How to trap the ALT key state in a visual component

> *QUESTION*
>
> I'd like to trap the ALT Key state in a visual component to display the status. So any pressing of the key in any other component should be visible in this component.

You could install a window hook procedure and execute your code each time the ALT key was pressed. Below is a simple example:

```pascal
{ ... }
type
  TTestEdit = class(TEdit)
  protected
    procedure CreateWnd; override;
    procedure DestroyWnd; override;
  end;

{ ... }

var
  Hook: HHook;

function GetMsgHook(nCode: Integer; wParam: longint;
  lParam: longint): longint; stdcall;
begin
  if wParam = VK_MENU then
    ShowMessage('alt');
  Result := CallNextHookEx(Hook, nCode, wParam, lParam);
end;

procedure TTestEdit.CreateWnd;
begin
  inherited CreateWnd;
  if (Hook = 0) and not (csDesigning in ComponentState) then
    Hook := SetWindowsHookEx(
      WH_KEYBOARD, GetMsgHook, Hinstance,
      GetWindowThreadProcessId(Handle, nil)
    );
end;

procedure TTestEdit.DestroyWnd;
begin
  if Hook <> 0 then
  begin
    UnhookWindowsHookEx(Hook);
    Hook := 0;
  end;
  inherited DestroyWnd;
end;

initialization
  Hook := 0;
```