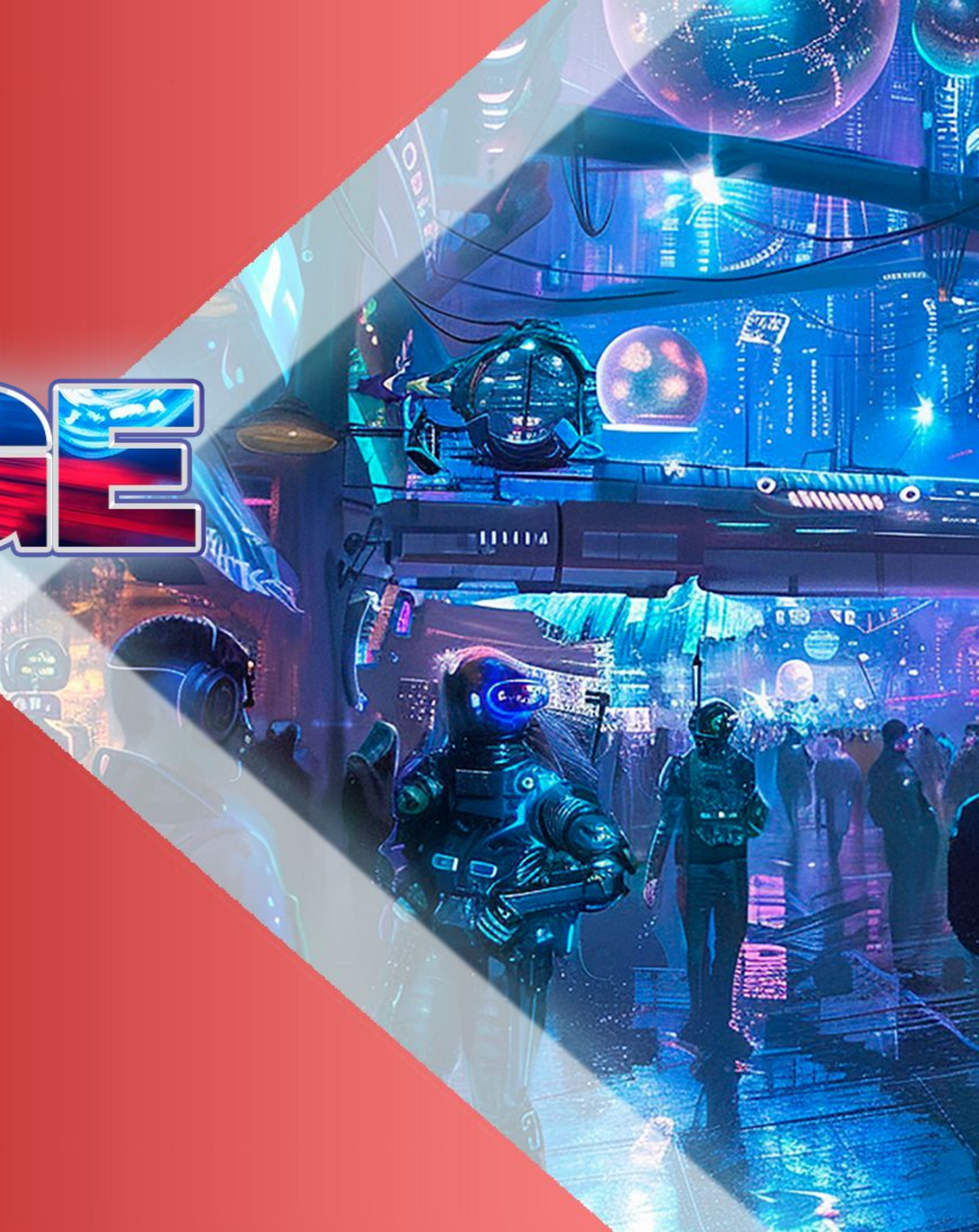
CODERAGE 2025



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A starter kit for your FireMonkey projects

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Agenda

- Introduction
- The “FMX Tools Starter Kit” project
- How it works
- Its dependencies
- A ready-to-use project template
- What’s next?
- Conclusion

Introduction

Introduction

The majority of programs developed in Delphi or C++Builder are VCL projects for historical reasons, habit, and installed software.

In companies, this is not a problem, even when the question of switching from Windows to Linux is in the air.

However, the situation is different for software publishers, who must constantly offer new products and expand their user base.

Introduction

Windows, Mac, and Linux are platforms to consider for software designed for businesses and individuals alike.

Mobile extensions with iOS and Android are sometimes a good approach for testing a market or offering truly useful solutions.

The web in the form of SaaS is another option, but that's a whole other vast topic that goes beyond just software...

Who am I ?

Embarcadero MVP, freelance developer,
Delphi and web trainer, content creator.

To contact me:
https://vasur.fr/about

Regularly on Twitch:
https://www.twitch.tv/patrickpremartin

Open source projects:
https://codeberg.org/PatrickPremartin
https://github.com/DeveloppeurPascal

Patrick PREMARTIN

Some of my websites

Catalog of books on Delphi and Pascal
https://delphi-books.com

Blog on Pascal development in Delphi
https://developpeur-pascal.fr

Self-learning Delphi via VOD
https://apprendre-delphi.fr

Utilities for Delphi and C++Builder developers
https://getitnow.embarcadero.com/vendor/patrick-premartin/

Patrick PREMARTIN

Introduction

FireMonkey was introduced in 2011.

In 14 years, VCL's “little brother” has evolved and provided the features needed to develop comprehensive database management software.

https://delphi.embarcadero.com/history-of-delphi-innovations/

As with VCL, if you can't find what you need in the standard package, you can turn to external publishers and developers, draw on a multitude of open source projects, or develop it yourself.

Introduction

Since its release, I have been using only FireMonkey (FMX) for my video game development projects, as well as for the small software programs that I use myself or distribute as shareware.

In VCL, we have several project creation wizards.

For FireMonkey, there are project templates and screen examples available for download from GetIt, but nothing generic apart from the basic creation wizard.

Since I was always doing the same thing to create a new project, I put together a starter kit and now offer a ready-to-use version that you can customize.

Introduction

This PDF, the list of links, the replay of the presentation, and additional videos will be available after CodeRage 2025 from this code repository:

https://apprendre-delphi.fr/cr2025-starterkit

The starter kit

The “FMX Tools Starter Kit” project

The “FMX Tools Starter Kit” project is a code repository containing a configurable FireMonkey project and examples.

It is intended to serve as a basis for desktop programs of all types.

Information, videos, and links are available on its website:

https://fmxtoolsstarterkit.developpeur-pascal.fr

The “FMX Tools Starter Kit” project

My new programs are based on it.

A migration of my existing programs is underway.

To see it in action, take a look at this software: Folder To FMX Image List, GroupProj Updater, HTML Writer, IDB Keys Generator, Shift Keys Generator, SUTOM Helper, SVG Folder To Delphi Unit, Swap Keys Generator, Text2HTML, XOR Keys Generator.

You can find their updated source codes on Codeberg: https://codeberg.org/OlfSoftware

How it works

How it works

This starter kit supports:

- the user's language for the user interface and the choice of another language
- FireMonkey styles and the choice of application appearance
- the dialog box for standard legal information
- a license management API
- a program version management API
- a menu on the main screen in which the “standard” options are in the right place depending on the operating system
- simplified settings in the form of constants
- saving and loading configuration settings
- saving and loading documents in different formats

How it works

Common dialog boxes are provided for supported operations.

The main menu provides options for the current document or project as well as for the software.

Everything is done in the form of classes or virtual methods that can be overridden.

How it works

The starter kit can be used by cloning the repository, as a template for another git repository, or as a ZIP file (in which case, opt for its preconfigured template).

Translations are easily handled in the files or frames, but you can also use your usual project localization system.

FMX styles are included in the project. They are distributed as standard with any Delphi license. You can add your own or others very easily.

How it works

Document management classes are offered as ancestors for your own classes.

You can use them as they are or simply extend the common ancestor to create your own classes according to the type of documents to be managed.

Its dependencies

Its dependencies

As with my FireMonkey video game creation starter kit, this one is based on other code repositories that you can use independently.

- the “About” dialog box
  https://dialogueapropos.developpeur-pascal.fr

- the Delphi client for the CilTseg API for license and version management
  https://ciltseg4delphi.developpeur-pascal.fr

Its dependencies

As with my FireMonkey video game creation starter kit, this one is based on other code repositories that you can use independently.

- visual and non-visual components for FMX
  https://fmxextend.developpeur-pascal.fr

- routines to simplify loading and using FMX styles
  https://fmxstylesutils.developpeur-pascal.fr

- my toolbox for Delphi
  https://librairies.developpeur-pascal.fr

A project template

A ready-to-use project template

Installing the starter kit and creating a project requires a few tedious and risky steps (such as manually modifying the DPROJ file).

To save time and simplify things for both you and me, I have created a repository template based on the starter kit that you can simply download and edit.

It is available on the starter kit website and can be downloaded from GetIt.

https://fmxtoolsstarterkit.developpeur-pascal.fr

A ready-to-use project template

To benefit from the starter kit's features and updates in a new project, I suggest you use git.

- When creating your code repository, use the template repository as a model.
- Initialize the submodules.
- Update the submodules.

When you want to create a new version, simply update the submodules to retrieve the changes in the starter kit and integrate them into your project.

A ready-to-use project template

To benefit from the starter kit's features and updates in an existing project, I suggest you use git.

- Clone the template repository.
- Copy its directory structure into your project.
- Add the submodules used by the template to your project.
- Transfer your features to the project provided with the template.

When you want to create a new version, simply update the submodules to retrieve the changes made to the starter kit and integrate them into your project.

A ready-to-use project template

You can also use the template without going through git. A ZIP file is available on GetIt, as in the publications in the code repository.

Download the ZIP file, which contains everything you need.

Simply modify the project provided in /src to integrate your code.

If you use the ZIP file, you will not benefit from starter kit updates.
From time to time, you will need to download the new version of the ZIP file and overwrite the contents of the /lib-externes folder in your project with the new version.

What’s next?

What's next?

The current version of the starter kit works for all types of projects.

The SDI and MDI modes are partially operational but still require some development before they can be activated in public projects.

I also need to choose a simple solution for overloading the application menu so that it can be customized from the form designer rather than by code.

Of course, the documentation still needs to be completed in the source code. A user manual will need to be written at some point.

What's next?

The project is public.

Please feel free to send me your requirements and suggestions.

For the moment, I am the sole developer. I distribute it under an AGPL v3 license and sell standard developer licenses if AGPL v3 does not suit you.

I am open to external contributions. Please contact me to discuss this.

Conclusion

Conclusion

FireMonkey is a viable alternative to VCL for new projects.

There are differences in how the framework works, habits that need to be changed for creating screens and accessing data, positioning, coordinates, etc.

Purely Windows features are not available as components, but everything can be done through code. The APIs, SDKs, and RTL are common.

Before starting new projects in Delphi, C++Builder, or another language, ask yourself this question.

Conclusion

I recorded some bonus videos in French and English. They are available from the presentation's code repository. You will also find them on PeerTube and YouTube after the conference.

If you have any questions about my libraries, starter kits, models based on these starter kits, this presentation, or others, feel free to send them to me or join me to discuss them during a live stream on Twitch. I will try to answer in French or English.

Conclusion

This PDF, the list of links, the replay of the presentation, and additional videos will be available after CodeRage 2025 from this code repository:

https://apprendre-delphi.fr/cr2025-starterkit

Informations about the “FMX Tools Starter Kit” project and its ready-to-use template are available on the website:

https://fmxtoolsstarterkit.developpeur-pascal.fr

Thank you for your attention, and see you soon...

Thank You!