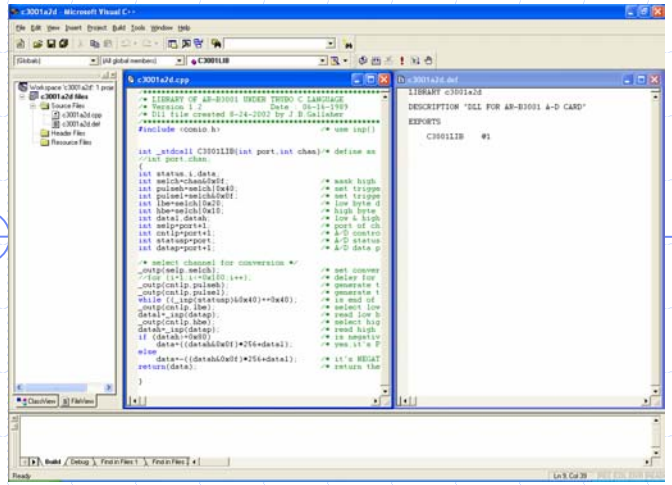
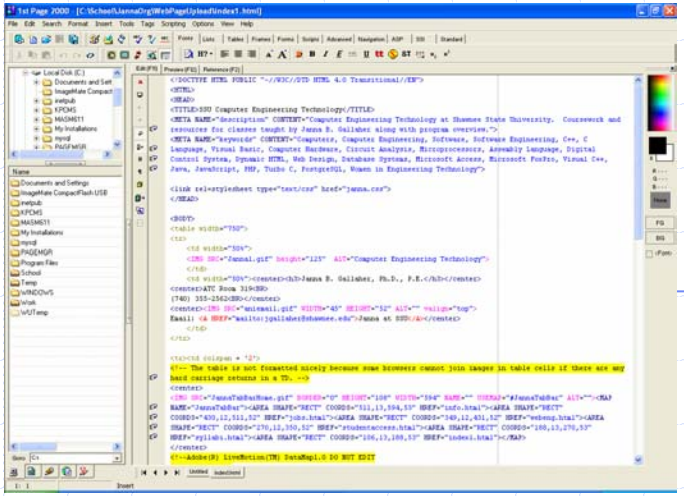
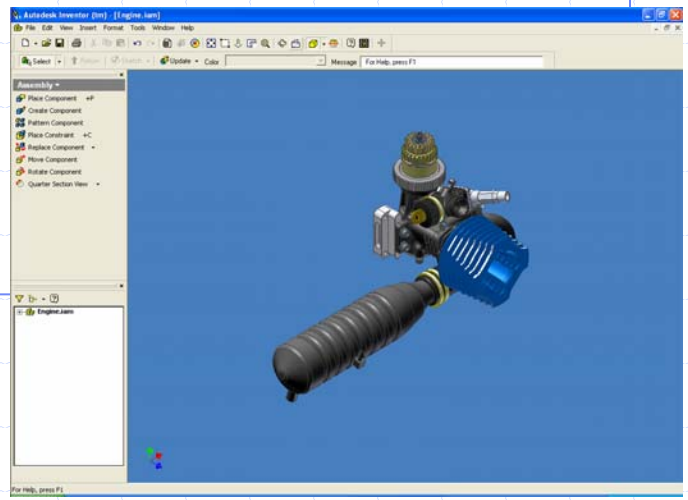


The User Interface Design Process

Step 5: Select the Proper Kinds of Windows

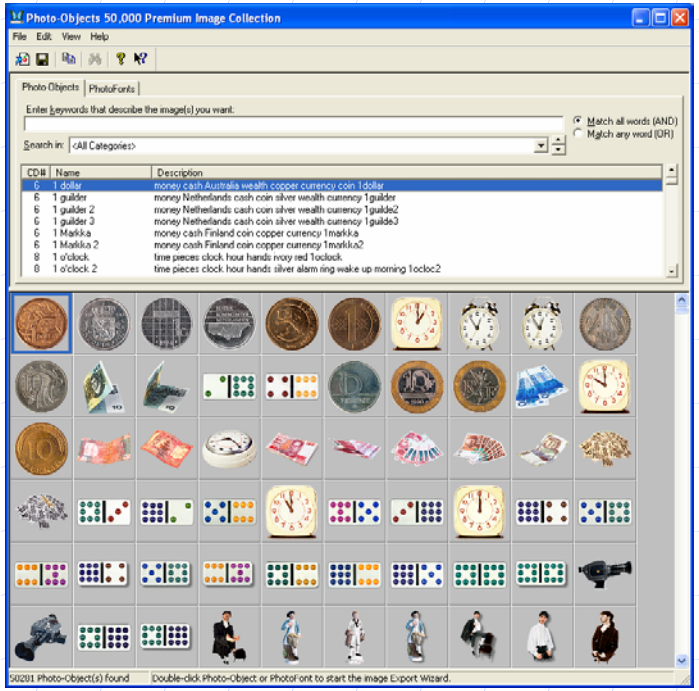




Introduction

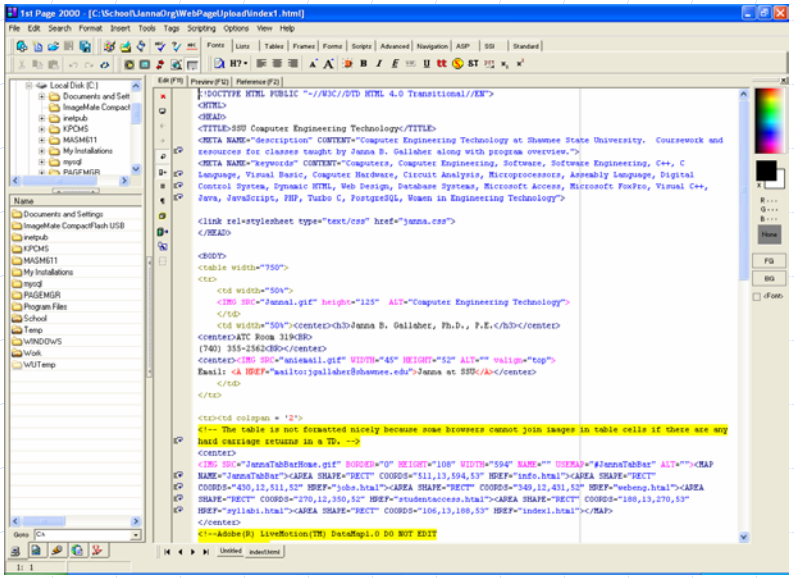
A window is an area of the screen, usually rectangular in shape, defined by a border that contains a particular view of some area of the computer or some portion of a person's dialog with the computer.

- This step addresses:
  - A window's characteristics.
  - A window's components.
  - A window's presentation styles.
  - The types of windows available.
  - Organizing window system functions.
  - A window's operations.
  - Web system frames and pop-up windows.



Window Characteristics

- Window Characteristics:
  - A name or title.
  - A size in height and width
  - A state (active or inactive).
  - Visibility.
  - A location.
  - Presentation .
  - Management capabilities.
  - The task to which it is dedicated.



The Attraction of Windows

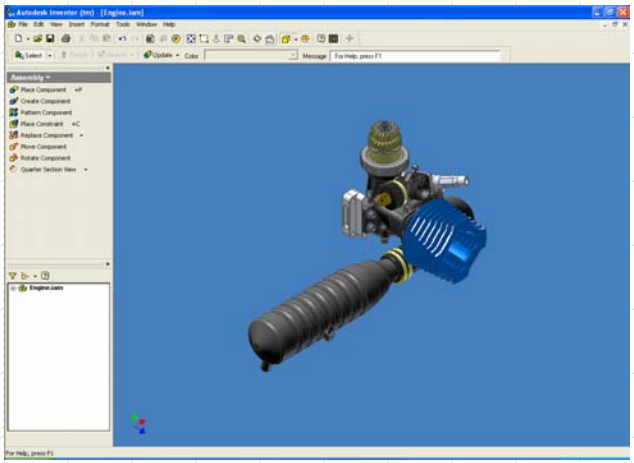
- Presentation of Different Levels of Information
- Presentation of Multiple Kinds of Information
- Sequential Presentation of Levels or Kinds of Information
- Access to Different Sources of Information
- Combining Multiple Sources of Information
- Performing More Than One Task
- Reminding
- Monitoring
- Multiple Representations of the Same Task

Constraints in Window System Design

- Historical Considerations
- Hardware Limitations
- Human Limitations
- Other Limitations

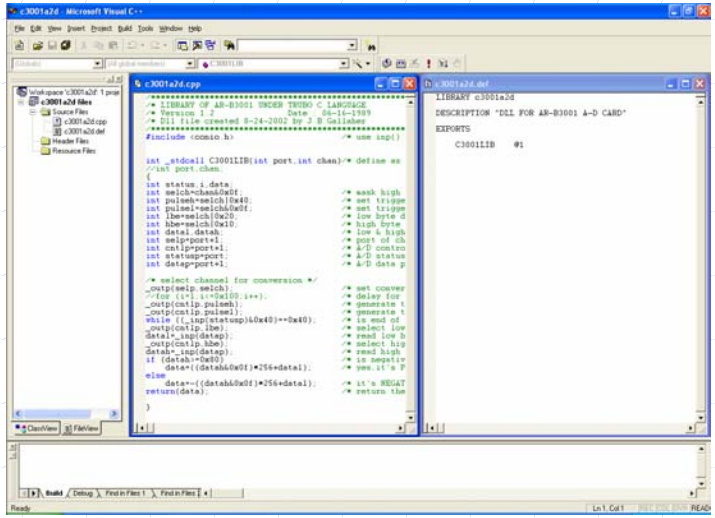
Components of a Window

- Frame
- Title Bar
- Title Bar Icon
- Window Sizing Buttons
- What's This? Button
- Menu Bar
- Status Bar
- Scroll Bars
- Split Box
- Toolbar
- Command Area
- Size Grip
- Work Area



Window Presentation Styles: Tiled Windows

- Advantages:
  - The system usually allocates and positions windows for the user.
  - Open windows are always visible.
  - Every window is always completely visible
  - They are perceived as less complex than overlapping windows.
  - They are easier for novice people to learn and use
  - They yield better user performance for tasks where the data requires little window manipulation.



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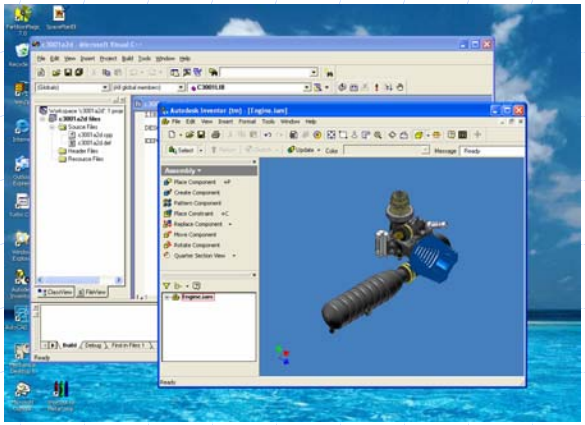
Window Presentation Styles: Tiled Windows (Continued)

- Disadvantages:
  - Only a limited number can be displayed.
  - As windows are opened, existing windows change size.
  - As windows change size, the movement can be disconcerting.
  - As the number of displayed windows increases, each window can get very tiny.
  - Changes in sizes and locations are difficult to predict.
  - Configuration of windows may not meet the user's needs.
  - They are perceived as crowded because window borders are flush against one another and they fill up the whole screen.
  - They permit less user control because the system actively manages the windows.

Window Presentation Styles: Overlapping Windows



- Advantages:
  - Their look is three-dimensional
  - Greater control allows the user to organize the windows.
  - Windows can maintain larger sizes.
  - Windows can maintain consistent sizes.
  - Windows can maintain consistent positions.
  - Screen space is conserved because windows are placed on top of one another.
  - There is less pressure to close or delete windows.Larger borders can be maintained around window information.
  - They yield better user performance for tasks where the data requires much window manipulation.

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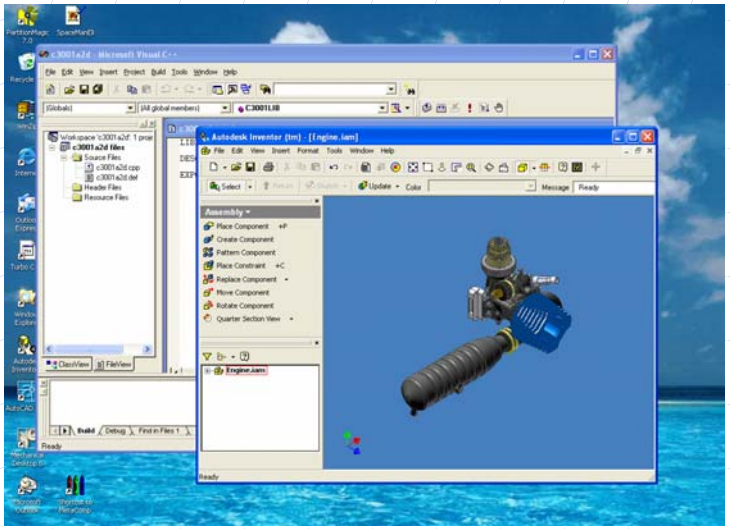
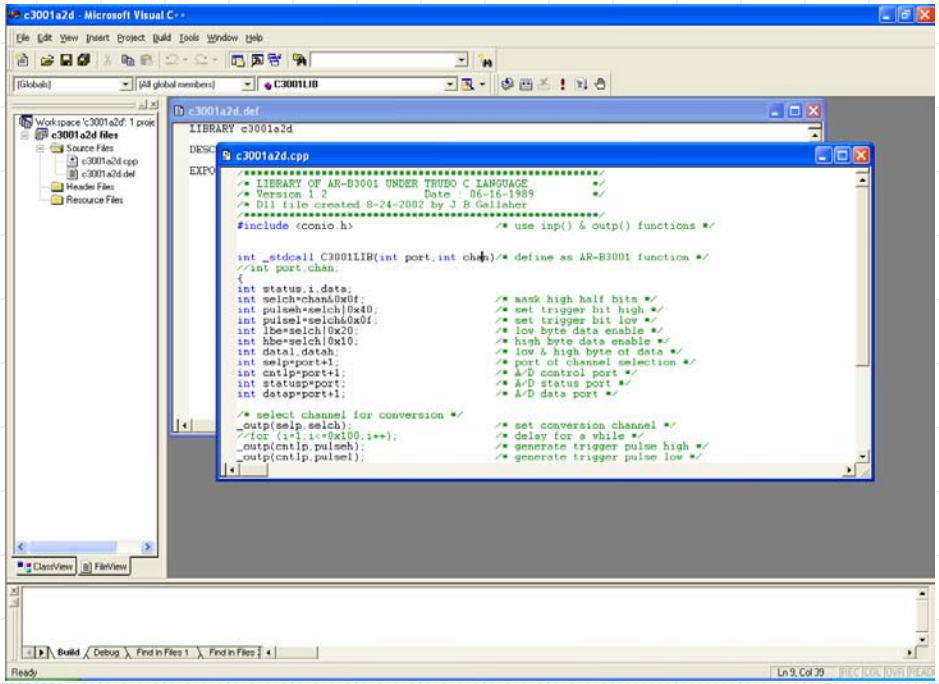
Window Presentation Styles: Overlapping Windows (Continued)

- Disadvantages:
  - They are operationally much more complex than tiled windows.
  - Information can be obscured behind other windows.
  - Windows themselves can be lost behind other windows.The three-dimensional space representation is not always realized by the user.
  - Control freedom increases the possibility for greater visual complexity and crowding.



Window Presentation Styles: Cascading Windows

- Advantages:
  - No window is ever completely hidden.
  - Bringing any window to the front is easier.
  - It provides simplicity in visual presentation and cleanness.

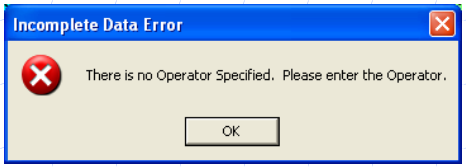


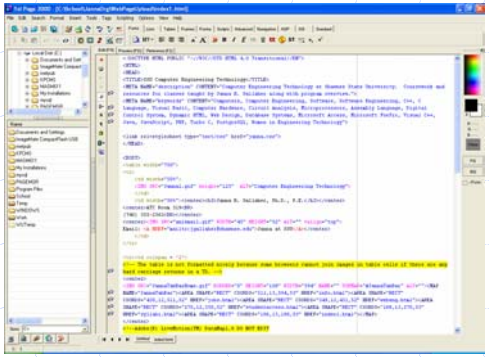
Window Presentation Styles: Picking a Presentation Style

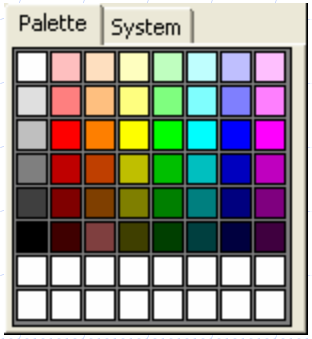
- Use tiled windows for:
  - Single-task activities.
  - Data that needs to be seen simultaneously.
  - Tasks requiring little window manipulation.
  - Novice or inexperienced users.
- Use overlapping windows for:
  - Switching between tasks.
  - Tasks necessitating a greater amount of window manipulation.
  - Expert or Experienced users.
  - Unpredictable display contents.

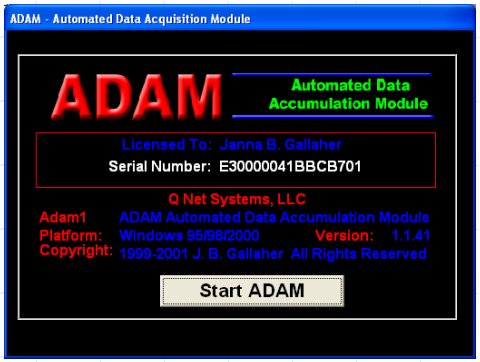
Types of Windows

- Primary Window
- Secondary Windows
- Dialog Boxes
- Property Sheets and Property Inspectors
- Message Boxes
- Palette Windows
- Pop-up Windows

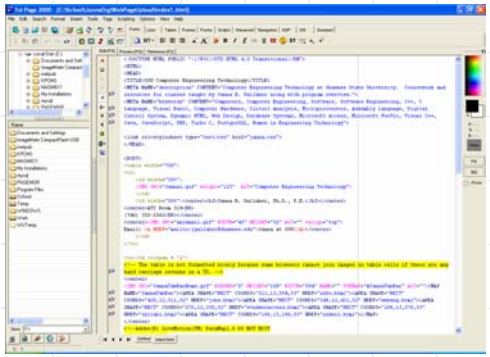








Primary Window



- Proper usage:
  - Represent an independent function or application
  - Use to present constantly used window components and controls
    - Menu bar items that are used frequently or used by most, or all, primary or secondary windows.
    - Controls used by dependent windows.
  - Use for presenting information that is continually updated. (e.g. time and date)
  - Use of providing context for dependent windows.
  - Do not:
    - Divide an independent function into two or more primary windows.
    - Present unrelated functions in one primary window..

Secondary Window

- Proper usage:
  - For performing subordinate, supplemental, or ancillary actions that are:
    - extended or more complex in nature.
    - Related to objects in the primary window.
  - For presenting frequently or occasionally used window components.
- Important guidelines:
  - Should typically not appear as an entry on the taskbar.
  - Should not be larger than 263 dialog units x 263 dialog units.

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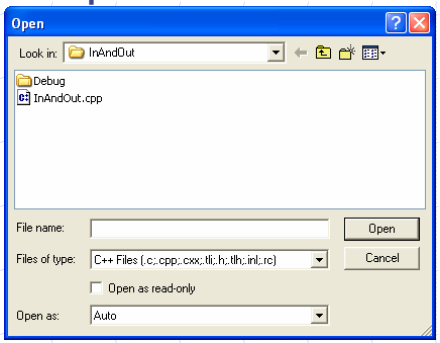
Secondary Window (Continued)

- Modal and Modeless
  - Modal:
    - Use when interaction with any other window must not be permitted
    - Use for: Presenting information, receiving input, asking questions.
    - Use carefully because it constrains what the user can do and stops the program flow.
  - Modeless:
    - Use when interaction with other windows must be permitted.
    - Use when interaction with other windows must be repeated.

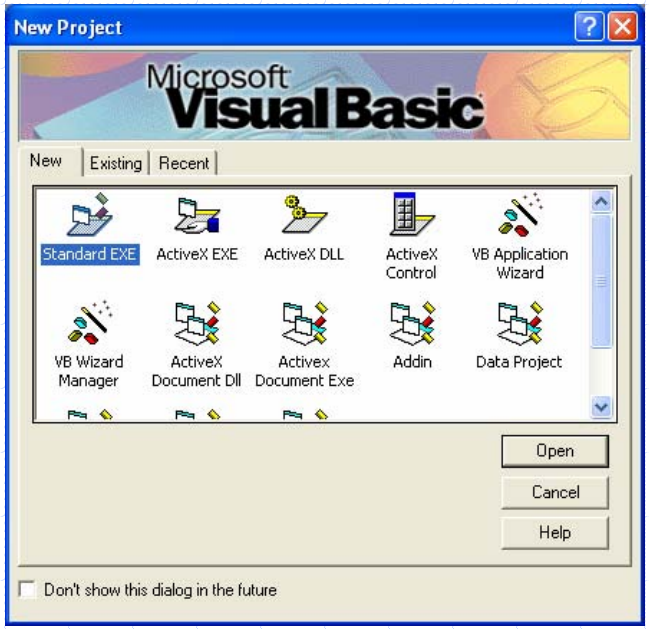


Secondary Window (Continued)

- Cascading:
  - Provides advanced options at a lower level in a complex dialog.
  - Guidelines:
    - Provide a command button leading to the next dialog box with a "To a Window" indicator (...).
    - Present the additional dialog box in cascaded form.
    - Provide no more than two cascades in a given path.
    - Do not cover previous critical information.
    - If independent, close the secondary window from which it was opened.
- Unfolding:
  - Provide advanced options at the same level in a complex dialog.
  - Guidelines:
    - Provide a command button with an expanding dialog symbol (>>).
    - Expand to right or downward.

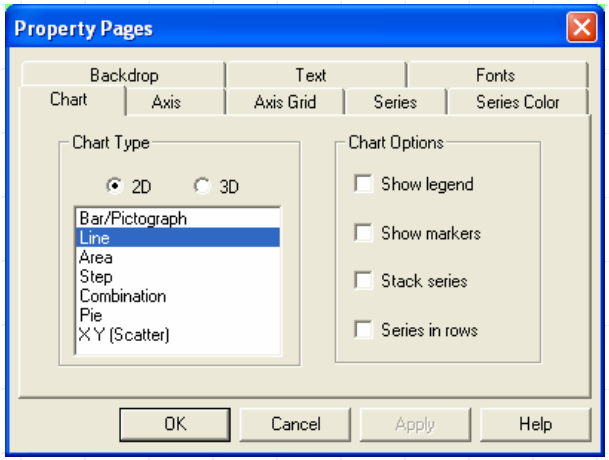
Dialog Boxes

- Use for presenting brief messages.
- Use for requesting specific, transient actions.
- Use for performing actions that:
  - Take a short time to complete.
  - Are not frequently changed.
- Command buttons to include: Ok, Cancel, and others as necessary.



Property Sheets and Property Inspectors

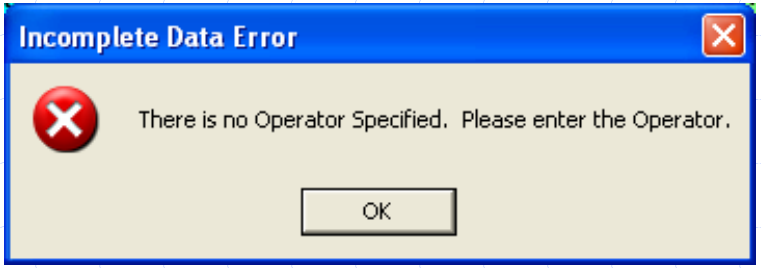
- Property Sheets
  - Presents the complete set of properties for an object
  - Categorize and group within property pages
  - Command buttons: Ok, Cancel, Apply, Reset, and others
  - For a single property sheet, place the commands on the sheet.
  - For a tabbed property page, place the commands outside the tabbed pages.



- Property Inspectors
  - Displays only the most common or frequently accessed object properties.
  - Make changes dynamically.

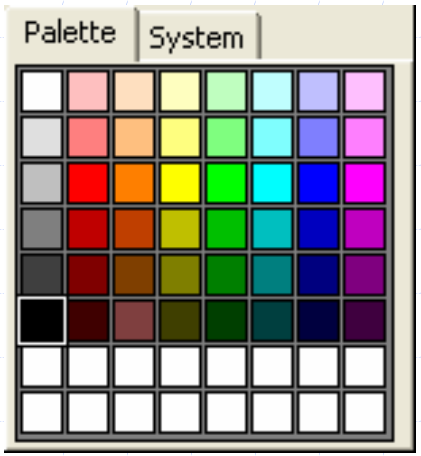
Message Boxes

- Use for displaying a message about a particular situation or condition.
- Command buttons to include: OK, Cancel, Help, Yes and No, Stop, and buttons to correct the action that caused the message box to be displayed.
- Enable the title bar close box only if the message includes a cancel button.
- Designate the most frequent or least destructive option as the default command button.



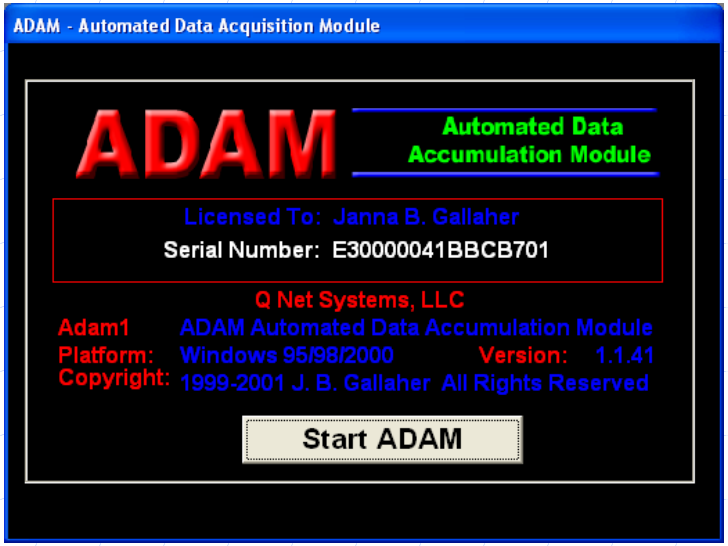
Palette Windows

- Use to present a set of controls.
- Design as resizable or, if it fits, fixed in size.



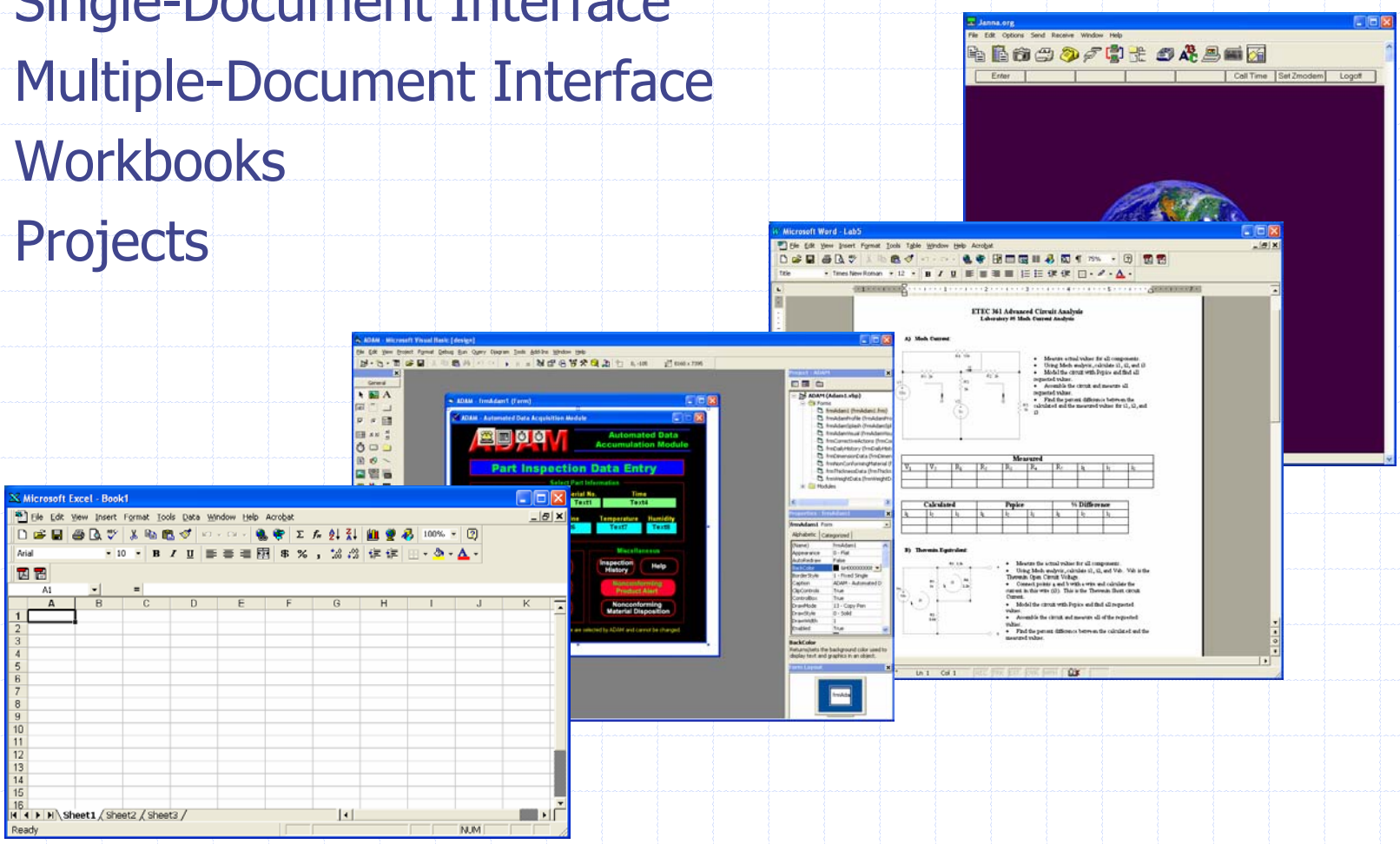
Pop-up Windows

- Use to display:
  - Additional information when an abbreviated form of the information is the main presentation.
  - Textual labels for graphical controls.
  - Context-sensitive Help information.



Window Management

- Single-Document Interface
- Multiple-Document Interface
- Workbooks
- Projects



Single-Document Interface

- A single primary window with a set of secondary windows.
- Proper usage:
  - Where object and window have a simple, one-to-one relationship.
  - Where the object's primary presentation or use is as a single unit.
  - To support alternate views with a control that allows the view to be changed.
  - To support simultaneous views by splitting the window into panes.
- Advantages:
  - Most common usage.
  - Window manipulation is easier and less confusing.
  - Data-centered approach.
- Disadvantage:
  - Information is displayed or edited in separate windows.

Multiple Document Interface

- Description:
  - A technique for managing a set of windows where documents are opened into windows.
  - It contains a single primary window, called the parent.
  - A set of related document or child windows, each also essentially a primary window.
  - Each child window is constrained to appear only within the parent window.
  - The child windows share the parent window's operational elements.
  - The parent window's elements can be dynamically changed to reflect the requirements of the active child window.

Multiple Document Interface (Continued)

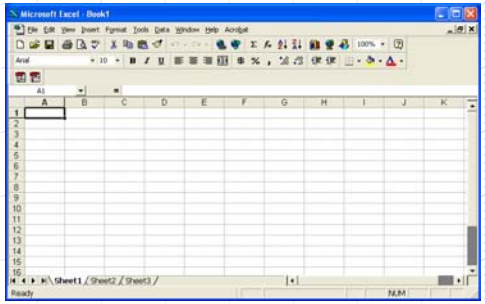
- Proper usage:
  - To present multiple occurrences of an object.
  - To compare data within two or more windows.
  - To present multiple parts of an application.
  - Best suited for viewing homogeneous object types.
  - To clearly segregate the objects and their windows used in a task.
- Advantages:
  - The child windows share the parent window's interface components.
  - Useful for managing a set of objects.
  - Provides a grouping and focus for a set of activities within the larger environment of the desktop.

Multiple Document Interface (Continued)

- Disadvantages:
  - Reinforces an application as the primary focus.
  - Containment for secondary windows within child windows does not exist, obscuring window relationships and possibly creating confusion.
  - Because the parent window does not actually contain objects, context cannot always be maintained on closing and opening.
  - The relationship between files and their windows is abstract, making an MDI application more challenging for beginning users to learn.
  - Confining child windows the the parent window can be inconvenient or inappropriate for some tasks.
  - The nested nature of child windows may make it difficult for the user to distinguish a child window in a parent window from a primary window that is a peer with the parent widow is positioned on top.

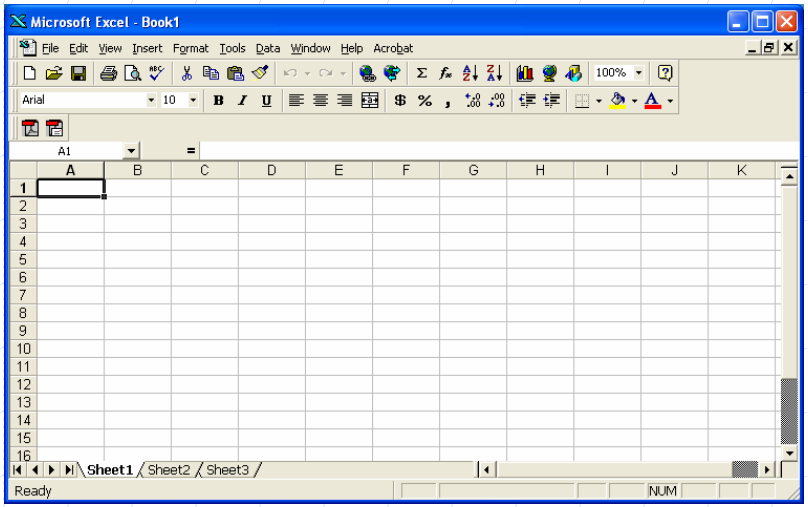
Workbooks

- Description:
  - A window or task management technique that consists of a set of views organized like a tabbed notebook.
  - It is based upon the metaphor of a book or notebook.
  - Views of objects are presented as sections within the workbook's primary windows; child window do not exist.
  - Each section represents a view of data.
  - Tables can be included and used to navigate between sections.
  - Otherwise, its characteristics and behavior are similar to those of the multiple-document interface with all child windows maximized.



Workbooks (Continued)

- Proper usage:
  - To manage a set of views of an object.
  - To optimize quick navigation of multiple views.
  - For content where the order of the sections is significant.



Workbooks (Continued)

- Advantages:
  - Provides a grouping and focus for a set of activities within the larger environment of the desktop.
  - Conserves screen real estate.
  - Provides the greater simplicity of the single-document window interface.
  - Provides greater simplicity by eliminating child window management.
  - Preserves some management capabilities of the multiple-document interface.
- Disadvantage:
  - Cannot present simultaneous views.

Projects

- Description:
  - A technique that consists of a container: a project window holding a set of objects.
  - The objects being held within the project window can be opened in primary windows that are peers with the project window.
  - Visual containment of the peer windows within the project window is not necessary.
  - Each opened peer window must possess its own menu bar and other interface elements.
  - Each opened peer window can have its own entry on the task bar.
  - When a project window is closed, all the peer windows of object also close
  - When the project window is opened, the peer windows of the contained objects are restored to their former positions.
  - Peer windows of a project may be restored without the project window itself being restored.

Projects (Continued)

- Proper usage:
  - To manage a set of objects that do not necessarily need to be contained.
  - When child windows are not to be constrained.
- Advantages:
  - Provides a grouping and focus for a set of activities within the larger environment of the desktop.
  - Preserves some management capabilities of the multiple document interface.
  - Provides the greatest flexibility in the placement and arrangement of windows.
- Disadvantages:
  - Increased complexity due to difficulty in differentiating peer primary windows of the project from windows of other applications.

Organizing Window Functions

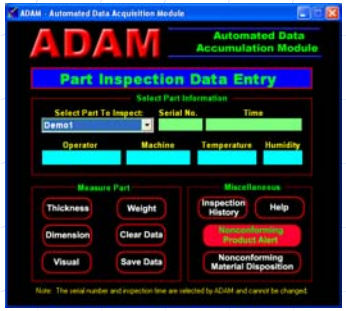
- Window Organization
  - Organize windows to support user tasks.
  - Support the most common tasks in the most efficient sequence.
  - Use primary windows to:
    - Begin an interaction and provide a top-level context for dependent windows.
    - Perform a major interaction.
  - Use secondary windows to:
    - Extend the interaction.
    - Obtain or display supplemental info.
  - Use dialog boxes for:
    - Infrequently used or needed info.
    - "Nice-to-know" info.
- Number of Windows
  - Minimize the number of windows needed to accomplish an objective.

Window Operations

- Active Window
  - A window should be made active with as few steps as possible.
  - Visually differentiate the active window from the other windows.
- General Guidelines
  - Design easy to user and learn windowing operations (direct manipulation is better than indirect manipulation).
  - Minimize the number of window operations necessary to achieve a desired effect.
  - Make navigating between windows particularly easy and efficient to do.
  - Make the setting up of windows particularly easy to remember.
  - In overlapping systems, provide powerful commands for arranging windows on the screen in user-tailorable configurations.

Window Operations (Continued)

- Opening a Window
  - Provide an iconic representation or textual list of available windows.
  - When opening a window:
    - Position the opening window in the most forward plane of the screen.
    - Adapt the window to the size and shape of the monitor on which it will be presented.
    - Designate it as the active window.
    - Set it off against a neutral background.
    - Ensure that its title bar is visible.
  - When a primary window is opened or restored, position it on top.
    - Restore all secondary windows to the states that exited when the primary window was closed.



Window Operations (Continued)

- Opening a Window (Continued)
  - When a dependent secondary window is opened, position it on top of its associated primary window.
    - Position a secondary window with peer windows on top of its peers.
    - Present layered or cascaded windows with any related peer secondary windows.
  - When a dependent secondary window is activated, its primary window and related peer windows should also be positioned at the top.
  - If more than one object is selected and opened, display each object in a separate window. Designate the last window selected as the active widow.
  - Display a window in the same state as when it was last accessed.
    - If the task requires particular sequence of windows, use a fixed or consistent presentation sequence.
  - With tiled windows, provide an easy way to resize and move newly opened windows.

Window Operations (Continued)

- Sizing Windows
  - Provide large-enough windows to:
    - Present all relevant and expected information for the task.
    - Avoid hiding important information.
    - Avoid crowding or visual confusion.
    - Minimize the need for scrolling.
  - If a window is too large, determine:
    - Is all the information needed?
    - Is all the information related?
  - Otherwise, make the window as small as possible.
    - Optimum window sizes:
      - For text, about 12 lines.
      - For alphanumeric information, about seven lines.

Window Operations (Continued)

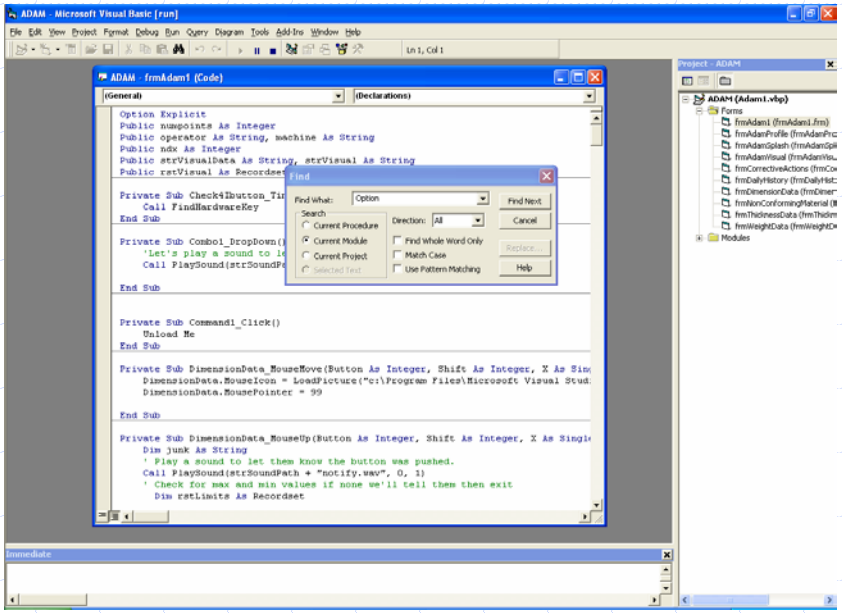
- Window Placement
  - Considerations:
    - the use of the window
    - The overall display dimensions.
    - The reason for the window's appearance.
  - General:
    - Place the window so it is entirely visible.
    - If the window is being restored, place the window where it last appeared.
    - If the window is new, and a location has not yet been established, place it:
      - At the point of the viewer's attention, usually the location of the pointer or cursor.
      - In a position convenient to navigate to.
      - So that it is not obscuring important or related underlying window information.

Window Operations (Continued)

- Window Placement (Continued)
  - General (Continued);
    - For multiple windows, give each additional window its own unique and discernible location.
      - A cascading presentation is recommended.
    - In multiple-monitor configuration, display the secondary window on the same monitor as its primary window.
    - If none of the above location considerations apply, then:
      - Horizontally center a secondary window within its primary window just below the title bar, menu bar, and any docked toolbars.
    - If the user then moves the window, display it at this new location the next time the user opens the window.
      - Adjust it as necessary to the current display configuration.
    - Do not let the user move a window to a position where it cannot be easily repositioned.

Window Operations (Continued)

- Window Placement (Continued)
  - Dialog boxes:
    - If the dialog box relates to the entire system, center it on the screen.
    - Keep key information on the underlying screen visible.
    - If one dialog box calls another, make the new one movable whenever possible.



Window Operations (Continued)

- Window Separation
  - Crisply, clearly, and pleasingly demarcate a window from the background of the screen on which it appears.
    - Provide a surrounding solid line border for the window.
    - Provide a window background that sets the window off well against the overall screen background.
    - Consider incorporating a drop shadow beneath the window.
- Moving a Window
  - Permit the user to change the position of all windows.
  - Change the pointer shape to indicate that the move selection is successful.
  - Move the entire window as the pointer moves.
    - If it is impossible to move the entire window, move the window outline while leaving the window displayed in its original position.
  - Permit the moving of a window without its being active.

Window Operations (Continued)

- Resizing a Window
  - Permit the user to change the size of primary windows.
    - Unless the information displayed in the window is fixed or cannot be scaled to provide more information.
  - Change the pointer shape to indicate that the resizing selection is successful.
  - The simplest operation is to anchor the upper-left corner and resize from the lower right corner.
    - Also permit resizing from any point on the window.
  - Show the changing window as the pointer moves.
    - If it is impossible to show the entire window being resized, show the window's outline while leaving the window displayed in its original position.

Window Operations (Continued)

- Resizing a Window (Continued)
  - When window size changes and content remains the same:
    - Change the image size proportionally as window size changes.
  - If resizing creates a window or image too small for easy use, do one of the following:
    - Clip (truncate)information arranged in some logical structure or layout when minimum size is attained, or
    - When no layout considerations exist, format (restructure) information as size is reduced, or
    - Remove less useful information (if it can be determined), or
    - When minimum size is attained, replace information with a message that indicates that the minimum size has been reached and that the window must be enlarged to continue working.
  - Permit resizing a window without its being active.

Window Operations (Continued)

- Other Operations
  - Permit primary window to be maximized, minimized, and restored.
- Window Shuffling
  - Window shuffling must be easy to accomplish.
- Keyboard Control/Mouseless Operation
  - Window actions should be capable of being performed through the keyboard as well as with a mouse.
  - Keyboard alternatives should be designated through use of mnemonic codes as much as possible.
  - Keyboard designations should be capable of being modified by the user.

Window Operations (Continued)

- Closing a Window
  - Close a window when:
    - The user requests that it be closed.
    - The user performs the action required in the window.
    - The window has no further relevance.
  - If a primary window is close, also close all of its secondary windows.
  - When a window is closed, save its current state, including size and position, for use when the window is opened again.

Web Systems

- Frames
  - Description:
    - Multiple Web screen panes that permit the displaying of multiple documents on a page.
    - These documents can be independently viewed, scrolled, and updated.
    - The documents are presented in a tiled format.
  - Proper usage:
    - For content expected to change frequently.
    - To allow users to change partial screen content.
    - To permit users to compare multiple pieces of information.
  - Guidelines:
    - Use only a few frames (three or less) at a given time.
    - Choose sizes based upon the type of information to be presented.
    - Never force viewers to resize frames to see information.
    - Never use more than one scrolling region on a page.

Web Systems (Continued)

- Pop-Up Windows
  - Be extremely cautious in the use of pop-up windows.