

SPOS Laboratory

T.E Semester -II

Problem Statement: Write a program to create Dynamic Link Library for any mathematical operation and write an application program to test it. (Java Native Interface / Use VB or VC++).

Objectives :

- To understand Dynamic Link Libraries Concepts
- To implement dynamic link library concepts
- To study about Visual Basic

Outcomes:

After completion of this assignment students will be able to:

- Understand the concept of Dynamic Link Library
- Understand the Programming language of Visual basic

Dynamic Link Library :

A dynamic link library (DLL) is a collection of small programs that can be loaded when needed by larger programs and used at the same time. The small program lets the larger program communicate with a specific device, such as a printer or scanner. It is often packaged as a DLL program, which is usually referred to as a DLL file. DLL files that support specific device operation are known as device drivers.

A DLL file is often given a ".dll" file name suffix. DLL files are dynamically linked with the program that uses them during program execution rather than being compiled into the main program. The advantage of DLL files is space is saved in random access memory (RAM) because the files don't get loaded into RAM together with the main program.

When a DLL file is needed, it is loaded and run. For example, as long as a user is editing a document in Microsoft Word, the printer DLL file does not need to be loaded into RAM. If the user decides to print the document, the Word application causes the printer DLL file to be loaded and run.

A program is separated into modules when using a DLL. With modularized components, a program can be sold by module, have faster load times and be updated without altering other parts of the program. DLLs help operating systems and programs run faster, use memory efficiently and take up less disk space.

Feature of DLL :

DLLs are essentially the same as EXEs, the choice of which to produce as part of the linking process is for clarity, since it is possible to export functions and data from either. It is not possible to directly execute a DLL, since it requires an EXE for the operating system to load it through an entry point, hence the existence of utilities like RUNDLL.EXE or RUNDLL32.EXE which provide the entry point and minimal framework for DLLs that contain enough functionality to execute without much support.

DLLs provide a mechanism for shared code and data, allowing a developer of shared code/data to upgrade functionality without requiring applications to be re-linked or re-compiled. From the application development point of view Windows and OS/2 can be thought of as a collection of DLLs that are upgraded, allowing applications for one version of the OS to work in a later one, provided that the OS vendor has ensured that the interfaces and functionality are compatible.

DLLs execute in the memory space of the calling process and with the same access permissions which means there is little overhead in their use but also that there is no protection for the calling EXE if the DLL has any sort of bug.

Difference between the Application & DLL :

An application can have multiple instances of itself running in the system simultaneously, whereas a DLL can have only one instance. An application can own things such as a stack, global memory, file handles, and a message queue, but a DLL cannot.

Executable file links to DLL :

An executable file links to (or loads) a DLL in one of two ways:

- **Implicit linking**
- **Explicit linking**

Implicit linking is sometimes referred to as static load or load-time dynamic linking. Explicit linking is sometimes referred to as dynamic load or run-time dynamic linking. With implicit linking, the executable using the DLL links to an import library (.lib file) provided by the maker of the DLL. The operating system loads the DLL when the executable using it is loaded. The client executable calls the DLL's exported functions just as if the functions were contained within the executable.

With explicit linking, the executable using the DLL must make function calls to explicitly load and unload the DLL and to access the DLL's exported functions.

The client executable must call the exported functions through a function pointer.

An executable can use the same DLL with either linking method. Furthermore, these mechanisms are not mutually exclusive, as one executable can implicitly link to a DLL and another can attach to it explicitly.

DLL's Advantages :

- Saves memory and reduces swapping. Many processes can use a single DLL simultaneously, sharing a single copy of the DLL in memory. In contrast, Windows must load a copy of the library code into memory for each application that is built with a static link library.
- Saves disk space. Many applications can share a single copy of the DLL on disk. In contrast, each application built with a static link library has the library code linked into its executable image as a separate copy.
- Upgrades to the DLL are easier. When the functions in a DLL change, the applications that use them do not need to be recompiled or relinked as long as the function arguments and return values do not change. In contrast, statically linked object code requires that the application be relinked when the functions change.
- Provides after-market support. For example, a display driver DLL can be modified to support a display that was not available when the application was shipped.
- Supports multi language programs. Programs written in different programming languages can call the same DLL function as long as the programs follow the function's calling convention.
- The programs and the DLL function must be compatible in the following ways: the order in which the function expects its arguments to be pushed onto the stack, whether the function or the application is responsible for cleaning up the stack, and whether any arguments are passed in registers.
- Provides a mechanism to extend the MFC library classes. You can derive classes from the existing MFC classes and place them in an MFC extension DLL for use by MFC applications.
- Eases the creation of international versions. By placing resources in a DLL, it is much easier to create international versions of an application. You can place the strings for each language version of your application in a separate resource DLL and have the different language versions load the appropriate resources.
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Disadvantage :

- A potential disadvantage to using DLLs is that the application is not self-contained; it depends on the existence of a separate DLL module.

Write Up Points

What Is Dll And What Are Their Usages And Advantages?

What Are The Sections In A Dll Executable/binary?

Where Should We Store Dlls ?

Who Loads And Links The Dlls?

How Many Types Of Linking Are There?

What Is Implicit And Explicit Linking In Dynamic Loading?

How to call a DLL function from Visual Basic?