Using a configuration file to manage test environments

As shown in the previous recipe, it is possible to read variable values from an `.ini` file. We will show how to define several environments within such a file and load the input data for the current environment during runtime.

Getting ready

Follow the same steps stated in the *Getting ready* section of the *Reading values from an INI file* recipe.

How to do it...

Create a new file with the name `QA-env-settings.ini`. Enter the following entries to create three sets of parameters corresponding to three test environments `QA1`, `QA2`, and `QA3`:

```
[QA1]
InputDataSrc= "RegressionData1.xls"
Username     = "user1"
URL          = "http://www.url1.com"
Description = "Data for QA1 environment"

[QA2]
InputDataSrc= "RegressionData2.xls"
Username     = "user2"
URL          = "http://www.url2.com"
                 QA2 environment"

            ionData3.xls"
Username     = "user3"
URL          = "http://www.url3.com"
Description = "Data for QA3 environment"
```

In our test, we will load the input data based on the value of the Environment variable `QA_ENV`, which will take one of the following environments: `QA1`, `QA2`, or `QA3`. Before running the test, ensure that the variable exists, and provide the value for the required testing environment (see the *Storing data in the Environment object* recipe). Therefore, our code in `Action1` will look like the following code snippet:

```
Dim sDataSourcePath, sURL, sUsername

oExtern.GetPrivateProfileString(Environment("QA_ENV"), _
"InputDataSrc", "", sDataSourcePath, 255, _
"QA_env_settings.ini")

oExtern.GetPrivateProfileString(Environment("QA_ENV"), _
"InputDataSrc", "", sURL, 255, "QA_env_settings.ini")

oExtern.GetPrivateProfileString(Environment("QA_ENV"), _
"InputDataSrc", "", sUsername, 255, "QA_env_settings.ini")

DataTable.Import(sDataSourcePath)
```

How it works...

We retrieve the value of the `QA_ENV` Environment variable, and accordingly load the values of the variables in the corresponding section in the `.ini` file. The value of the `InputDataSrc` key within the corresponding section is then retrieved (note that the parameter is passed by reference and filled by the target method) and is used to import the Excel file (as you can see in the *Importing an Excel file to a test* recipe) that contains the input data for the given testing environment.

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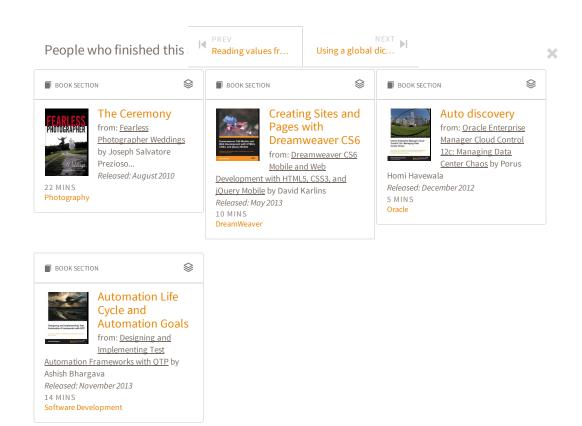
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