

Free IDE for Windows Mobile Development? [closed]

Asked 15 years, 11 months ago Modified 9 years, 11 months ago

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It's been a while now since Microsoft stopped supporting Embedded Visual C++ 4.0 (eVC 4), and they don't let you use the Windows Mobile SDK with the Express version of VS 2008. Now, I'm OK because I get an MSDN license through work (including VS 2008 Pro), but I'd like to work on a couple open-source projects, and not all the other contributing developers are so lucky. As a result, they're sticking with eVC, even though it doesn't run at all on Vista.

Is there a (free!) common denominator here? An IDE that will build MFC (and/or .NET!) apps, which runs on both XP and Vista? It doesn't have to be fancy, per se, but the more VS-level niceties it has, the happier I think we'd all be with it.

Suggestions for *cheap* commercial-ware are also welcome, though of course the very best option would be something open-source, especially cross-platform. I think MS is doing serious damage to the WM OS by discouraging development like this.

ide

open-source

windows-mobile

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edited Dec 31, 2014 at 7:48



pnuts

59.4k ● 11 ● 91 ● 141

asked Jan 16, 2009 at 15:52



Coderer

27.2k ● 30 ● 104 ● 166

4 Answers

Sorted by:

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6

Unfortunately I think you're out of luck. There has been some success in getting [SharpDevelop to compile managed smart device apps](#), though there was [a period where it was broken in SharpDevelop too](#). I don't believe that debugging directly against the device or emulator



works, though, so I'd be highly inclined to not bother. Developing without a debugger is unbelievably painful.



Even with this you don't have native support. What's your option here? Well there's [CeGCC](#) and [PocketGCC](#), but neither of those projects has had much activity in the past few years - I'd say they've withered and died.

So really, Visual Studio is the only viable option.

Many in the development community (including myself) complained vocally when Microsoft stopped providing a free solution for smart device development. Believe me, we sat in several closed rooms in Redmond and yelled at several people about this - and it was way back in the Studio '03 days that we started yelling. The standard response was that the development side (whom we talked to) don't handle the business side (of pricing, SKU features, etc). Unfortunately I understand that, and I believe they were telling the truth.

To make matters worse, Microsoft made the unbelievable stupid decision that in VS '08 they'd not just require Standard (like they did in VS05) but they move it back to a Professional and better SKU feature again (where it was in '03) and thereby increase the cost to do development.

So what's your recourse? I'd recommend that if you can't afford the license, then look around for programs and offers that might give it. There was a time when Microsoft provided "driver developers" a free copy if they promised

to develop and sell a driver within a year. I don't think they ever checked to see that you actually did (and if they did, creating a driver that does very little is only a couple hour task). If you're a student try to get a student discount. If you play with hardware, look for a kit that comes with VS. If you have any contact with any Microsoft reps at work, complain about this feature lack. Even if it's to the Office rep.

Edit: Just FYI, I ran it up the flagpole again this morning with the Visual Studio for Devices team telling them to tell their managers to think about a free option under VS 10. No idea if it will help or change things, but I've already seen another half dozen people jump in and agree with me, so there's certainly support and pressure for the idea from the outside.

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edited Jan 16, 2009 at 19:18

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answered Jan 16, 2009 at 16:16



ctacke

67.2k ● 20 ● 98 ● 155

-
- 2 I mean, the iPhone is already on track to **murder** WM flat dead, and discouraging app development like this is only going to propel the OS grave-wise ever faster. – [Coderer](#)
Jan 16, 2009 at 19:20

You're preaching to the choir. I've not agreed with a lot of their decisions of late. – [ctacke](#) Jan 16, 2009 at 20:57



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Here is an article about [Windows Mobile Development Without Visual Studio](#). It is only for Compact Framework development and it uses SharpDevelop as an IDE.

However, I don't know if is possible/legal to download and install Windows Mobile SDK without Visual Studio.



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answered Jan 16, 2009 at 16:06



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[kgiannakakis](#)

104k ● 28 ● 161 ● 197



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Some quick google research indicates that [SharpDevelop](#) has support for this, but it might be a bit buggy at the moment.



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answered Jan 16, 2009 at 16:10

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[Joel Coehoorn](#)

415k ● 114 ● 577 ● 813



0

Well, I think most have been said by the others however if you are prepared to spend a little, then Basic4PPC might be a good choice.



If I recall it's about \$50,00. Don't get fooled by the word BASIC - it's actually very powerful. It's based on the NET Framework and you can write programmes both for desktop and device. It even has an IDE which works on the device. You can find further information at [Basic4PPC](#). If you have a look at the forum as well, you



will find out that there are many users and the forum has a high activity which is very positive.

Finally, have a look at this [thread](#) over at XDA-developers. There you can find lots of goodies.

Good luck.

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answered Jan 16, 2009 at 20:28

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moster67

850 ● 4 ● 12 ● 31
