News

What's New In Delphi 6

Next month, we will have an in-depth review from Dave Jewell and Brian Long of the latest incarnation of our favourite development tool, but to keep you going, here's a summary of the new features and other details.

Interestingly, the official press release majors on the web capabilities of the new version: *'As the first RAD tool to help developers easily use and create industry standard Web Services, Delphi 6 enables the rapid development and deployment of applications using XML- and SOAP-based Web Services technologies.'* Of course, this is the kind of thing that Microsoft's Visual Studio .NET will be targeting too and when it says Web Services Borland does mean *'Web services for Microsoft .NET, Oracle .NOW and Sun One'*, according to Michael Swindell (Director of Product Management at Borland).

New in version 6 is BizSnap, a web services platform designed for building B2B integration components, making use of native XML and SOAP capabilities. Swindell commented *'This isn't just a set of classes that we've bolted on. We've gone down into the compiler...'* BizSnap also will natively support WSDL and XSL web services protocols, as well as DTDs and XML schemas. In addition to building standalone applications and services, BizSnap will allow multiple services to be aggregated into a single service or application, regardless of the source of those services.

Second in the 'snap' feature line is WebSnap, a web page designer that is intended to simplify building and debugging web applications, bringing web development to a greater audience (including non-technical web designers). VBScript and JavaScript functions are separated from the interface design. The look and feel can be amended by designers through Surface Designer, a new HTML/JavaScript module that can integrate with either Macromedia's Dreamweaver or Microsoft's FrontPage.

Server-side scripting support in WebSnap includes ActiveScript and JavaScript now, with Perl, Python and others to be added later. An integrated web server will save time and make web application development easier.

The MIDAS middleware will be replaced by DataSnap, a web services-enabled middleware environment for building database access. This is intended to allow developers to build middleware for accessing databases and to work with applications through SOAP/XML, TCP/IP, DCOM and
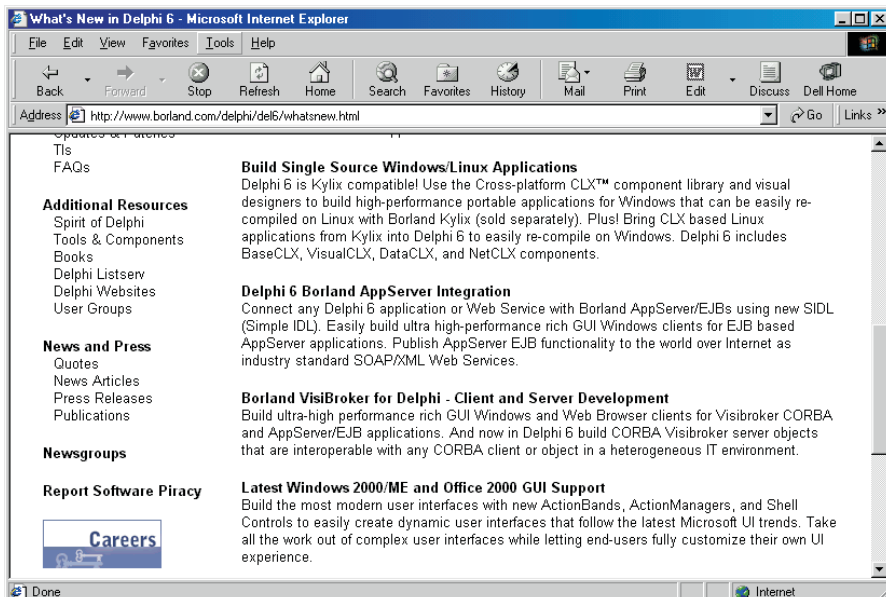
From The Editor...

So, now that the dust has settled a little after the Kylix launch, how are things going for Kylix and what are our plans?

We had to schedule in our Kylix coverage for *The Delphi Magazine* well before the product was available, with no real idea of how popular Kylix would be. Borland of course was hoping for big sales. We tried to keep an ear to the ground and gauge the demand for Kylix material in the magazine. Now, although I haven't seen any sales figures, my impression is that Kylix sales have not been anything like as big as Borland had hoped, so far. The price levels seem to have put off a significant number of developers, unsurprisingly. Dave Jewell (our Technical Editor) and I have been reviewing the demand for Kylix material and considering what level it should be at in order to reflect the real interest in Kylix amongst our readers. We have concluded that this will be a lower level than we'd originally planned for.

So, from the July issue onwards, we're going to scale back our Kylix coverage a bit and see how things go. Our goal is to provide what our readers want: it's a continual juggling act and we depend on feedback from you, so please do drop me an email and let me know what you think. If you are actively using Kylix (especially on commercial projects rather than in-house testing) we want to hear from you! If you **do** want more Kylix material, let us know!

Chris Frizelle, Editor (chrisf@itecuk.com)

➤ *More details of what's new in Delphi 6. For a full feature matrix in PDF format, visit www.borland.com/delphi.*

CORBA. It will enable developers to build MIDAS-compatible n-tier middleware services supporting GUI, browser and web services clients, with client connection pooling capabilities. Databases supported in the initial release include Oracle, SQL Server, Informix, IBM DB2, Sybase and InterBase.

Finally, Delphi 6 also includes the CLX component library that will from now on be common to both Delphi and Kylix, as well as the good old VCL of course. Support for CLX in Delphi will allow developers to build single-source applications for both Windows and Linux.

There will be three editions of Delphi 6: Enterprise, Professional and Personal. UK pricing is as follows (check with your dealer for possible discounts):
➢ Delphi 6 Enterprise Edition: Full System £1,999; upgrade £1,379 (includes £40 coupon for redemption on registration)
➢ Delphi 6 Professional Edition: Full System £699; upgrade £269 (includes £20 coupon for redemption on registration)
➢ Delphi 6 Personal Edition: £79
Hmm, I see the bean-counters have been hiking the prices again, which will not go down too well at the

sharp end (didn't they learn the lesson from Kylix?).

First impressions are that if you don't develop for the web then there's perhaps not a lot here that's new or noteworthy. Don't miss the in-depth review from Dave Jewell and Brian Long in next month's issue, though.

Dr.Bob's Delphi 6 Clinic

Bob Swart's first Clinic on the new features in Delphi 6 will be taking place on Friday June 22nd in Eindhoven, The Netherlands.

Topics include (but are not limited to): dbExpress, DataSnap, WebSnap, BizSnap and all the other new additions and features in Delphi 6 Professional and Enterprise. Visit www.drbob42.nl for more information.

Greatis Form Skin

New from Greatis Software, these components allow developers to create 'skinned' windows with bitmap backgrounds, transparent areas and of an arbitrary shape.

Features include simple control of caption and borders, transparency, auto-sizing, moving of the window using the client area for non-caption forms, plus definition of any form areas as system areas (caption, caption buttons, resize borders, etc). Visit www.greatis. com for a pre-compiled demo, documentation in PDF format and trial versions of the components. Form Skin costs $29.95.

Greatis Print Suite

Also just out from Greatis Software, this component suite provides print and preview features, including: multipage printing control and print preview (with optional toolbar, statusbar and scaling control). The Pro version includes components to print grids, databases and tables with many abstract classes to create custom print jobs.

Visit www.greatis.com for a pre-compiled demo, documentation in PDF format and trial versions of the components, which cost $29.95 to $39.95.

AQTime 2.0

AutomatedQA has released a new version of its software testing tool, formerly known as Qtime. It includes all the functionality of MemProof, and automatically integrates five profilers into AQtest.

Visit www.automatedqa.com for more details and pricing.

Windows XP
To Launch October 25th

Microsoft has announced it will launch Windows XP on Thursday, October 25th 2001. Any bets on whether it will make that date for *shipping* the code?

The new version is built on an enhanced Windows 2000 engine and (it says here…) 'enables exciting experiences'. There are two editions: Home and Professional. Steve Ballmer, CEO at Microsoft, said 'Windows XP will be the highest-quality Microsoft operating system ever.'

So hold onto your hats: Dave Jewell will be spilling the beans on what's in XP for us grubby-handed developers (hopefully next month, God and Bill Gates willing).

MySQLDAC:
Direct Access To MySQL

New from MicroOLAP Technologies, MySQLDAC (MySQL Direct Access Components) is a library of native VCL components for direct access to the MySQL database server: a very popular and powerful freeware product which is almost universal on Linux web servers.

Neither the BDE nor ODBC is required, which means developers can build easily distributable thin client applications. It supports all MySQL-specific features (such as show, transaction, ping, kill process, check and repair table) and also simplifies development of client/server applications. There are flexible and easy automatic insert, update, delete and refresh capabilities, support of BLOB fields, faster fetching of records from the database and more.

MySQLDAC supports MySQL 3.23.xx stable versions for all existing platforms and works with Delphi versions 4 and 5. A single user licence costs $49.95, or $79.95 with source.

Visit www.microolap.com for more information and to download a free trial version.

ESS-Model
New from Eldean AB, ESS-Model allows reverse engineering of Delphi, Kylix and Java applications. The goal is to determine the object design, or how classes are inter-related, in existing projects, by analysing the source code and displaying it in the form of UML standard static class diagrams.

ESS-Model costs $49, but you can visit www.eldean.se/essmodel for a free trial version to experiment with.

ThinkSQL For Linux
A preview release of this RDBMS which has been written entirely in Delphi/Kylix is now available at www.thinksql.co.uk for free download. It also includes a native dbExpress driver.

The ultimate aim is to bring the server as close as possible to full compliance with the ISO SQL standard. Feedback from Kylix and Delphi users is welcomed by the developers.

Aladdin Launches Cross-Platform USB Key
Aladdin Knowledge Systems has released the HASP4 USB software protection key, which is designed to protect applications on PC, Linux and Mac environments from unauthorised copying or use.

HASP4 allows features such as time limited demos, concurrent or floating licences and remote updating of software modules to be incorporated into applications, as well as including on-chip encryption, an advanced Envelope Utility, and a remote updating system with full 32-bit Windows API integration.

Visit www.ealaddin.com for more information.

UDDI Business Registry Goes Live
The Universal Description, Discovery and Integration (UDDI) project today announced that its global Business Registry is fully operational, marking the successful completion of live beta testing.

Now supporting production-class operations, the UDDI Public Business Registry is a cornerstone of web services architecture because it enables businesses to register and discover web services via the internet. The UDDI project has expanded from an initial 36 companies in September 2000 to more than 260 community members today.

The UDDI Business Registry is a global, public, online directory which uses XML to give businesses a uniform way to describe their services, discover other companies' services, and understand the methods necessary to conduct e-business with a particular company. UDDI is committed to the acceleration and broadening of B2B integration and commerce through the internet.

The UDDI Community expects to turn the UDDI specification over to a standards organisation after the

next two versions are released. More information about the UDDI project can be obtained at www.uddi.org.

Hewlett-Packard has also recently signed an agreement to become a UDDI Business Registry operator, along with IBM and Microsoft. The existence of multiple operators helps ensure that global registry information is always available and accessible to all users everywhere, say the organisers. Hewlett-Packard expects to go live as an operator by the end of the year.

Chant SpeechKit 3.0
Develop software that speaks and listens, says Chant, with this component suite which allows you to integrate speech technology and deploy speech-aware applications.

Delphi is amongst the many development tools supported by the Chant SpeechKit 3.0, which is available now in the UK from Grey Matter at £280 plus VAT: visit www. greymatter.co.uk for more details.