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1. Included Files

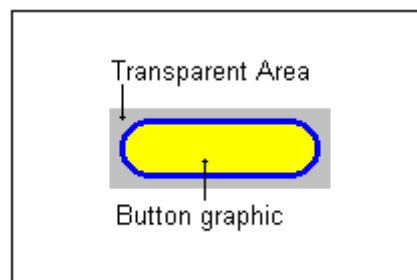
README.WRI	This file
SHAPEBUT.DCU	Delphi component
SHAPEBUT.DCR	Component resource file
SBDEMO.DPR	
SBDEMO1.DFM	
SBDEMO1.PAS	Sample program

2. Overview

Tired of rectangular Buttons? Brush up your user-interface by creating your own buttons with this Delphi component: ShapeButton creates a three-dimensional button out of any bitmap-graphic. It doesn't simply put a glyph on a standard button but creates a bevel at the outside contour of your specific bitmap. A special feature is the possibility to define a semi-transparent area on the button, that gives this area the look of opalescent glass. The sample application SBDEMO shows the different features of this component.

3. Creating a button

The button-picture can be created with any bitmap editor in the following way:



Every button must have a transparent area outside the button graphic, that must be filled with a specific color (non-white!), that doesn't appear in the button graphic itself. The program assumes the color of the upper left pixel to be the transparent color. Placed in your application, ShapeButton will show no reaction if you click on the transparent area, only with a mouseclick on the button graphic you can press it down. As the program creates a bevel outside the button graphic, there must be at least 3 pixels between the button graphic and the image borders, it doesn't matter if there is more space in between.

In the object inspector, one specific color can be defined as 'semi-transparent'. By doing so, this color will be replaced by a bitmap pattern that acts like opalescent glass.

The sample program SBDEMO shows the semi-transparent feature with the button shown above. The color 'clYellow' is used for this purpose.

4. Using ShapeButton in Delphi

After the installation of ShapeButton, you will have a new entry in your component palette: 'Buttons'.

The special properties of ShapeButton are:

BevelWidth: width of the bevel in pixels (1 or 2), please set this value before you load a button graphic, for it takes a few moments to create the up- and down-pictures.

Picture: the button-picture (see description above); after loading the bitmap, two other bitmaps (the up- and down-pictures) are created automatically, this process can take a few moments.

PictureDown, PictureUp: these pictures are created automatically when the property picture is set or changes are made to BevelWidth, SemiTransparent or SemiTransparentColor. In all standard cases, these properties don't have to be set or changed. By publishing them, you have the possibility to make changes to them if it ever should be necessary.

SemiTransparent: boolean value, set it to true, if you want to work with semi-transparent areas.

SemiTransparentColor: specifies the color in the button graphic, that should be drawn semi-transparent. To save time, set this property first, then switch the property SemiTransparent to 'true'.

5. Registering ShapeButton

ShapeButton is Shareware. The unregistered version displays a copyright notice if you run your application outside the Delphi IDE every time a ShapeButton is created. You can register ShapeButton in the SWREG forum of CompuServe, the Registration ID is 9257. The registration fee is U\$25.00. After registering, you will receive a version of ShapeButton via E-mail, that doesn't display the copyright notice.

6. Limited warranty and disclaimer of warranty

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such damages.

By using ShapeButton you acknowledge that you have read this limited warranty, understand it, and agree to be bound by its' terms and conditions.