

ClassMaster by David E. Whitney

Beta Release 1.1 - 11/15/95

ClassMaster is a Visual Basic 4.0 add-in that is designed to aid the developer in the creation of Visual Basic classes. This beta version provides very basic functionality, and is released as shareware. Full registration of ClassMaster, upon release of the final product, will be \$20. If you will register your name and email address as a beta tester, you may procure a full release of the final version for only \$15.

Target platforms

ClassMaster should work with no problem under either version of Visual Basic 4.0 (16-bit or 32-bit), and on any attendant Windows operating system platform (Windows 3.1x, Windows NT 3.5, and Windows 95). However, extensive testing has not been conducted on each of these platforms. That's one of the big reasons why this product has been released as a beta this time around.

If you are using VB 4.0 for 16-bit development, use CLASS16.EXE. For 32-bit Visual Basic 4.0 development, use CLASS32.EXE. This should go without saying, but just to be complete, ClassMaster cannot be used in any way with Visual Basic 3.0. VB 3.0 does not support classes nor add-ins.

Intent

Classes are not new, but they are new to many Visual Basic developers. This tool was designed primarily with simplicity in mind; that is, to allow basic definition of member variables, establish some fundamental naming conventions, create default Property procedures for each member variable, and generate the .CLS file that is then incorporated into the project.

There is no question that there are numerous other capabilities that are candidate for incorporation into a VB class development tool. Rather than try to "outguess" the number of VB developers that might be interested in ClassMaster and provide too many features, I opted to encourage feedback on the part of beta testers that download and use the tool.

This beta is primarily a "refresh" update that includes a few visible changes, some internal changes, and hopefully a "smoothing of the edges" in various areas. I have some specific plans ahead for ClassMaster, drawn from the suggestions of beta testers. Many, many thanks for the time, comments, and (yes) praise for the first release. I hope to continue improving it to the benefit of all VB developers as time progresses. The next beta release will be a more comprehensive update.

Feedback

Please email all bug reports, comments, and suggestions for improvements to **intrepid@ionet.net**. Tell me what you like, what you don't like, and for that matter, if you think the tool is worth a \$20 shareware fee. If you're feeling particularly generous, and would like to send the registration fee with the beta test, you may send a check or money order, payable in US funds, to the following address:

David Whitney
Attn: ClassMaster Registration
9101 Southlake Drive
Oklahoma City, OK 73159-6721

Make all checks payable to David Whitney.

The schedule for release of a final version of ClassMaster is directly dependent upon bug reports and suggested improvements. The final version will include an improved help file, (the one included now is only adequate) and certainly more features.

Update History

10-26-95 Original Beta 1.0 release.
11-15-95 Beta 1.1 release. Items changed in this release include:

Updated installation instructions. A user must run ClassMaster once with the /REGSERVER command-line switch to register the add-in with the Windows OLE registry. It must be run a second time with no switches in order to insert itself into the VB.INI file. This issue is a prime candidate to be resolved in the setup program that will accompany the final version of ClassMaster.

Main window changes. The VB ClassMaster dialog now incorporates the name of the current class in the title bar, not in a separate text box on the form. The dialog has also been reduced in size per request from developers who found it to be a little too large for comfort on lower resolutions.

Member definition window now "sticky." The member definition window now remains open with an "Add Now" button to allow the developer to define multiple class members without re-opening the Add Member dialog each time.

Minor interface refinements. Tab ordering on some forms was incorrect. This has been updated.

Addition of Date type for member variables.

Terminology consistent. Different words and phrases were used to describe common items within ClassMaster. This has been changed.

Bug fixes. If a user defined a class, made changes, then attempted to define a new class, then cancelled, ClassMaster would crash quite ungracefully. This has been fixed. Also, menu selections were not working properly.

Problems still under review, but not fixed in this Beta:

Help file problems not resolved. CLASSMAS.HLP must reside in \WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory for now. Note that changes in this Beta are not yet reflected in the Help file, although few (if any) conflicts should arise.

'Delete Member' button not yet implemented. Best way to implement this internally has not yet been determined.

Installation

Installation of ClassMaster is simple:

1. Copy the appropriate .EXE file, CLASS32.EXE or CLASS16.EXE, to any directory on your hard drive. (**Note:** If you are updating from Beta 1.0 of ClassMaster, be sure to remove it from your

Windows OLE Registry by typing CLASSxx.EXE /UNREGSERVER *before* copying the updated version over it.)

2. From a DOS window, (or NT Command Prompt) type CLASS32 /REGSERVER (or CLASS16 /REGSERVER). This will register the add-in in the Windows OLE registry.

3. After #2, run the add-in once with no /REGSERVER. This will register ClassMaster in your VB.INI file.

The next time you start Visual Basic, go to the Add-in menu, select the Add-in Manager, and a list of available add-ins will be displayed. VB Classmaster should appear; click the checkbox to incorporate it into the VB IDE.

ClassMaster will now appear as another item under the Add-in menu. The ClassMaster main dialog pops up, from which you may create your classes. Be sure to copy the help file, CLASSMAS.HLP, to the \WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory. (Yes, this is a lousy place for it, but this will be resolved in the final release.)

The help file contains references to all elements within ClassMaster, and hopefully provides the right amount of information to guide you along the way in developing your classes. You may press F1 at any time while ClassMaster is active to open the ClassMaster help file.

You may also run ClassMaster from the command line by supplying "/D" as a command-line switch. Obviously, the ability of ClassMaster to move a created class into an active VB project will not be available.

Plans for ClassMaster

Several good responses and suggestions have been received for ClassMaster. Here are the plans for ClassMaster's near future:

1. Full setup program.
2. Automatic creation of Collection class for each defined class.
3. Generation of .Clone method to create a duplicate of a class instance.
4. Elimination of "Let/Get/Set" Property verbs; rework such that all such functions refer to the property itself.
5. Change "param" generic parameter name in Property procedures to type-proper syntax.

Conclusion

Thank you for taking the time to download ClassMaster. I hope you find it to be of use in your development efforts. Please let me know how it can be made better!

Check for updates and other ClassMaster information at <http://www.ionet.net/~intrepid>

Notes

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