About VBMax

VBMax—Visual Basic to the Max

Visual Basic is no longer just for prototypes. VB has evolved into a rich and powerful language and continues to go from strength to strength with each release. With version 4.0, VB makes it possible to write VB add-ins and both in-process and out-of-process OLE servers without even breaking a sweat.

Whether they realize it or not, this is a major leap forward for VB programmers. My belief is the technology will continue to advance and that using VB to develop software components instead of C, C++ or Pascal is going to be the way of the future. **Microsoft has announced already that the next release of VB will be able to create ActiveX controls**.

VBMax programming components herald the dawn of this new era. Written *by* a VB developer *for* VB developers, VBMax add-ins and DLLs are comprised entirely of VB 4 code without any help from third-party controls. Hence the name VBMax—it means 'Visual Basic to the Max'.

My goal is to provide high-quality Visual Basic products at an affordable price.   Also, registered users receive the complete, commented source code so that they can see how it works and can even change it to suit their own preferences if they so desire.

Key Benefits
- Less overhead than third-party controls.
- Objects can be used in servers or incorporated directly into applications.
- VB source-code provided.
- Saves hours of coding.
- Inexpensive.
- No royalties.
- No need to continually buy upgrades with each new release of VB.

Contact Information
Postal address: 25 Lansdowne Street, Manchester, NH 03103, USA
Electronic mail: 74632.2227@compuserve.com
Web Site: http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/vbmax

VBMax Message Box Wizard

Description

With all those options and new constants, do you ever forget the exact syntax for creating a message box? Me too. There are plenty of utilities on the market to help you create message boxes, both commercial and shareware. But have you tried any of them?

I did, and was so disappointed by what I found that I wrote my own. I called it VBMax Message Box Wizard. It is a VB 4.0 add-in that greatly simplifies the process of coding message boxes.

When you reach a point in your code where you want to display a message box, select the VBMax Message Box Wizard from the VB Add-Ins menu and type in your message. Click a control or two and you're done—the generated code is written into your source file.

There are several configuration options and shortcuts you can use to tailor the utility to your own style of working. If they are not enough, you also get the fully-commented source code which you can tweak any way you want. The code is up to date with new VB 4.0 features such as class modules, predefined constants and use of the registry.

As with all VBMax products, the Message Box Wizard is written entirely in VB and uses no third-party controls. With that in mind, check out the icon selection bar in Step 1 and the spin button on the Options dialog—they work with the keyboard too and adapt themselves to changes in the Windows color scheme.

Price: $10

Registration

This is a shareware utility which you can register for US $10 per copy.

You can register using any of the following methods:

• CompuServe's Shareware Registration facility. For more information, sign on to CompuServe and **GO SWREG**. The SWReg ID is **12766**.
• Sending payment to:
  Mike Stanley
  25 Lansdowne Street
  Manchester
  NH 03103

USA

• You can use your Visa, MasterCard or American Express credit cards. See *Credit Card Registration* below.

In return, I will give you an encryption key which will unlock the source code from the file 'VB Source Code.grk'— *don't forget to include your Internet e-mail address*. Better still, also send me an e-mail to let me know that your registration is on the way.

Any future updates to the software will use the same encryption key, so you can always get them at no additional cost.

If you don't have an e-mail address, you can receive the registration ID and encryption key via snail-mail by sending me a postage-paid self-addressed envelope.

Credit Card Registration

There are two methods of registering by credit card:

• On-line registration. Visit my web site **http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/vbmax** and click on the **Registration** link for more information.
OR
• Cut and paste the following text into an e-mail message, fill in the blanks and send it to Mike Stanley at **74632.2227@compuserve.com**:

Snip --

Name:
Company:
Address:
Address:
Town/City:
State/Province:
Postal Code:
Country:
E-mail:
Credit Card Type:

[ ] Visa
[ ] MasterCard
[ ] American Express

Credit Card Number:
Credit Card Name:
Expiration Date (Month/Year):

[ ] VBMax Message Box Wizard $10.00
[ ] VBMax 3D Effects $10.00
[ ] VBMax Liquid Crystal Display $10.00
[ ] VBMax Electronic Message Display $10.00

Total: $

Snip --

Important—Use at Your Own Risk!

While every effort has been made to ensure a reliable, high-quality product, you should note that this software is provided 'as is' without any kind of warranty whatsoever, neither explicit nor implied.

In order to use this software, you must agree 100% that I will not be held liable in any way, shape or form (not even a little bit) for anything untoward that befalls anyone or anything, either directly or indirectly, as a result of using this software no matter how calamitous, disastrous or inauspicious the occasion may be.

Your use of this software constitutes acceptance of these terms.

Installation

Copy the files to a folder of your choice and run Reg.bat which will update the Windows registry so that it knows about the Message Box Wizard.

From VB, select the Add-Ins menu option and then select Add-In Manager...

From the list of available add-ins, select VBMax Message Box Wizard, press OK and the a new menu entry will be added to VB.

The new menu entry will be present every time you start VB until you choose to remove it using the add-in manager.

Gronked Files

These are encrypted files created using the **VBMax Gronk Meister** that contain one or more other files.   In this case, the file 'VB Source Code.grk' contains the complete, commented VB 4.0 source code for the Message Box Wizard.

The source files may be extracted using the included **VBMax Degronker** utility.   Before you can do that, however, you need to know the encryption key.   This key will be given to you when you register the software.

Packing List

ReadMe.rtf (+bmps)	-	The document you are reading.
VBMax Message Box Wizard.exe	-	Evaluation copy of the message box wizard add-in.
Reg.bat	-	Registers the add-in with Windows.
Unreg.bat	-	Unregisters the add-in with Windows.
VB Source Code.grk	-	Source code for the add-in in gronked format.
Degronker.exe	-	Utility to extract the source code from the gronked file.

Technical Support

Technical support is available to both registered and unregistered users by *e-mail* only.

Please send questions, comments, criticisms, etc. to Mike Stanley at **74632.2227@compuserve.com**.

Other Products and Services

Windows 95 gave us a snazzy, new and improved three-dimensional user interface. VB 4.0 adds the 3D look to our forms automatically. That's a great feature—as far as it goes. Unfortunately, some 3D effects are still difficult to achieve without using a third-party control.

Have no fear—VBMax is here. VBMax3D.dll is an in-process OLE server that lets you add the 3D effects that Microsoft forgot to your VB 4 applications—without the overhead of third-party controls.
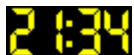
VBMax3D.dll contains methods and properties for creating:

- Panels
- Borders
- Frames
- Lines
- Drop shadows
- Status bars
- Progress meters
- A variety of text effects

Wait, there's more! With the release of Windows 95, 3D doesn't just mean shades of gray anymore. VBMax3D.dll understands this and uses the Windows 95 color scheme settings to create the 3D effects.

Price: $10

VBMax Liquid Crystal Display

Want to add LCD/LED style controls to your applications? Now you can with VBMaxLCD.dll.

VBMaxLCD.dll is an in-process OLE server for adding LCD/LED style controls to your VB 4.0 applications. There are tons of uses for these babies: clocks, timers, meters, calculators, dialers—the list goes on.

VBMaxLCD.dll contains methods and properties for:
- Setting the digit and background colors
- Autosizing the display area
- Blinking colons
- Flashing digits
- Showing or hiding unlit segments
- Aligning digits left, right or centered

Price: $10

VBMax Electronic Message Display

Have you seen those electronic billboards that display messages using moving lights? Wouldn't it be cool to add one to your killer VB app? You can't do that in VB though. Right?

Wrong! VBMaxEM.dll handles the task with aplomb.

VBMaxEM.dll is an in-process OLE server for adding electronic message style controls to your VB 4.0 applications. It contains methods and properties for:
- Controlling static or scrolling displays
- Adjusting the speed
- Changing the foreground and background colors
- Showing or hiding the grid
- Handling callbacks
- *Dozens* of special effects

Price: $10

Murphy's Laws for Windows

It was Murphy who first observed that if anything can possibly go wrong, it will go wrong.

Deceptive in its simplicity, this profound insight marked a turning point in our understanding of why things happen the way they do.   Indelibly etching itself into the human psyche, this revelation ensured that never again would we look at the world in quite the same way.

Not content to rest on his laurels, Murphy went on to expand on his theory and formulate the now famous laws that bear his name.   Truly one of the great thinkers of our time, Murphy somehow managed to unravel the very fabric of the cosmos itself and lay bare the fundamental perversity with which it is woven.
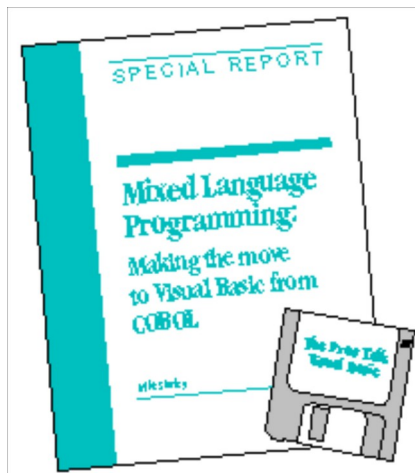
"Mother Nature is a bitch.", he said.

It was a defining moment in history and Murphy's accomplishments provided the foundation for a host of others who would follow in his giant footsteps. There will only ever be one Murphy but his successors have, nonetheless, made significant contributions to his work.

Murphy 96 is the embodiment of the collective consciousness of these intellects—a compilation of hundreds of laws, corollaries, axioms, rules, maxims and other truisms. Place Murphy 96 in your StartUp folder and it will present you with a different pearl of wisdom from Murphy and his cohorts every time you start Windows.

Murphy 96 is offered free, gratis and for nothing to all those who seek true enlightenment about that which we call reality.

Price: Free

Making the Move to Visual Basic 4 from COBOL

 From Pinnacle Publishing

Message to COBOL Programmers

This isn't just any old Visual Basic book. This one is written especially for you, the COBOL programmer, as you emerge into the strange, new world of personal computers, or PCs, about which you may know little. Whether you like it or not, the programming world as you know it is changing—and changing fast.

This book introduces you to programming Windows using the Visual Basic programming language, and, at the same time, explains why making the transition to VB is a good move and how to overcome the inevitable culture shock.

Using COBOL as a point of reference, I'll show you a different way of doing things, highlighting the differences and similarities between the two languages. As a COBOL programmer, you already know how to program, you just need to become familiar with a new environment and new tools. Wherever possible, I have tried to convey Windows and Visual Basic programming concepts in terms familiar to your COBOL experience.

This book wasn't written by an academic perched in a remote ivory tower, totally divorced from the real world with no concept about what it takes to program computers for a living. I am a working programmer with many years of COBOL programming experience. Now, as an independent consultant specializing in Visual Basic, I not only continue to find gainful employment but am enjoying the change enormously.

Although learning Visual Basic was a little strange at first, it was not hard work. On the contrary, it was fun. Visual Basic programming is fun, and if you can get paid for doing it, so much the better. If you enjoy

programming, you'll love Visual Basic.   It offers many more possibilities and opportunities than you will ever find with COBOL.

If I can make the transition, so can you.

Services

Software Development

I provide Visual Basic software development services in the Southern New Hampshire/Northern Massachusetts area and also areas further afield for those willing to let me telecommute.

The Message Box Wizard add-in which this document accompanies is an example of my work.   For more examples, download some of the other software described here.   See VBMax Electronic Display, VBMax Liquid Crystal Display and VBMax 3D Effects.

About Mike Stanley

Although now specializing in VB software development, I am no newbie to the business. I have extensive experience working on mainframes, minis and PCs. I have a strong database background and have designed and developed many business applications using hierarchical (IMS), network (IDMS) and relational (DB2, SQL Server) databases.

I have been programming in Visual Basic ever since version 1.0 was released and have written articles for *Visual Basic Programmer's Journal* and *VB Tech Journal*.   I also authored the book *Making the Move to Visual Basic 4 from COBOL* from Pinnacle Publishing, Inc.

My client-server experience is with VB and MS SQL Server, currently using Remote Data Objects (RDO).   I also speak COBOL, CICS and DB2.

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