Overview

What It Does

Resource Assistant™ for VB allows you to check for common resource problems in a Visual Basic form or collection of forms. Such resource problems include spelling errors, controls that are too small to display in all video modes, forms that are too large to display in all video modes, questionable control orders, and duplicate access keys.

When To Use It

Being able to check for such resource problems makes Resource Assistant for VB valuable when performing quality assurance on a Visual Basic program. You should always run Resource Assistant for VB as a quick resource check before shipping your software.

How To Use It

To check the resources of a form file, open the file using either the **Open File** or **Open Folder** command. All resource checks are performed by default, but you can select which checks are performed with the **Options** command.

Note that Resource Assistant for VB does not check for spelling errors directly. Rather, it extracts all the strings from string resources, forms, and menus, and allows you to paste the strings into your favorite word processor to check for errors. You can copy the resource strings using the **Copy Strings to Clipboard** command.

Quick Tips

This section presents a few quick tips that will help you get the most out of Resource Assistant for VB.

General Usage

You will get the best results from Resource Assistant for VB if you use it at the beginning and the end of your QA process. You should never use Resource Assistant for VB as the sole means for finding resource problems.

Note that while Resource Assistant for VB does a good job of finding typical resource problems, it is neither foolproof nor exhaustive. It is not able to determine exact dialog box control, and text sizes in standard VGA mode (which at 640x480 is assumed to be the most troublesome video mode), so it has to estimate the sizes (although it is usually accurate to within a couple pixels.) It checks only a subset of the basic Windows controls, specifically static text, command buttons, radio buttons, check boxes, and frames. If your program sets these controls to use fonts other than what was specified in the form then the estimated text sizes will be wrong. If your program changes dialog sizes at runtime then the dialog size estimates will be wrong. Furthermore, the algorithm used to check tab order is based on patterns of typical dialog boxes. Your dialog boxes may be different.

Despite its limitations, Resource Assistant can make your testing process far more productive when used properly. Consider it to be a supplement to the QA process, not a replacement for QA.

Development Advice

Our tests show that control text is most likely to be chopped off due to improper control sizes in a small fonts video mode. Therefore, **you are less likely to have control size problems if you create and test your dialog boxes in a small fonts video mode**.

Furthermore, there is no reliable way to determine if a small fonts or large fonts video mode is used, so Resource Assistant for VB assumes small fonts. The **Report Large Dialog Boxes in Large Font Mode** option allows you to check for problems in a large fonts video mode while running in a small fonts video mode. Unfortunately, text size calculations are incorrect when Resource Assistant for VB is run in a large fonts video mode, so **you must run Resource Assistant using a small fonts video mode for accurate results**.

Opening Files

You can select a file or a group of files using the **Open File** command. If you want to open all the form files in a folder, you may find it easier to use the **Open Folder** command, which opens all the form files in the folder, but not the files in any of its subfolders. You can also open files and folders using drag and drop from the Windows Explorer.

Checking Spelling

Resource Assistant for VB does not check for spelling errors directly. Rather, it extracts all the strings from string resources, forms, and menus, and allows you to paste the strings into your favorite word processor to check for errors. You can copy the resource strings using the **Copy Strings to Clipboard** command.

Checking Large Forms

Resource Assistant for VB verifies that the forms will fit on the screen in standard VGA mode. Note that since Windows 95 and Windows NT 4.0 both provide a taskbar, the height of the taskbar is subtracted from the 480 vertical pixels. This assumes that the user has the taskbar on the bottom (or top) of the screen, which is usually the case.

Checking Small Controls

Resource Assistant for VB verifies that Visual Basic labels, command buttons, check boxes, option buttons, and frames are large enough to display their text in all video modes. It does not check ActiveX controls. Note that if a control size is too small, the last words are not displayed since they are "wrapped" to the next line, making them invisible. Again, note that the text sizes are estimates, so you should not use Resource Assistant for VB as your only method of checking control sizes.

Resource Assistant for VB assumes that any label with the **AutoSize** or **WordWrap** properties enabled will be able to display its text in all video modes. It may return an incorrect error if these properties are not set in the form but are set in a procedure.

Checking Control Tab Order

Resource Assistant for VB checks the placement of the controls in a form and reports the forms that appear to not have a correct tab order. Visual Basic uses the tab order to determine the behavior of the tab key. While it is impossible for Resource Assistant for VB to know for sure if the tab order is incorrect, it uses an algorithm that reports questionable tab order correctly most of the time.

Checking Duplication Access Keys

Resource Assistant for VB checks the form and menu resources for their access keys to make sure they are unique. Resource Assistant for VB also checks for multiple access keys for a single item.

Options Dialog Box

This dialog box gives you options to select what resource problems to check and other options that determine how problems are reported.

Resources Options

Report Large Forms
Verifies that the forms will fit on the screen in VGA mode.

Report Large Forms in Large Font Mode
Verifies that the forms will fit on the screen in VGA mode in large font mode.

Report Small Controls
Verifies that labels, command buttons, check boxes, option buttons, and frames are large enough to display their text correctly in all video modes.

Report Bad Control Tab Order
Verifies that the form controls appear to have a correct tab order.

Report Duplicate Form Access Keys
Verifies that the form text does not have duplicate or multiple access keys.

Report Duplicate Menu Access Keys
Verifies that the menu text does not have duplicate or multiple access keys.

Report Extracted Strings
Extracts all the strings from string resources, forms, and menus.

Output Options

Report No Problems Found
Reports if no problems are found.

Report Missing Resources
Reports if the resource type being checked is not found.

Contact Information

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Once your order is received, you will be given (preferably via e-mail) a registration number that matches your name (for a Personal Use License) or your company name (for a Site License). You should then enter the name and registration number using the **Perform Registration** command to register the program.

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Resource Assistant and Resource Assistant for VB

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