

News

Mobius Components

Mobius is a British company (well, Scottish really!) which has several sets of native Delphi Components in development. We've seen demos of them all and they are certainly impressive. We will be reviewing each product in detail just as soon as we can (hopefully in the next issue), but to give you a taster here's a rundown:

> **Mobius Business Builder**

A suite of standard tables, forms, reports and experts to use as building blocks in business applications. The table classes have standard business rules built into them, so they all 'know' how to work with each other and link automatically. Included classes are customer, sales & purchase orders, despatch notes, sales and purchasing invoices, statements, job costings, inventory, payments and departments/staff.

> **Mobius WinG Sprite Kit**

Just about the easiest way to get the incredible speed and power of WinG graphics in your Windows applications. Included are classes for a WinG surface, WinG sprite surface and sprites.

> **Mobius Draw Kit**

Provides a set of building blocks for developing drawing and image editing type applications with minimal coding. Features include a draw surface with undo/redo, file handling, toolboxes, printing, etc. A number of standard tools are included such as line, freehand pen, Bezier curve and so on.

By the time you read this, at least one of these products should be available in final release. Mobius is also running an early experience programme for those developers who can't wait to get their sticky paws on them!

Contact Mobius Limited in the UK at 10 Coates Gardens, Edinburgh EH12 5LB, Tel: +44 (0)131 467 3267. In the USA contact Mobius Limited at PO Box 259, Hershey, PA 17033.

Borland Wins Lotus Suit

It looks like Borland has finally won the 'look and feel' lawsuit brought by Lotus over the Quattro and Quattro Pro spreadsheets (now of course owned by Novell). The US Court of Appeals has reversed a District Court ruling against Borland.

All three judges held in favour of Borland, concluding "Because we hold that the Lotus menu command hierarchy is uncopyrightable subject matter, we further hold that Borland did not infringe the copyright by copying it."

Let's hope that this sees the end of these worthless lawsuits, which make lawyers very rich and bring no benefits to the software houses concerned or their users.

InfoPower

Woll2Woll Software has announced version 1.0 of InfoPower: a set of data-aware native Delphi Components designed for those developing database front-ends. Included are a Super Database Grid, Table Sort, Lookup Combobox, Advanced Filtering, Incremental Search, Auto-Expanding Memo, and a Table Lookup/Locate dialog.

The Super Database Grid can include check boxes, comboboxes etc, and allows multiple tables to be displayed in the same grid. The Lookup Combobox displays one or more columns of data in a drop-down listbox, with incremental search to allow easy locating of specific items. By using the Advanced Filtering component, you can limit the data displayed by any Delphi data-aware component to just what the user needs to see.

We look forward to bringing you more information on InfoPower in a future issue. The bad news is that InfoPower is not due to ship until 1st May. The good news, however, is that Woll2Woll are doing an introductory price of \$149 (\$50 off the normal price). Contact Woll2Woll by phone from inside the USA on 1 800 WOL2WOL, or from elsewhere on +1 408 293 9369, or alternatively by email at 76207.2541@compuserve.com

Delphi Developers' Group

A number of Delphi 'user groups' have sprung up very quickly and one which many of our readers will be interested in is the British *Delphi Developers' Group*. It provides a newsletter, regular meetings in various locations, a source for code libraries and tools, technical assistance by email or fax, a route for feedback to Borland, seminars and conferences, training and a developers list for those seeking contract help etc.

Meetings are held every other month and include an extended afternoon workshop, during which 'teasers' or practical Delphi problems are set for the members to resolve collectively. This is an interesting way of learning more about Delphi and stretching your programming muscles! After a refreshment break, in the evening regular or guest speakers discuss new developments, applications,

Delphi add-ons and utilities. The inaugural meetings held during March were very well attended and seemed to be appreciated by all.

Membership costs £100 plus VAT for one year. More details from Joanna Pooley, Delphi Developers' Group, 8 High Street, Upavon, Wiltshire SN9 6EA, United Kingdom, Tel: +44 (0)1980 630032, Fax: +44 (0)1980 630602, Email: 100016.355@compuserve.com

Do let us know details of any Delphi user groups you are aware of, anywhere in the world, so we can include the information in regular listings.

HighEdit Word Processing

From Heiler Software in Germany comes the High Edit fully programmable word processor, available either as a VBX or a DLL. It features a true WYSIWYG display which makes use of all available printer and TrueType fonts, font attribute

Looking For Information?

One of the great things about Delphi is its ability to use VBX custom controls (Version 1.0), as well as native Delphi components and DLL-based controls. There are, however, a large number of companies who market VBX and other controls and it can sometimes be difficult to get hold of the right information from the right source - for example on Delphi compatibility. There are two useful CompuServe fora which have been set up for vendors of Windows components/controls: COMPA and COMPB. Some of the companies involved are:

A&G Graphics (GO COMPA or GO SPEECH)
Aardvark Software, Inc. (GO COMPA or GO AARDVARK)
APEX Software Corporation (GO COMPA or GO APEX)
Avanti Software (GO COMPA or GO AVANTI)
Bennet Info Systems (GO COMPA or GO BTIS)
Crescent Software (GO COMPA or GO CRESCENT)
Desaware (GO COMPA or GO DESAWARE)
Foxhall Publishing (GO COMPA or GO VBZFORUM or GO FOXHALL)
ImageFX (GO COMPA or GO IMAGEFX)
London Software (GO COMPB)
Mabry Software (GO COMPA or GO MABRY)
Media Architects (GO COMPA or GO MEDARCH)
MicroHelp (GO COMPA or GO MICROHELP)
Sax Software (GO COMPA or GO SAXSOFT)
Sheridan Software Systems (GO COMPA or GO SHERIDAN)
Stylus Innovation (GO COMPA or GO STYLUS)
SuccessWare International (GO COMPB)
The Young Software Works (GO COMPB)
VideoSoft (GO COMPA or GO VIDEOSOFT)
Viewpoint Technologies (GO COMPB)
Teknowledge (GO COMPB)
VisualTools (GO COMPA or GO VISTOOLS)

Thanks to Robert Scoble of Fawcette Technical Publications for this information.

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One other feature which looks really useful is input fields, which promise to make things like form letters and mail-merge easier. Dear Heiler, can we have a native Delphi Component version please...?!

HighEdit is available in the United Kingdom from Bits Per Second at 14 Regent Hill, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 3ED, Tel: +44 (0)1273 727119, Fax: +44 (0)1273 731925.

Delphi Communications From TurboPower

As well as their Orpheus product, containing lots of native Delphi components (see the ad in this issue - to be reviewed soon!),

TurboPower from Colorado, USA, are working on Delphi components for their acclaimed Async Professional for Windows communications library (APRO). When they are ready, we understand the Delphi components will be downloadable from CompuServe or the TurboPower BBS for existing APRO users (you'll need APRO to use them). Fax support is also due to be added soon.

We understand TurboPower are also working on other exciting Delphi projects and we'll let you know more just as soon as we can. For details Tel: +1 719 260 9136, Fax: +1 719 260 7151, or email: 76004.2611@compuserve.com

Client/Server Load Testing

An important aspect of any development cycle has to be software testing, but how much does your new baby get really *stressed* before you ship it to the client?

Empower/CS from Performix is designed to capture and replay the activities of Client/Server applications running under Windows,

stressing a database server by running multiple scripts from one driver to simulate the load of multiple PCs. In this way you can test your application with an effective load of hundreds or thousands of users with just one machine. Response times are measured and logged for analysis. Sounds ideal for thoroughly testing your new Delphi C/S apps!

Contact Performix in the United Kingdom at The Atrium Court, Apex Plaza, Reading, Berkshire RG1 1AX, Tel: +44 (0)1734 795016, Fax: +44 (0)1734 795017, email: sach@performix.com. In the USA Performix Inc are at: 8200 Greensboro Drive, Suite 1475, McLean, Virginia 22102, Tel: +1 703 448 6606, Fax: +1 703 893 1939.

Information Please!

If you have products or services relevant to Delphi developers we want to hear about them! Send your information to us at the address on page 42 (or by fax or email), marked for the attention of the Editor.

AFD postcode

From AFD Computers comes a neat DLL-based package which all developers creating applications which capture addresses in the United Kingdom will find useful.

These screenshots demonstrate the postcode DLL in use in a simple Delphi example application. You just grab a Postcode from an edit box, as shown in the top screenshot, then make one call to the DLL, which returns the remainder of the address as shown in the bottom screenshot, plus the STD telephone area code as a bonus. All you then need to do is fill in the house number in the Street field and you have a complete address which the Royal Mail are guaranteed to like! In the example, which took me a few minutes to knock up, the call to the DLL is triggered by the user clicking the *Get address* button.

This tool is designed for developers' use and what makes it unique is the sensible pricing: between £75 and £15 per end-user (ie your client's users) for the software licence and an annual licence fee for the Postcode data which depends on the number of end users: for 1 user with no updates it's £55, but very good deals are available for site or company licences. Competing products are usually very much more expensive and out of the range of the small developer. The advantage for your users is that they save time and hence money when punching in address details.

Contact AFD Computers at 51 Meadowfoot Road, West Kilbride KA23 9BU, United Kingdom, Tel: +44 (0)1294 823221, Fax: +44 (0)1294 822905. An evaluation version (PCEVAL.EXE) can be downloaded from the CompuServe MS BASIC forum or from AFD's bulletin board on +44 (0)1294 829327 (to 19200 bps).

