Companion Disk…

A run-down of what's included on the free disk with this issue

With each issue of *The Delphi Magazine* we include a free companion disk, which includes all the source code and example files from the articles in that issue. Up till now we've also been including a selection of recent shareware and freeware releases relevant to Delphi developers, ably collated and tested for us by Mike Orriss. From this issue on, we've decided to have a change.

There is a vast, and constantly increasing, quantity of shareware and freeware components, libraries and utilities for Delphi developers. Unfortunately, much of this material is of decidedly mixed quality. Because of this, we asked Mike Orriss to test and collate the disk files for us and he has been doing a sterling job. However, the time that this has been taking has increased over the months, to the point where it is no longer practical for Mike. Also, there are now a number of sources of shareware and freeware material for Delphi developers. Notable amongst these are the UK Borland/Inprise User Group's DIL CD-ROMs, now issued quarterly (call +44 (0)1980 630032 for details), Torry's Delphi CD (visit www.torry.webnorth.com/cd/cd.htm) and you must check out the search engine for the Delphi Super Site at developers.href.com. And finally, ideally we'd need to check the provenance of all the files, which would take even more time.

So What Now?

We have decided to use the 'spare' space on future companion disks for trial editions of commercial software. This will ensure the quality of the material is high and also give you the opportunity to check out some great products. We'll also be using the space for some of our own material. If your company publishes commercial components or utilities for Delphi developers and you are interested in this opportunity, please contact the Editor, Chris Frizelle (see page 66 for contact information). We are making a nominal charge of £50 for this service.

On this issue's disk we are including a copy of NoteTree from Mike Orriss, which we're confident you will find tremendously useful.
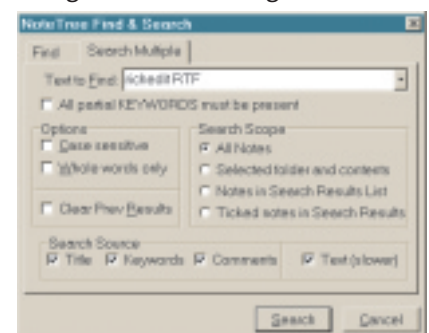
NoteTree

Mike Orriss describes his masterpiece

When I first started using Delphi and the Compuserve forum I soon realised there were many knowledgeable people, imparting words of wisdom that often went totally over my head (unfortunately the same can be said of the Inprise newsgroups now...). As I needed a practice project, I thought that building a knowledge database where I could store these items until I needed and/or understood them would kill two birds with one stone. Hence the production of DTopics, which grew to the extent that it was useful to others and so I uploaded it to the Delphi forum library, where there have been over 5,000 downloads.

By the time Delphi 3 came along, DTopics' user interface was looking decidedly dated: the time had come for a replacement. Also, over the years I had tried and discarded every program I could find that would allow me to store information snippets in a way that I could easily find them again. So NoteTree was designed to satisfy both objectives. As a DTopics replacement it offers a free browser for a knowledgebase of Delphi lore. As

an organiser it offers a shareware snippets manager, suited to many uses.

Facilities

NoteTree stores a hierarchy of rich text notes compressed within an OLE2 structured library. The notes are displayed via synchronised tree and listviews with rich text edit windows (Figure 2). At first sight, this screen may be a bit overwhelming and so the application supports five feature levels, from Basic to Wizard (Figure 3 shows the Basic level).

Features are many, but here's a sprinkling. NoteTree offers full persistence: when you re-open the program, all the notes are as you left them. There's an extensive Preferences dialog, plus import and export between NoteTree files and import of files from Explorer. Embedded links allow switching to another note, execution of an external program, launching of a URL and mailto. The alias manager allows several references to be stored for a single note. There are comprehensive search facilities (Figure 1) and all the expected editing functions.

Delphi Support

If you run NoteTree at the Wizard feature level, you will see an IDE entry on the main menu. If you select Delphi 3 from this, NoteTree will open (or create) an appropriate NoteTree file as you switch projects. The files are placed in the
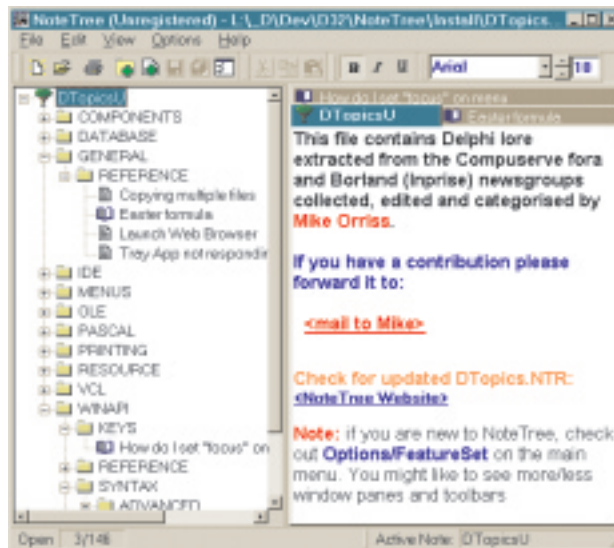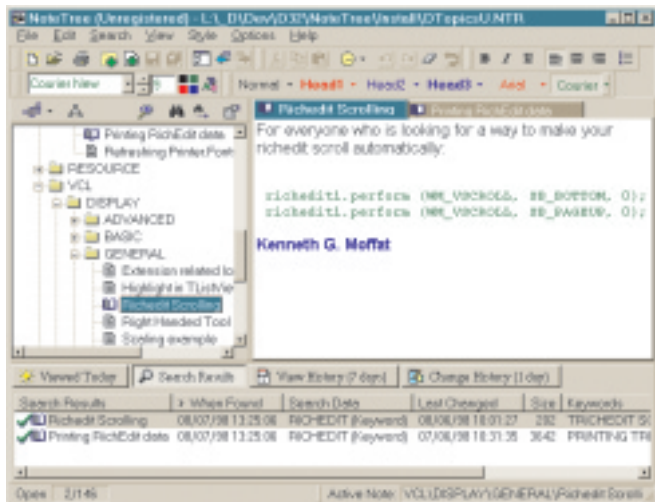
➤ *Figure 1: Searching.*

project directory with the project name (extension .NTR). You can then add notes to your heart's content! Soon there will be more project-based facilities and also support for Delphi 4 and other Inprise IDEs.

On The Disk
Two files are included. NoteTree.Zip should be unzipped to a new directory and the application can then be run. The NoteTree.NTR file serves as an example of its facilities as well as describing changes since the help file. DTopicsU.Zip contains DtopicsU.NTR

➤ *Below: Figure 2, NoteTree user interface*
➤ *Right: Figure 3, Basic feature level*

with 85 items that have been compiled since the DTopics data was last published (the base DTopics.Zip file is on the NoteTree website at www.3kcc.co.uk). From the website you can also sign up to the NoteTree mailing list: news flashes are sent to members as new builds are available or DTopics upgrades are uploaded.

Registration
NoteTree is a shareware program. The only drawback to the unregistered version on the disk is the intermittent nag screen that only occurs when you update notes. Registration costs just US$29.99 and can be done online at www.3kcc.co.uk