
Subject: Re: Chance for a Million!

Posted by [JD Smith](#) on Mon, 06 Jan 2003 23:35:58 GMT

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On Sun, 05 Jan 2003 21:29:14 -0700, David Fanning wrote:

> Hi Folks,

>

> It is a well-known fact that independent IDL consultants don't eat all
> that well at *any* time of the year, but they pretty much starve for the
> two weeks around Christmas as their faithful customers abandon them to
> head off to climates warmer or colder than here for some well-deserved
> time off.

>

> Normally, it's not a problem. I'm only too happy to join them somewhere
> warm where we can play tennis, or somewhere cold where we can ski, but
> this year... well, let's just say even the spiked eggnog didn't offer
> much holiday cheer. :-(

>

> So I worked. I guess that is the good news. I've spent the past several
> days writing articles for my web page. If you haven't checked there for
> awhile, there are 25 or so new articles, a couple of new programs, etc.
> I was going to clean things up a bit, get rid of old articles, etc., but
> then someone asked the ol' "Device, Decomposed" question today, so you
> never know. I left all the old ones there. *Somebody* might need them.

>

> <http://www.dfanning.com/>

>

> The bad news is that I have a depository of ideas that I draw from when
> I get an itch to write an article and there are about 250 files in this
> directory! (From about 287 when I started the other day.) It occurred to
> me that even if I did an article a day, it would take me at least a year
> to get caught up!

>

> It takes roughly an hour to write each article, what with the research,
> the editing, and, finally, testing of the code. Some articles take
> considerably longer, a few don't take that long. But it's pretty much an
> hour every time I sit down to write one.

>

> Then I realized that most of the articles I write these days aren't my
> ideas at all. They are YOUR ideas! I steal them all from here. :-)

>

> So I sorta put two and two together and I wondered if you wouldn't want
> to write your own damn articles. :-)

>

> Here is my idea. If each of you volunteered to write 2-3 articles this
> year, we could probably make considerable headway on the backlog. I'd
> give you all the raw material, an HTML template, everything you need to

- > get started. (Some of you have already written articles, and I have to
- > tell you, they are some of the best on the site! I appreciate your
- > effort.)
- >
- > Here is what you would have to bring to the table.
- >
- > 1. A philanthropic spirit and willingness to pay (in some way)
- > for what you ordinarily get for free. Think NPR radio. In this
- > case, time is money.
- >
- > 2. A sense of humor. Otherwise, what's the point?
- >
- > 3. A willingness to work with a crabby, egocentric, and anal
- > editor. (I've suggested to the Chairman that he might think about
- > retirement, but he won't hear of it.)
- >
- > I'm not going to beat you around the ears to make you do it. I enjoy it,
- > and I'll slog along at my own pace. But I wanted to give everyone the
- > opportunity. You will learn a LOT about IDL by doing it. You will make a
- > contribution to the newsgroup. You might even get some well-deserved
- > recognition. I guarantee you won't make any money.
- >
- > You probably know how to find me. :-)

I have to say I feel somewhat misrepresented in my caricatured diatribe against for loops. Perhaps suitable placement of the phrase "tongue in cheek" in the prologue would suffice to make it clear that, when it comes to looping in IDL, reason and experience, rather than blind devotion to a particular belief system, must be your faithful guides.

JD
