
Subject: Re: Destroying objects

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 12 Feb 2004 01:04:00 GMT

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Michael Wallace writes:

- > Speaking of objects, is there any primer out there about object
- > programming other than what's provided in the IDL documentation?

No there is not. And after the last completely and utterly frustrating week working with my damn object library, I can report that there is NO chance I will be writing one anytime soon. :-(

I don't know if I just hit a bad patch, or what, but I have spent the past few days AMAZINGLY frustrated with objects. I'm trying to understand why, because not even a week ago I had what I thought were three of the most productive days of my working life, working on the same library.

Talk about the yin and yang. But I think objects tend to be like this. When they are good they are very, very good; but when they are bad, they are horrid.

There is something about them--a tendency to get too cute, is the way I think of it--that can get you in a LOT of trouble occasionally. There must be a theory of unintended consequences that I am not completely familiar with.

I don't know. I've had the same frustrating days with normal widget programs. (And the bugs I've been chasing are--to give them their due--legitimate bugs. The kind you might expect in new code.) But there is something about chasing through superclass upon superclass (Where is that damn field defined anyway!?) that drives you nuts. Maybe it has to do with having to hold too much information in short-term memory. It isn't just *this* program you have to worry about, but its superclass, and the superclass above that.

And when all that gets sorted out, there is a matter of the control you have over your materials. Sometimes I feel like I'm doing finish cabinet work with thick gloves on. You can make the objects do what you want them to do, eventually, but by the time you are finished you feel like you have cobbled together a Rube-Goldberg contraption. You know, in your heart of hearts, that it just shouldn't be like this.

I see the same problems cropping up in other object libraries.
(For example, I counted 11 steps to change the color table
for an image with iTools.) It makes me suspicious that the
problem is not so much with the (inept?) programmer, but
with the methodology itself.

Any comments from you object programming gurus? Any words
of encouragement? Because if not, you may have heard the
last of me. :-(

Cheers,

David

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Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>
