
Subject: Re: IDL Virtual Machine--Forget It
Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Wed, 29 Oct 2008 14:30:50 GMT
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David Fanning writes:

> In short, forget about the idea of packaging your neat
> application up on a CD-ROM with the IDL Virtual Machine
> and handing it out to colleagues to use. Ain't gonna
> happen no more.

OK, here is the latest. I didn't get the straight scoop from the ITTVIS Technical Support person I talked to, although God knows I gave him PLENTY of opportunity to get his story straight, even asked him to check it out with someone else about five different times, but he was adamant. Oh, well, my hard-earned support dollars at work...

It turns out it *is* possible to create a CD with the IDL Virtual Machine installed on it, along with your application, and to hand that out to people who can then run your application from the CD. No IDL installation required. It is NOT possible, however, for Joe the Plumber to download an IDL Virtual Machine from the ITTVIS web page in the way it used to be done.

I am going to be writing an article about this with all the gruesome details, but the gist of it is that you need to use an IDL-supplied program named MAKE_RT to create your IDL run-time or VM distribution folder. For a single machine architecture, the process is fairly straightforward, although I did spend an hour or so reading the on-line documentation before I got started this morning.

And I had the usual problems of my program looking in the wrong directories for resource files, etc. But that was all fairly easy to sort out. (Details and suggestions in the follow-up article.) But I did manage to create a CD with my application on it, and I did manage to run the darn thing on my wife's computer (pretty much the ultimate test) successfully. So I'm a happy camper again.

According to the documentation, it *is* possible to create a CD that will be able to run multiple machine architectures. That's what I want, although I have to get to work before I can test this aspect of the problem. I'm fairly confident now that it is going to work. I'll let you know how it goes.

I will say that once I talked to the right people at ITTVIS,
I got a tremendous amount of help from them. I appreciate that.
I do think that this new way of doing things is not readily
apparent to many folks, both inside and outside of ITTVIS.
I'm hoping an article might help everyone understand the issues
better.

Cheers,

David

P.S. The entire distribution folder I wrote to the CD was
about 53 MBytes in size. Fairly hefty. But not so big you
couldn't stage it somewhere on an FTP site and let your
customers download it. I chose to let IDL to its default thing,
so the VM distribution has things in it I know I am not using.
I can eliminate these, and make a smaller distribution, by
modifying a manifest file.

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David Fanning, Ph.D.

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

Sepore ma de ni thui. ("Perhaps thou speakest truth.")
