
Subject: IDL 7 and Subversion

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Mon, 17 Dec 2007 17:00:29 GMT

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Folks,

Having declared it my goal to set up my IDL 7 Workbench in a way that accommodated the way I currently work with IDL, and to do that with a Subversion software version control system to manage my IDL files, I then proceeded to put my plan into action in every conceivable wrong way.

For nearly two weeks I haven't written a single new line of IDL code!

But, I have become something of a (self-acknowledged) authority on the subject. I'm pretty sure I have a handle on what I am doing now, finally! To that end, I have written down and cleaned up my extensive notes on this subject, which I am now flogging in the most shameful way possible. For \$5 and 20 minutes of reading, I think it is now possible to save yourself hours of time and frustration if you are as technically deficient in your understanding of this new paradigm as I am.

Here is an article that explains what I am up to:

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

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

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

Subject: Re: IDL 7 and Subversion

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Mon, 17 Dec 2007 17:05:08 GMT

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David Fanning writes:

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>

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Whoops! Commerce has never really been my thing. :-(

<http://www.dfanning.com/workbench/idlsvn.html>

Cheers,

David

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Subject: Re: IDL 7 and Subversion

Posted by [b_gom](#) on Mon, 17 Dec 2007 19:51:19 GMT

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Looks like a great resource, but I have a couple of questions:

-Can you say whether it is "worth it" to set up subversion? What are the benefits and do they outweigh the hassle of setting it up and the learning curve for using it?

-On the webpage you state that this is designed for a single user. How much of the guide is useful for a multi-user environment?

Brad

On Dec 17, 10:05 am, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

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>

> Cheers,

>

> David

> --

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Subject: Re: IDL 7 and Subversion

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Mon, 17 Dec 2007 20:18:13 GMT

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b_gom@hotmail.com writes:

> Looks like a great resource, but I have a couple of questions:
>
> -Can you say whether it is "worth it" to set up subversion? What are
> the benefits and do they outweigh the hassle of setting it up and the
> learning curve for using it?

Probably not worth it if you are running scheduled backups every 10 minutes, but otherwise, yes, it's worth it. :-)

I'm not sure it is a "hassle" to set up. *If* you know what you are doing, and you get the correct stuff, and you know where to look for the things you need, it is really quite easy. It's the fact that none of this is spelled out for you anywhere that is the problem. This guide just condenses what you need to know into a couple of pages. (Well, more than a couple, but there are lots of pictures so you can't make a mistake.)

Actually, *using* Subversion (at least the way I am using it) is so easy as to be laughable. Everyone can learn this in about two minutes.

> -On the webpage you state that this is designed for a single user. How
> much of the guide is useful for a multi-user environment?

I set the repository up as a file-based system, since that is dead easy and can be done on a single-user computer. I don't think it is much harder to set it up on an Apache server, but then you have to get the server running, etc. I've done that, but it really seemed like overkill for what I needed. I have pointed to excellent instructions for doing this, but I haven't included them in my Guide. I might, if there is sufficient interest.

If a server and Subversion repository is already up and running, then this Guide is still valuable (IMHO) for how to attach to the darn thing and where to find the commands you are going to need to use to check files in and out of IDL and do other Subversion things. I show you how to set IDL

up to work with files that are already in the repository, or to actually put files into the repository from within IDL. All of this is the same for all versions of IDL, since it is a Workbench issue. I found most of the commands I needed obscure and hidden from sight. The Guide shows you where to find them, and in what order (most important!) to execute them.

Cheers,

David

--

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Subject: Re: IDL 7 and Subversion

Posted by [Michi](#) on Tue, 18 Dec 2007 10:22:59 GMT

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I have found that TortoiseSVN (<http://tortoisesvn.tigris.org/>) is a really useful frontend for subversion. It plugs in into the windows explorer and makes all subversion commands available. I haven't used eclipse so far, so I don't know anything about subclipse.

Subject: Re: IDL 7 and Subversion

Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Tue, 18 Dec 2007 13:40:07 GMT

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b_gom@hotmail.com wrote:

- > Looks like a great resource, but I have a couple of questions:
- >
- > -Can you say whether it is "worth it" to set up subversion? What are
- > the benefits and do they outweigh the hassle of setting it up and the
- > learning curve for using it?

I have never found subversion a hassle to set up at all. It might be; via the IDL workbench (i.e. eclipse). But, setting up a repository on its own via the usual svnadmin commands is pretty easy. Using subversion is also easy - although I am assuming one has used version control software before. Even then, the svn book provides a beginner with excellent information (i.e. the why along with the how).

- > -On the webpage you state that this is designed for a single user. How
- > much of the guide is useful for a multi-user environment?

I haven't read the guide so I don't know what you mean by "this". Do you mean the IDL workbench stuff, or subversion? If it's the latter, then yes it is accessible by multiple-users - that's the point of it. (Note I avoided the use of the word "designed". See below). Keep in mind though that a version control system doesn't mean the developers don't need to communicate regularly. For multi-user development, I would recommend setting up conventions for committing code to the repository. What we're looking at doing (cribbed from the WRF developers):

- 1) Developer publishes to the developer email list what he/she is planning on doing.
- 2) Interested parties respond (good idea, bad idea, waste of time, etc).
- 3) Prior to commit (of completed, or partially complete, code), the developer makes code available for review (with a lead time to permit adequate evaluation of code)
- 4) Interested parties review the code and provide feedback regarding adherence to coding standards, overall design, efficacy of algorithms, etc
- 5) Development lead for the affected portions of code gives go ahead or refusal for commit. (each "portion" of code has a Grand Poobah person that has veto power for a commit. What "portion" means for a group is defined by them)
- 6) Developer commits code (or provides a tarball for commit if they don't yet have access).
- 7) Developer is also responsible for providing documentation and test cases for code.

As far as I can tell, that process seems pretty much tool-independent - i.e. convention over configuration. The actual version control system used also depends a lot on the development process. Subversion doesn't work for everyone. For example, see: <http://subversion.tigris.org/subversion-linus.html>. On the other hand, subversion is the repository for many large, multi-developer software projects; like, for example, the apache web server. I also know of a good number of people that prefer ClearCase for multiple developer projects - there's a *lot* more functionality built-in for distributed developers, but you pay big \$\$ for licenses (sorta like IDL :o).

I doubt that the IDL Workbench hamstrings the ability of multiple developers to access a remote repository (of whatever flavour; subversion cvs, perforce, etc.). Once it's all set up correctly, of course. :o)

cheers,

paulv

Subject: Re: IDL 7 and Subversion

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Tue, 18 Dec 2007 13:58:31 GMT

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Paul van Delst writes:

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Ah, I needed this reminder of why I work alone. :-)

Cheers,

David

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Subject: Re: IDL 7 and Subversion

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Tue, 18 Dec 2007 14:00:51 GMT

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Michi writes:

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- > really useful frontend for subversion. It plugs in into the windows
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And you may never have to learn. I'm voting for TortoiseSVN as Software of the Year! :-)

Cheers,

David

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Subject: Re: IDL 7 and Subversion

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Tue, 18 Dec 2007 14:28:32 GMT

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David Fanning writes:

> Michi writes:

>

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>

> And you may never have to learn. I'm voting for TortoiseSVN
> as Software of the Year! :-)

Just for the benefit of the number of people who have been confused by this entire IDL7/Subversion discussion (and I now have convincing evidence there are a LOT of you!), TortoiseSVN and Subclipse are both front-ends to Subversion, and allow you to work with the Subversion repository via the normal GUI methods you are used to, rather than having to write long, cryptic commands that are prone to misspelling.

You can easily install both, and use whatever front-end happens to be convenient to you to manage your files. I find TortoiseSVN *extremely* convenient and intuitive. I find the Eclipse environment, uh, less so.

Cheers,

David

--

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Subject: Re: IDL 7 and Subversion

Posted by [Paul Van Delst\[1\]](#) on Tue, 18 Dec 2007 15:44:07 GMT

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David Fanning wrote:

> Paul van Delst writes:

>

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> Ah, I needed this reminder of why I work alone. :-)

Yes, there are advantages to going solo. However, it doesn't scale too well when you are trying to model the earth. :o) Any one person who's brain is big enough to grok the big picture has long since become a manager.....

But still, even you're not really working alone. You work for people/companies that have some larger purpose, no? You must be - how else are you paying for all those recent computer upgrades? :o)

cheers,

paulv
