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Subject: Comments on Coding Style

Posted by [Aram Panasenco](#) on Thu, 29 Apr 2010 06:26:18 GMT

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Hey again people,

I have recently switched to a different coding style. I am currently in the first steps of writing a relatively big (for me at least) solar software project. I want to keep the source code readable and modifiable for other programmers, and I also want to use a consistent convention that other people would want to uphold. I have written a small part of a standard class that my program will use in a convention that I plan to keep for all classes.

I want your comments on the programming conventions I use and how I can change them to make the code more clear and desirable for other programmers to improve. Some things to consider:

- Should I use comments or is the code (so far) pretty self-explanatory?
- Is the non-standard capitalization annoying you? Should I switch to the classic IDL capitalization (All-caps for IDL keywords, capitalized function and procedure names)?
- Is there anything wrong with the way I handle the IDL class? The routines?
- Anything wrong at all? I'd rather fix it now than thousands of lines of code later.

Here's the class itself (finally :P)

<http://pastebin.com/DXZUsL30>

Thank you for your criticism,  
~Aram Panasenco

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Subject: Re: Comments on Coding Style

Posted by [David Fanning](#) on Thu, 29 Apr 2010 21:30:18 GMT

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mgalloy writes:

> Ah, just mouse over a call to a routine in the editor.

Ah, ha! I guess I had trained my mouse NOT to roll over calls to the routines, because I find this pop-up thing obscuring the very code I want to look at. Thus, I had completely forgotten this functionality was there. Funny! :-)

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting, Inc.

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

Sepore ma de ni thue. ("Perhaps thos speakest truth.")

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Subject: Re: Comments on Coding Style

Posted by [penteado](#) on Fri, 30 Apr 2010 02:35:34 GMT

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On Apr 29, 6:30 pm, David Fanning <n...@dfanning.com> wrote:

> mgalloy writes:

>> Ah, just mouse over a call to a routine in the editor.

>

> Ah, ha! I guess I had trained my mouse NOT to roll over

> calls to the routines, because I find this pop-up thing

> obscuring the very code I want to look at. Thus, I had

> completely forgotten this functionality was there. Funny! :-)

The editor also recognizes comments in the old (IDL) format. But with the rst format it shows more information (all tags?).

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Subject: Re: Comments on Coding Style

Posted by [David Gell](#) on Fri, 30 Apr 2010 13:07:48 GMT

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On Apr 29, 1:26 am, Aram Panasenco <panasenco...@gmail.com> wrote:

> Hey again people,

>

> I have recently switched to a different coding style. I am currently in

> the first steps of writing a relatively big (for me at least) solar

> software project. I want to keep the source code readable and modifiable

> for other programmers, and I also want to use a consistent convention

> that other people would want to uphold. I have written a small part of a

> standard class that my program will use in a convention that I plan to

> keep for all classes.

>

> I want your comments on the programming conventions I use and how I can

> change them to make the code more clear and desirable for other

> programmers to improve. Some things to consider:

>  
 > - Should I use comments or is the code (so far) pretty self-explanatory?  
 > - Is the non-standard capitalization annoying you? Should I switch to  
 > the classic IDL capitalization (All-caps for IDL keywords, capitalized  
 > function and procedure names)?  
 > - Is there anything wrong with the way I handle the IDL class? The  
 > routines?  
 > - Anything wrong at all? I'd rather fix it now than thousands of lines  
 > of code later.  
 >  
 > Here's the class itself (finally :P)<http://pastebin.com/DXZUsL30>  
 >  
 > Thank you for your criticism,  
 > ~Aram Panasenco

I've found using a "Hungarian Notation" where variable names are prefixed with an code indicating their intended type is useful. IDL is a flexibly typed language where the type of variable can be inadvertently changed, so encoding the intended type of the variable in its name is helpful for debugging. We use the following

type	prefix	example
string	s	sName
number	n	nBigNumber
Boolean	b	bFlag5
structs	x	xStructs
widget event	we	weEvent
widget identifier	wi	wiOption
widget user data	wu	wuWState
array	a--	axStructs
pointer	p--	pPointer1

I don't distinguish between different numerical types. Variable name capitalization is "camel case" with words capitalized. Variable names should be descriptive.

As far as comments go, there is no such thing as self-documenting code. Anyone can figure out what a statement does, but not why. Make sure you document intent. Remember that you've two audiences when you write code, the computer, and the poor sod who has to maintain the code maybe years later. Write code like you write an essay, in paragraphs. Each paragraph has an intent, document it, then follow with the code that performs that action.

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