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Subject: 8.0 Developer Documentation

Posted by [Erik Rasmussen](#) on Wed, 28 Jul 2010 23:51:43 GMT

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It looks like the new Help system does not include all of the class documentation, and I guess so far I've just not found it very easy to use for developer-oriented tasks. E.g. classes like IDLitManipulator, IDLitOperation... everything under IDLitComponent for that matter. I really need this stuff all the time.

I can look at it by popping open the 7.1 Workbench, launching Help, and leaving that workbench turned on while I work under the 8.0 Workbench (although there may be some ugly side-effects of having two workbenches open that I haven't found yet).

I thought the old class/method documentation was pretty useful. Does anyone have any suggestions on how I can get it back in one form or another? Or is it back to 7.1 for me?

(Or is this a subtle signal that iTools is on its way out?)

Thanks....

Erik

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Subject: Re: 8.0 Developer Documentation

Posted by [Haje Korth](#) on Fri, 30 Jul 2010 21:06:42 GMT

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Hi Doug,

I hate the pdfs because they have to be individually opened and searched. The content of these documents should be available in the help browser as it was in the past. This is my strong opinion, whether or not this changes anything is another question. :-)

Haje

On Jul 30, 11:00 am, Doug Edmundson <do...@ittvis.com> wrote:

> A lot of this has been moved into .../itt/idl/idl80/help/pdf/. If you  
> still can't find what you're looking for, let me know and I'll relay it  
> to the docs group.  
>

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Subject: Re: 8.0 Developer Documentation

Posted by [Erik Rasmussen](#) on Fri, 30 Jul 2010 22:34:55 GMT

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On Jul 30, 9:00 am, Doug Edmundson <do...@ittvis.com> wrote:  
> A lot of this has been moved into .../itt/idl/idl80/help/pdf/. If you  
> still can't find what you're looking for, let me know and I'll relay it  
> to the docs group.  
>  
> Cheers,  
> Doug  
>  
> On 7/30/10 6:45 AM, Haje Korth wrote:  
>  
>> Ugh, indeed, a lot of help has gone MIA. Also, the IMSL\_ routines are  
>> no longer listed. The PDFs are still in the distribution, but who  
>> wants to use the pdfs???  
>  
>> On Jul 29, 6:34 pm, Paulo Penteado<pp.pente...@gmail.com> wrote:  
>>> Indeed, it seems that a lot of the help has disappeared, not only  
>>> regarding the iTools. Which is a serious problem. It seems that the  
>>> contents that used to be in several of the "guides" has disappeared.  
>>> If it is there, I could not find.  
>  
>>> For instance, if I now search for DLM, all I find are the help pages  
>>> for dlm\_load, dlm\_register, and make\_dll. In the old help, there used  
>>> to be a lot more, under  
>  
>>> IDL Programmers' Guides> External Development Guide> Part III:  
>>> Techniques That Use IDL's Internal API  
>  
>>> I also searched and browsed the new help, and could find nowhere the  
>>> description of the IDL\_VARIABLE structure, which is in the 7.1 help. I  
>>> was particularly curious about that subject to find out how the  
>>> reference count got included into the pointers and objects while  
>>> keeping compatibility with the older versions.  
>  
>>> I have the same question as Erik: Where did those go? How do we get  
>>> them back (and updated)?  
>  
>>> It seems it is just a problem with the transition in the documentation  
>>> to the new format, since it is not specific to the iTools - and even  
>>> direct graphics are still around and present in the help.  
>  
>

Hi Doug,

I understand that the documentation is still being transitioned from  
the last system to the new one.

I wonder if there is some way that ITTvis could make available a

collection of html that comprises the 7.1 documentation as a temporary fix? Or perhaps is there some way to launch the 7.1 Help server without having the 7.1 Workbench running?

For example, in the old system, I could use just about everything that showed up under IDL API Reference Guides -> IDL Reference Guide -> Part II: Object Class and Method Reference. If I had a folder with those html files, I would be in much better shape than now.

Thanks...

Erik

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Subject: Re: 8.0 Developer Documentation  
Posted by [Doug Edmundson](#) on Mon, 02 Aug 2010 15:42:12 GMT  
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On 7/30/10 4:34 PM, Erik Rasmussen wrote:

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>> Doug

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> those html files, I would be in much better shape than now.  
>  
> Thanks...  
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> Erik

Hi Erik,

I've forwarded your idea on to the docs group. I talked to them last week about the issue and I think they'd like to know which PDFs people are using most. Are folks still heavy into iTools, dataminer, the EDG, etc.? That info will help them gauge priorities.

The 7.1 help system should work on its own, sans workbench. It should be in .../itt/IDL71/idlde/. Sorry if I'm misunderstanding your question.

I don't know if this'll help much, but note that on Mac one can open multiple PDFs at the same time in Preview, as if they're all a chapter in one big book. That might make searching a bit easier. Links should work for the most part. I just tried Adobe Reader on Windows and am feeling a bit of pain... ;-)

Cheers,  
Doug

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Subject: Re: 8.0 Developer Documentation  
Posted by [penteado](#) on Mon, 02 Aug 2010 16:46:05 GMT  
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On Aug 2, 12:42 pm, Doug Edmundson <do...@ittvis.com> wrote:  
> I've forwarded your idea on to the docs group. I talked to them last  
> week about the issue and I think they'd like to know which PDFs people  
> are using most. Are folks still heavy into iTools, dataminer, the EDG,  
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> feeling a bit of pain... ;-)

It is very inconvenient to have to look for the pdfs, particularly lacking their content showing on searches of the help system. As I remember, through all the recent versions of the help system, it was always possible to search everywhere from a single place. Now, one needs to know that besides the help, there are those separate pdfs to look into. Besides the inconvenience (I am probably going to use Acrobat to join them into a single file, so that they become a bit easier to use), it is not obvious that these separate files exist - I only found out from this thread, and I was already missing some of the content I knew was present in previous versions. So many users might not find what they need just because it does not show up in the help system.

At least there should be a way to launch the pdf reader on those pdfs directly from the Workbench or the help system, so that it is visible that they exist - if there is one already, it is not visible enough.

Of those pdfs, I particularly use most often the parts about the internal API, the iTool classes, and the IMSL routines.

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Subject: Re: 8.0 Developer Documentation  
Posted by [Haje Korth](#) on Mon, 02 Aug 2010 18:10:12 GMT  
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Doug,  
EDG and Analyst are the most pressing ones, but I really want all PDFs in the help documentation.

A good help system is extremely important for usability, especially for new users. I have other software packages I avoid as much as I can because I cannot find commands in a timely manner...

H

On Aug 2, 12:46 pm, Paulo Penteado <pp.pente...@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Aug 2, 12:42 pm, Doug Edmundson <do...@ittvis.com> wrote:

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Subject: Re: 8.0 Developer Documentation  
Posted by [Erik Rasmussen](#) on Mon, 02 Aug 2010 21:51:35 GMT  
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>  
> The 7.1 help system should work on its own, sans workbench. It should  
> be in .../itt/IDL71/idlde/. Sorry if I'm misunderstanding your question.

Ahhh thanks... I had poked around some but didn't notice the 7.1 help app was under idlde/. This will help me a lot... I think I got the gist of many of the 8.0 syntax changes through other sources, but I always need to check the reference material for one thing or another.

Regarding priorities... for me it's the iTools reference material. I am working on an iTool for digging into cloud model output, and I think that project will be ongoing for another year anyway. But since nothing has changed in the iTools framework for 8.0, the 7.1 help.app is going to solve my immediate problem.

But I will echo the other posters.... everything (EVERYTHING) ought to be accessible from the 8.0 help app.... I'm guessing it is just a matter of time?

Thanks for your responses....

Erik

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