

From: Brad Struss  
To: Doug Henrich  
Subject: FW: Namespace Extension Decision  
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 1994 12:27PM  
Priority: Low

fyi

From: Brad Struss  
To: Brad Chase; Richard Freedman; Rogers Weed  
Cc: Dhiren Fonseca; David Williams (POSD)  
Subject: FW: Namespace Extension Decision  
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 1994 12:03PM

Per Paulma we're now in the process of proactively notifying ISVs about the namespace api changes (will not document them and they'll go away/change). So far Stac, Lotus, WP, Oracle, SCC appear to be OK with this. Still talking w/ Symantec, but as of just a few minutes ago it seems like this will be manageable as well.

We are also working on a list of ISVs for press references if/when the press gets wind of this.

Annesc has made this an agenda item for Friday's pr meeting so we can discuss more then.

This is mainly a heads up since there is a slight chance it could hit the press before then, although we are stressing to ISVs the confidentiality of this.

From: Scott Henson  
To: Adam Waalkes; Brad Struss; Christopher Lye; Dan Fay; Darby Williams; Dave Berry; Denise Shephard; Jerry Drain; James Plamondon; Marshall Goldberg; Mark Brown; Sara Williams; Scott Henson; Stan Murawski; Tim McCaffrey  
Cc: Doug Henrich  
Subject: Namespace Extension Decision  
Date: Wednesday, October 12, 1994 1:41AM  
Priority: High

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THIS IS IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE DOCUMENT CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING ELSE!

As we covered at our meeting last Friday, we are faced with the challenge of going to our ISVs and telling them about BillG's recent decision to return the namespace extension API's to their original system-level status (notice the wording - Let's try not to use the word "undocumented" or private API's. This has a negative connotation to most ISVs). This e-mail will hopefully provide you with the necessary information you will need to communicate the changes and the justifications to the technical contacts at our FirstWave (and eventually all) companies. The objective is to call ALL of the ISV's by the end of the day today (yes this is ambitious but let's try!). After you have called please send me a one paragraph summary of the conversation with the ISV. We would like to build a press reference list - so if you feel the conversation went well ask the ISV if they would be willing to be used as a press reference. In addition, it is very important that we are able to summarize the impact of this decision for upper management. One last point is that if there is anything we have missed in this document we want to make sure and cover it in subsequent phone calls.

<<< OVERVIEW OF WHAT HAS CHANGED >>>

We have changed the status of the API's which allow objects to be represented in the explorer as if they were a part of the Windows 95 namespace. You have most likely seen this kind of functionality demonstrated with the InfoCenter and with Marvel (PLEASE DO NOT MENTION MARVEL IN ANY OF YOUR CONVERSATIONS). These API's return to their original status of becoming programmatic access for

system-level objects such as the Printers Folder, Fonts Folder, Control Panel, Wastebasket, Briefcase, and Remote Access to the Windows 95 namespace. Applications that have architected themselves to achieve this functionality need to remove themselves from the system and if they wish to implement similar views, to do it using the common controls without the explicit use of these system-only APIs.

#### <<< THE COOL STUFF THEY CAN STILL DO >>>

The position to take with your ISVs is that we are being proactive with informatpn and keeping them from going down a dead-end development path. In addition we want to emphasize the really \*hot\* and \*cool\* things you can still do with Windows 95 shell extensions!

The interfaces that remain for use by the ISV's:

- IContextMenu (Adds menu items to the drop down menu - context menu - that the shell displays when a user clicks the right mouse button)
- IExtractIcon (Allows for the use of custom icons on a per document (My Presentation.ppt) or document type (\*.ppt) basis.
- IPropSheetExt (allows for the use of custom property sheets on a per document or document type basis)
- IShellExtInit (Used as an initialization interface for context menu handlers, drag drop handlers, and property sheet handlers)
- IShellLink (Ability to create and use shortcuts in the shell)
- IShellFolder (Emphasize that this method in effect becomes only callable. ISV's can not implement this interface to present their own views - it will allow people to enumerate/browse through the Windows 95 namespace)

#### <<< THE CONVERSATION >>>

// For your use

This is to provide you with the language that we have experienced to be common amongst the calls we have done thus far.

If you would feel more comfortable conference calling one or so of your ISVs with either Brad Struss or myself please feel free to do so (please let us know ASAP).

// To tell the ISVs - comments in {}

"This conversation is obviously covered by the mutual non-disclosure agreement between Microsoft and

"There is a set of APIs which allows you to extend the explorer visually in a manner that makes an application look as though it were a system-level hierarchical component (i.e. like the control panel, fonts folder, printers folder, etc.). We have taken a hard look at these APIs and because it makes it very difficult for us to support our long-term objectives with the Windows shell we have decided to return these interfaces back to their system-only status. This means that if you are using these API's you should stop. The API's affected are: IShellBrowser, IShellView, ICommDlgBrowser, and IPersistFolder. These allowed for the CREATING (rather than browsing) of the shell's namespace (file system, net, control panel...) and for extending the namespace in general."

{  
At this point you should tell them what interfaces are going to stay and emphasize all the great things they can still do.  
}

"This decision not only affects people outside of Microsoft but inside the company as well. All applications within Microsoft which were originally implementing these interfaces have been required to stop. As a consequence the InfoCenter will no longer be integrated into the explorer. What they have decided to do is to provide their own views by using the common controls (listview, treeview, and the column header). This way they are independent of the shell and still provide the same visual consistency and functionality that the Explorer does. The good thing about this strategy is that it is compatible with NT as well (as the common controls will be made available for NT)"

{  
Body of the conversation where they ask questions, etc. Remember the number one question will be: 'Why have you decided to do this?' The answer is: Because they (the APIs) make it very difficult to support long-term. We don't want to send ISVs down a dead-end path.

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If this is starting to sound redundant it's because I want to emphasize this point very strongly.

"Please keep this information close to your chest. We have proactively gone and told our KEY accounts first and will continue to send out the message over the next couple of weeks those who will be affected. Please do not post any questions about this on CompuServe!"

If they do not seem to offer much in the way of information about how they feel then that's good. This means that this will simply be a minor note for them to make so that they can avoid doing this work.

<<< Q&A DOCUMENT - PLEASE READ ALL OF THIS COMPLETELY BEFORE YOU CALL! >>>  
Please DO NOT deliver this document outside of Microsoft. It is intended as an aid to provide you with the necessary information to answer any questions that may come up in your conversations.  
<<File Attachment: SHELLQA.DOC>>

Below is a list of all of the FirstWave ISV's and their respective owners (this is the list we want to tackle today). Once you have spoken with each of these companies, please send me that update paragraph.

Thanks for your help with this! I will send more mail on this talking about our next phase of attack (i.e. notifying the next tier accounts) on this issue very soon.

-- Scott

+++

FirstWave ISV's

- Adobe Systems [Pagemaker/Photostylar = scotthe/Photoshop = darbyw]
- America Online [chrislye]
- Attachmate [geraldld]
- Autodesk [darbyw]
- Borland International [adamwa]
- Claris Corp. [Jamespl]
- CompuServe [chrislye]
- Computer Associates [marshalg]
- Corel Corp. [scotthe]
- DataStorm Technologies [geraldld]
- DCA [geraldld]
- Delrina [timmcc]
- Legent [daveber]
- Lotus [bradstr]
- Macromedia [darbyw]
- Micro Focus [adamwa]
- Micrografx [scotthe]
- Oracle [mbrown]
- Powersoft [adamwa]
- Prodigy [chrislye]
- Saber [daveber]
- SAS [danf]
- Shapeware [saraw]
- Softkey International [scotthe]
- Software Publishing Corporation [darbyw]
- SPSS [danf]
- Stac Electronics [geraldld]
- Symantec Corp. (All Divisions) [geraldld]
- WordPerfect [bradstr]

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## Q&A

**Q: [Background] What were the namespace extension interfaces used for?**

A: These are the system-level building blocks (interfaces) of the Windows 95 explorer which allows the representation of hierarchical data in a folder-like metaphor. It was initially thought that ISVs could use these interfaces to allow users to use the explorer to view their hierarchical data. The idea was that Windows 95 users would know how to use the explorer, and developers would not have to reproduce a similar look and feel themselves.

**Q: Why has Microsoft decided not to publish the NameSpace extension interfaces?**

A: There are a number of reasons:

- Compatibility. We have determined that it will be very difficult to support these API's for applications as we move forward with our operating systems. We did not want to encourage ISV's to support interfaces that would go away in the future.
- System Robustness. Names space extensions were design to part of the system. As such they run in the explorer's process space. Badly written name space extension could cause the reliability of Windows 95 to be less then what it should.
  - Ship Schedule. We have determined the amount of development and testing time it would take to support these API's through the entire development cycle adds a tremendous amount of overhead to our very rigid dealines.
- Equivalent Visual functionality. We will provide common controls (listview, treeview, column heading , etc.) that will allow ISVs to create their own views in the same manner that the explorer does. This allows ISV's to write applications with the same look and feel of the Windows 95 explorer that run on Windows NT 3.5 and Windows 3.11.

**Q: Microsoft has talked about having it's Cairo based shell use OLE. Is this still the plan?**

A: The Windows 95 shell is a 32-bit shell which uses OLE (see next Q&A). Microsoft will provide the same UI and the same shell API for both platforms. Cairo shell might provide more OLE features, but it will not be a different shell.

**Q: Why don't you just use OLE for extending the Windows 95 shell?**

A: The Windows 95 shell uses OLE in many places. For example:

- The desktop. Folders and explorers accept a drag&drop from OLE applications which let the user create a scrap file (embedding), a shortcut file (link) or other application specific files.
- When the user opens the property sheet of a docfile, the shell adds additional pages that shows OLE standard properties, such as summary information.

All the shell extensions are written as OLE In-Proc servers. The shell is an OLE server as well.

Application can create some shell objects (such as a shell link object, or a desktop object) by calling CoCreateInstance with shell CLSIDs.

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**Q: What other functionality/API's are you planning on changing or removing?**

A: At this point in time we do not foresee any other APIs being removed. Of course since this is beta software there may continue to be minor changes to interfaces. Our goals is to keep these to a minimum.

**Q: Will Info Center, Marvel, and MS apps still continue use these interfaces? Seems like this would be an unfair advantage?**

A: Info Center, Marvel, and MS apps will no longer use these interfaces. [DO NOT MENTION MARVEL UNLESS ASKED DIRECTLY]

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**Q: Microsoft has encouraged ISVs to use shell extensibility, can I still do that?**

A: Yes, there are still lots of exciting things ISVs can do with the shell. For example, you may customize the behavior of your application files under the shell by adding extra menu items (context menu extension), adding property sheet pages (property sheet extention) and/or providing per-instance icons (icon extention). For more details, see Kyle Marsh's MSDN article (.....)

**Q: When will there be final documentation on what I can use?**

A: The Windows 95 user education team is working on the official documentation now. In addition there will be a new version of Kyle's MS Developer Network on the January Development Library with all the final updates to the shell extensions. We will post this article to CIS and our ftp server as soon as possible.

**Q: [press] What is the impact (development time and engineering dollars) for ISV's that have already started development?**

A: There are very few ISVs who had even started development on these interfaces (and very few that have received the documentation), so the impact is minimal. We are working with those ISVs who have started using these interfaces to help minimize any potential impact on them. For ISVs who want to maintain the Explorer's look, we provide controls (tree view, list view, toolbar, etc.) necessary to do this.  
[INSERT ISV PRESS REFERENCES HERE]

**Q: What if I decide to use some of the undocumented API's (i.e. I am a developer that has received some of the preliminary documents on the topic)? What will the penalty be? Will you change the interfaces that had been defined?**

A: We will not arbitrarily change these interfaces, but because of how tightly these interfaces are tied to internals of the shell, we cannot guarantee ISVs that try to call into them will work in future releases of Windows 95 (or even between interim beta builds). There will be no support for ISVs who use this. It will be completely at their own risk.

**Q: Can I still roll-my-own common dialogs and enumerate the namespace?**

A: Yes, the IShellFolder interface will still be published to allow ISVs to enumate the namespace.

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