# Voice of the PPL



# Welcome to the April 2008 Newsletter

We hope you like the redesign!

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### INFORMATION

Editor, Design and Layout: Mike Halliday © 2008 Arianesoft President: Alain Deschenes Development support: Eric Pankoke (with thanks)

Do you have a product created in PPL that you want to share with the community?

Drop me an Private message on the FORUM - I'd love to hear from you!

Submission deadlines:

20th of each month for next edition



### A word or two from our President

Two years have passed since ArianeSoft Inc. first started doing business and what a tremendous amount of work we have put into this company. PPL has been in active development since January 2004 and it never stops to amaze me what can be done with it. Our community is growing bigger everyday and new products written in PPL are appearing every month. Even if the past is full of happenings, the future has never looked brighter for PPL. There are major announcements that will be done in the next few months that we cannot talk about right now but rest assured that you will be informed in this newsletter and the forums. Expect the community to grow bigger in the near future that is all I can say for now...

Alain Deschenes - President, Arianesoft Inc.

### A word or two from one of our Users

Having used Delphi for Windows I decided to try programming PPC and my first success was with NSBasic. It was useful, but slow and limited.

Looking further afield I discovered PPL. This really excited me because it included sprite control within the language. While not easy to learn because I didn't have an API background, I did find it easy to forget (when not using it regularly).

It is a very rich language with so many features that add-ons seem not to be required. Everything is there. The forum for PPL is second to none with a crowd of good people only too willing to help.

One very unusual thing though... no sooner has a bug been reported than it is fixed in a new issue! Nobody is rude or sarcastic as on some forums. I actually feel at home with the people, as if they were my friends.

PPL is made a little more difficult to master because it never stands still long enough. (That is not a complaint.)

In a nutshell... very exciting and it will keep me busy continuously for ever. I don't expect to look for anything else, but I will still need the continued support that I have been receiving.

Donone - registered forum member and PPL user.

### **PPL Release Dates**

# The following versions of PPL have been released in the last 6 months

Date	PPL Version	Date	PPL Version
30/11/07	1.40	07/03/08	1.51
20/12/07	1.41		
24/12/07	1.42		
29/12/07	1.50		

### Current PPL Community User count

At the time of writing (Middle of April), the current PPL registered user count in the community forum is;



### Interesting PPL Development #1

As you will see in this months tutorial, I have added some user input functionality to PPL by creating for you a way of capturing signatures from within PPL.

This technique can also be used to capture an infinite number of stylus strokes for use in many more applications.

Please load it up, have a play around with it and comment on it. Heck  $\dots$  improve on it if you think you can.

That's what the community spirit is all about, and because I have not seen one of these on the forum before I thought it would make a good tutorial.

### Interesting PPL Development #2

This area has been intentionally left blank.

### PBE4PPL - Programming By Example for PPL!

Q: What is the one thing that PDA's and smartphones have over conventional mobiles?

A: The ability to take input directly from the screen!

I had been thinking about that recently and while playing about with the UI example in PPL (Remember the re-coloured keyboard graphics?) I wondered if I could find a way of storing my signature for future display and usage using only PPL code.

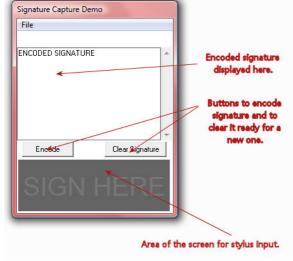
The following tutorial is based on an idea I had for grabbing stylus movement on the smart phone/PDA screen and storing it in either a text file or a database field for future viewing or manipulation.

**What is a signature?** - A signature is a collection of joined up pen strokes each with a start position and an end position. So it should not be too difficult to capture these into memory, but where do we start? This can be broken down into 3 steps.

- Step 1: Set up the scribbling area so we have room to scribe our signature.
- Step 2: Capture each of the stylus movements and storing them into memory.
- Step 3: Save them to a file or DB field.

Here are the details of how I have done each step. - As always, look at the archive that accompanies this newsletter for the exact code that I created.

Step 1: - Set up the scribbling area for capturing the signature.



### SIGN HERE area is a bitmap control with text overlaid.

Signature\$ = NewControl(106, "EDIT", NULL, "", WS\_VISIBLE|SS\_BITMAP, FORM100\$, 2, 199, 235, 80);

### **ENCODED SIGNATURE** is a standard edit box control.

Encoded\$ = NewControl(102, "EDIT", NULL, "Encoded Signature", WS\_VISIBLE|WS\_BORDER|WS\_VSCROLL|ES\_AUTOVSCROLL|SS\_LEFTNOWORDWRAP, FORM100\$, 0, 25, 240, 144);

### **Encode and Clear Signature are standard form button controls.**

Encoder\$ = NewControl(104, "BUTTON", NULL, "Encode", WS\_TABSTOP|WS\_VISIBLE, FORM100\$, 8, 171, 80, 24);

ClearButton\$ = NewControl(105, "BUTTON", NULL, "Clear Signature", WS\_VISIBLE|WS\_TABSTOP, FORM100\$, 136, 171, 96, 24);

All these controls are created within the WinMain function of the project.

The SIGN HERE text is added within the ONPaint function of the Bitmap control, using the setfont function of the WINAPI.

fnt\$ = NewFont(Signature\$, "@Arial Unicode MS", 40, 0, 0, 0); SetFont(hdc\$, fnt\$); SelectObject(hdc\$, fnt\$); // Make sure the font is being used

Any font installed on the PC/PPC can be used, just change the font name accordingly.

Use of the OnLeftButtonDown, OnLeftButtonUp and OnMouseMove functions are also used as we will see in step 2.

(cont...)

### Continued ...

Step 2: - Capture each of the stylus movements and storing them into memory.

Check for the stylus being pressed. - **(OnLeftButtonDown)**Set a global variable so we know the stylus is pressed
Initialise the X & Y co-ordinate array and store the current stylus position.

Check for stylus movement while

it is still pressed down - (OnMouseMove)

StartPainting for form

Create a new PEN to draw with

Get the current Stylus location using

x\$ = LOWORD(IParam\$); y\$ = HIWORD(IParam\$)

If the stylus is within the bounds of the 'SIGN HERE' box

Store them in the X & Y co-ordinate array

Move to the current stylus position - MoveToEX

Draw a line to the current stylus position - LineTo

Else

Do Nothing

End

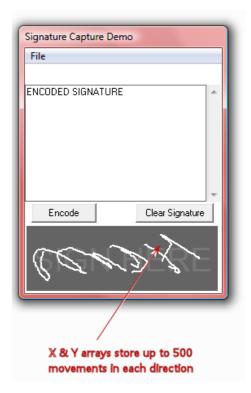
Delete the PEN

FinishPainting the form

Check for stylus removed from screen

Clear the global variable ready for next press

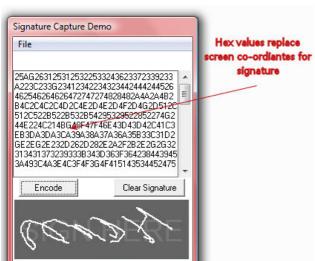
Repeat the above until either the Encode, Clear or Exit options are selected.



Step 3: - Save them to a file or DB field.

I have chosen to save the encoded signature to a file to make it easier to show the contents. - Here goes...

Click the encode button and using the Encoder\_ONClick function go through each of the arrays (X & Y) changing each co-ordinate pair into their corresponding HEX values. Once the whole array has been scanned, display the results in the top Edit box control and write them to a text file called 'signature.dat'



### Contents of 'signature.dat' -;

25AG2631253125322533243623372339233A223C233G2341234223432344244424452646254626
4626472747274828482A4A2A4B2B4C2C4C2C4D2C4E2D4E2D4F2D4G2D512C512C522B522B53
2B54295329522852274G244E224C214BG48F47F46E43D45D2D4TC1G3EB3DA3DA3CA39A38A37
A36A35B33C31D2GE2EG2E232D262D282E2A2F2B2E2G2G32313431373239333B343D363F364
2384439453A493C4A3E4C3F4F3G4F4151435344524754485449554A564A574A584B594B5A4B59
4B564A554A534951474E474B4649454644424242413F413E413C3F3A3D393D393C3933B383A373
7373637333831382G3C2F3C2E3F2E422E432C462C492C4B2E4D2E522G55315A345C345F3464
37693A6B3B6D3C6F3E755F7741794379447945774376437541723F6G3D6F3C6C3B6A39663664
3664356334633362326332653369346B355G38753A7A3E7E4181418545874688468A478A488B48
48AE852E872F892G8B318E328G33913594369638973A993C993D9B3E9A3G9A419A429A439944
98439441913F78ABF82A792A79297C297E2A7F2A7G2A832B862C882D8A2E8C2F913194329633
9A359D379F38A139A33BA53CA53DA53EA53FA43GA33GA242A243A1439G449F459E479E489D
489D499C499B499A49994998499749964895489549944993499249AA148A428A62AAA2CAD
2DB12GB633B835BC37BG3DC23FC642C844CA45CC47CC48CD49CD4ACC4ACB4ACB4BCA4A
C849C749C847C846BF42BBCB88BB83AB938BB34BC32B22GB22EBG2CC12AC129C229C228
C327C326C226C124BG24BF22BD218AF8BEBTCB6C6B6BFCCBADBCEBEGC323C826CA27CE2A
CG2BD52ED72GD931DB32DE33DG35E237E337E437E438E538E539

To clear the signature, just re-paint the bitmap control using a SENDMESSAGE command and it goes back to how it was before the signature was made.

SendMessage(Signature\$, WM\_PAINT, 0, 0);

So there we have it, the very, very simple way to use your smart phone/PDA to capture and store a signature in PPL. I hope this will be of some use to some of you in your form based projects. - Check out the source code included in the archive, and as always ... you are free to use this code as you see fit. - Just give me a little credit if you use it!

Next months tutorial will be a follow on from this .. How to re-load the signature file and display it back to the device screen.

Until next month .. Mike.

### Version 2.0 of PPL - What's in the future?

Alain was kind enough to take an hour out of his day to chat to me about Version 2.0 of PPL and what it has to offer.

The conversation below is taken from the MSN chat that I had with Alain on Tuesday 08/04/2008.

I want to express my gratitude to Alain for spending time answering my questions as I know he was busy with a nagging programming bug in V2.0 (as you will read below)

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Hi, it works!

### Mike Halliday says:

Hi Alain

### Mike Halliday says:

good to see you online

### Mike Halliday says:

so what interesting news do you have about PPL 2.0 then?

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

I am hard at work on v2.0 and there is this bug that is driving me nuts right now. Can you give me a few more mins or you have to go?

### Mike Halliday says:

so you been working hard on version 2 then?

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Yep, for the past month, very hard.

### Mike Halliday says:

Is V2 a complete re-write rather than an upgrade

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Only the PIDE side. I took a lot of the code that was already in V1, I didn't want to reinvent the wheel for every part of the project. I copied parts like, the code formatter, debugger, trace window. I will improve on them a little later. But the whole PIDE is very very different, it works differently too.

### Mike Halliday says:

sounds great - will there be a screen shot released for the newsletter to go with the article?

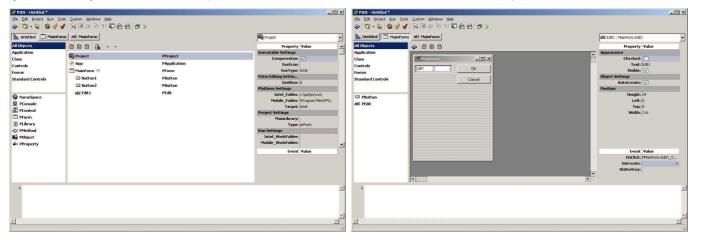
### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

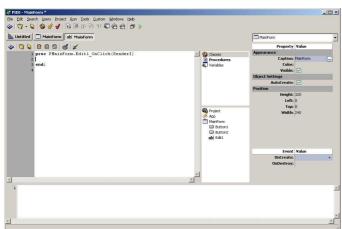
Let me try to send you an email with a few. Hold on...

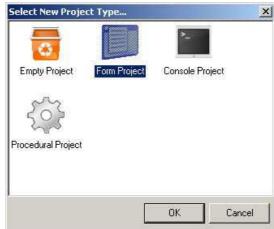
(cont....)

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

I just emailed you a few shots. - alpha release screen shots below of the V2 PPL designer interface







### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

There will be an internal beta in a few weeks, only selected people will have it.

### Mike Halliday says:

wow, that looks so different

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Yes, it is all object-oriented.

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

No external files in projects anymore.

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

A project is a single file containing multiple objects, be it Libraries (PPL code files), Forms, Classes, etc...

### Mike Halliday says:

will that make it easier or more complex to understand? I know that I am not too good at OO stuff!

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

It will certainly be easier. You don't have to use OO if you don't want. All you need to do, is create a new Procedural project and in the Main Library, you type your PPL code, old-style, hit Run and voila.

You will also notice the project object properties. All the necessary configuration info for the project are stored there.

(cont...)

### Mike Halliday says:

Will the windows mobile version of PPL be the same or are you changing the interfaces too?

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

We will try, nothing is certain yet. <snip>

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

The PPC interface might not be fully ready for version 2, more like 2.5.

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Another thing is a new web site dedicated for V2 alone in Joomla.

### Mike Halliday says:

oooo, a dedicated site

### Mike Halliday says:

Joomla is a CMS?

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Yes, that is why I want to stay with a CMS.

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Right now I am using e107 but Joomla seems more complete.

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Oh, a new PPL 2 logo as well!

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

As for future plans for PPL, version 3.0 will be a major compiler/interpreter rewrite.

### Mike Halliday says:

Aren't you thinking a bit far ahead with v3?

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

No, I need to see far ahead. If I want this product to be top-class one day, I have to look forward.

### Mike Halliday says:

Will there be separate versions in V2.0 (Pro, Std, Lite) or just one?

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Just one.

### Mike Halliday says:

Will there be an upgrade price or are you just having a one off cost for V2?

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

No prices have been decided upon yet.

### Mike Halliday says:

At any price it is still a lot cheaper than the other PC/Mobile development tools. And if it performs as good as it looks then I can't see why it wont sell in bucket loads

(cont...)

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Hopefully!

### Mike Halliday says:

Are there any other features that you are including in V2 that you have not included as an extra in a sub release of V1?

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

The Visual Form Editor is completely new. It uses only object-oriented PPL code using the PCL. The Project Manager is XML based and projects uses only one XML file.

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

It will still include most of what was in V1 in some form or another.

### Mike Halliday says:

ok, so everything we have in V1 (up to its current release) will be in V2? - just to make it clear for the article

### kornalius - Arianesoft (PPL) says:

Yes.

At this stage MSN decided to throw a wobbler and kick us out of the session. - The following is the final eMail I got from Alain before ending the chat about PPL V2.0

### (from Alain)

Sorry, it acted funny for me as well.

### (from me)

Thanks for taking the time to chat today - i am sure the readers will find it insightful and give them something to look forward to in PPL V2.

### Cheers

Mike

So as you can see, Alain is hard at work bringing us a much improved PPL.

I for one can't wait to see the end results and I have my fingers crossed for Arianesoft and hope that we all purchase V2 and continue to support a great product and a helpful and friendly company.

### Thanks for sticking with us!

### Next months issue!

This months issue has been almost totally taken up by the interview with Alain about PPL V2.0.	This months issue has b	been almost totally taken up	p by the interview with	Alain about PPL V2.0 .
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Rest assured that next months issue will be the same size, but filled with more content, and less waffle.

### Coming in next months issue ...

To keep up the theme of 'change' there will be a different colour to the newsletter - I will try to cycle the colours on a regular basis.

Part 2 of the signature capture tutorial. Learn how to load the saved signature and re-display it to the screen.

I have some more ideas for tutorials, some simple ... others a bit more complex, so watch out for them in the coming months.

We hope you have enjoyed this months newsletter? We think it is a vast improvement on last months content and re-design.

This new design should stay with us for the next few issues, by which time it will be almost Christmas (AGAIN).

Join me next month for another edition of Voice of the PPL to catch up on the further developments of the PPL community and development scene.

Regards

Mike & the Arianesoft Team