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INFORMATION

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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! Or you can eMail me at: mike.halliday@dsl.pipex.com

Submission deadlines:

20th of each month for next edition

When you have finished with this magazine, please recycle it.

A word or two from our Editor

Ah, another month has come and gone. Where is the time going to?

Disappointment all round this month really. I have not had as much time to devote to PPL as I would have liked. The odd coding session here and there, but that's about it.

I am hoping that the September will be different as I change jobs and have a weeks holiday! :) - Will get some PPL time in that week, for sure.

On the newsletter front, It has now been 9 months since I took over production of the newsletter and I have still only had 3 or 4 people contribute to it. It's a bit disheartening knowing that there are 39+ active members on the forum and only 10% of those are willing to send articles for the newsletter.

Come on guys … 20 minutes of your time, that's all we ask (AGAIN!)

Mike.

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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	Soon	1.52
24/12/07	1.42	Soon	2.0
29/12/07	1.50		

Current PPL Community User count

There has been a lul in the number of registrations so from now on and until we have more registrations I will leave this section like this. (just to fill space)

Interesting PPL Development #1

Following on from last months snippet on my mobile development environment, I thought I would investigate more into what is available for the mobile developer.

There is the redfly of course, but this only allows PPC coding as it controls your mobile device.

Interestingly enough, there are now a plethora of micro notebooks floating round, mostly running Linux, that make ideal development machines.

In the UK, Currys and PCWorld recently ran a promotion on the Acer Aspire One micro notebook. For £199 you get 1.6ghz CPU, 8GB solid state drive and 512mb ram. This machine is A5 in size and weighs less than 2Lbs. - It was my mission to get one and get PPL installed.

The Acer Aspire One comes preinstalled with LINPUS linux, which is fine if you just want to get eMails and browse the web, but as with the other flavours of Linux … IT DOES NOT RUN PPL! :(

So I grabbed the nearest copy of Norton Ghost and backed up the 8GB linux installation (just in case I cocked it up) and installed XP Pro. 40mins later I had a mini laptop with XP Pro installed, all the updates (except SP3), Office 2003 (this bit if the newsletter was edited on the Aspire One!) and PPL.

Because there is no HD, the machine runs so quietly I forget its on, and the 8.9" screen is so clear that once I start coding, it seems to expand and fill my entire view :).

The advantages of using a machine like this are numerous.

Cont...

1. Full PC compatibility, so all XP programs work out of the box (if a little slow)
2. Cross development as we are still able to compile for both device and PC.
3. Ultra mobile without being too small to see or too fiddly to type with

There are some disadvantages though.

1. Keyboard is small, so if you have big hands you may find yourself using 2 fingers instead of them all.
2. Price is still a little expensive if you already have a machine
3. Screen is small (not as small as a PDA screen, but by laptop standards its tiny, so you may find yourself straining to see it!)

On the whole, this is a much better development environment than using just a PDA when out and about.

It all depends on how often you want to develop while away from home or the office.

My machine will stay with me for a long time now as I have installed everything I have on my office machine so I don't have to be in the office as much! :)

Check out the web for images and reviews. 'Acer Aspire One - A110L AB'

Mike.

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Well I do declare!

This months tutorial is provided by me.

Unfortunately, at the time of writing, we do not have Part 3 of NickNack's terrain tutorial. Hopefully we will have it for the September issue.

#Declareapi

The #declareapi functionalty of PPL has to be the most flexible aspect of the language. It allows users to include 3rd party dll files into their applications.

The #declareapi function takes the following parameters;

#declare <PPL Function name> <dllfile> <dll function name@function number"> <Input parameters> <Output parameters>;

<dllfile> can be defined using the following;

#define <dllfile> "<name of dll file>.dll"

To find the functions within a dll file I have used DLL Export Viewer © Nir Sofer (http://www.nirsoft.net/utils/dll_export_viewer.html)

It may take a few attempts to get your external functions working, but the time spent is worth it. Just imagine adding extra graphics or sound processing to PPL?

Included with this months tutorial is the code for my WEBCam integration app from the forum.

Below is the declarations I used in the code provided.

```
#ifdef _WIN32
#define camdll "avicap32.dll"
#else
#define camdll "coredll.dll"
#endif
```

As you can see, I called my dllfile 'camdll' for easy referencing.

AviCap32.dll is the standard windows video input library, and its commands can be referenced as follows;

```
#declareapi capGetDriverDescriptionA camdll capGetDriverDescriptionA 5 1
#declareapi capCreateCaptureWindowA camdll capCreateCaptureWindowA 8 1
```

Check out the included source code and compile it to see your web cam image within PPL.

Apologies for the brief tutorial this month, but I have so much going on, I just wish I had more time to devote to PPL.

Ta. Mike.

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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 .

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

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