Subject: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by mirek on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 16:32:07 GMT
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In order to improve public image of U++, there are several claims I would like/need to be commented/tested by the community:

- "The structure of the website and navigation is all boasting how ultimate clever we are. People see that childish."

- "Website should be more friendly. The accents must be: We serve humanity by delivering powerful things in a simple way. And everyone who reads the web pages must feel that spirit."

- "We need more features in U++ library"

- "We need more features in TheIDE"

- "Default forum design/layout repels people, it should be more similar to the website (blueish)."

- "Website design repels people"

Please feel free to add your own suggestions to the list.

And one nobody argues with, so I am adding that here just for completeness:

- "U++ needs better documentation"

however, the question is, do we need more

- "tutorials"

or

- "concept overviews"

or

- "reference"

?

Also, if you find some documentation topic worth special attention, feel free to post it here so we can make it priority.

Mirek

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by fudadmin on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 17:32:54 GMT
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I would rename this topic: "What is more important: to waste time on blowing up public image "buble" or first really improve the "taste" of U++ product:
1. even F1 for help doesn't work .
2. if you press on "?" icon you can't search that ultimate help.
3. sources are not even scarcely commented (if tried fox-toolkit you would understand what I'm talking about).
4. some docs are on upp.sourceforge.net, some included with the instalation. That means that you have to be always connected to the i-net.
5. Navigation through the docs on upp.sourceforge.net is ... Ok, open other toolkit sites and compare...
6. Why someone needs an IDE if it only compiles itself (That's why I've made AGG package)?
7. etc.

My sequence of improvements:

1. "Identify Fire measures". First of all - Identify the worst features of U++ and why so many people just download and throw U++ away.
And please tell openly if you are going to dump U++...

2. "Prioritize"

P.S. Parralel "in the background" just do what you can...
(that's how and why I launched these forums...)

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by fudadmin on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 17:52:50 GMT
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also have a look and read this as example:
BTW, read about the founder...
And, btw, they are using AGG...
About REBOL Technologies

Our Mission

We dramatically improve the way people and applications communicate, collaborate, share, and process information over the Internet.

Our Premise

We believe that modern distributed applications do not need to be large, complicated, and

expensive.

In fact, we believe that when it comes to software, smaller is better. Smaller software is cheaper to develop, more efficient to operate, and easier to update and improve.

We believe that the X-Internet can make web applications a lot faster, a lot smarter, and run on a lot more devices in the future.

We believe that an open collaborative development community is key in creating and expanding on the fundamental technology and inspiring an exciting variety of applications and methods.

We believe that the Internet is always changing, and that the more flexible and lightweight your technology, the more rapidly you can adapt and benefit from change.

http://www.rebol.com/mission.html

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by fudadmin on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 18:08:00 GMT
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7. there is no Grid widget
8 there are no regular expressions
9. printing on Linux not working
10. draw is a big problem (can't operate normally with semi-transparency)

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by fudadmin on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 18:10:45 GMT
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IMHO, colors of the websites are the last important thing -at the moment.

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by jadeite on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 19:43:59 GMT
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Hey, you 2 settle down.

It is interesting how the forum page is a continual topic of discussion. I personally like the blue/gray colors, but it is a matter of taste, and not critical.

I'll have to think about the question some more, but on the opposite end, 1 of the things that drew me towards checking out Ultimate++ was:

-Has an IDE with layout designer

-Template-heavy, which is slightly unique to GUI frameworks.

Then, what made me look even deeper was the fact that even complicated apps (like the text editor) are VERY responsive to resizing. I mean, when I grab the edge of the app frame and resize it, it just flows. This is something you only see in Delphi and MFC apps.

The name Ultimate++ seems fine to me. You remember it.

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by jadeite on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 19:54:32 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

luzr wrote on Mon, 20 February 2006 11:32however, the question is, do we need more

- "tutorials"

or

- "concept overviews"

or

- "reference"

?
I would say documentation for a new U++ user should be written in this order:
"concept overviews"
"tutorials" (maybe just a couple more)
"reference"

For an experienced U++ user, they would prefer "reference" be completed first. Doc writing is a no-win task, because you can't please everyone until it is finished (and it is never finished).

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by mirek on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 20:04:59 GMT
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jadeite wrote on Mon, 20 February 2006 14:43 Hey, you 2 settle down.

Oh, no, this was not supposed as "he is right - he is wrong" flamewar, just the reality check.

I am definitely ready to change things, but for some of them I would like to hear more opinions.

As for U++ improvements itself, they will definitely be happening. They always did. And IMHO, development was and is fast.

However this thread is about possible drawbacks in public image - I can deal with engineering issues, but I am not PR guy.

Mirek

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by zsolt on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 20:53:37 GMT
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About documentation:
Basic documentation found on the website was enough for me.
With the lack of real reference, I'm using doxygen generated documentation. It is very useful, you can browse it very fast using the many cross-links. And you can read sources if the name of a method or function is not descriptive enough.
My personal opinion is that the documentation should be something similar with some descriptions.
Or you can check Qt's docs.

Website:
It is not childish, basically it is good, I think. Maybe it could be good to put a screenshot to the examples.
I think it could be a good idea to write something about the incredible productivity of programmers using upp. And simplicity of course.

Forum:
The default theme for guests is awful. When you login, the default is OK.

PR:
It is needed to write a press release about the release of upp-602 and describing it's strengths.
Mainly: simplicity, productivity, cross-platform, BSD-license, Ide with debugger, layout designer, fast build-technology, etc.
The text should be written (or at least edited) by a native english person.
This press release should be sent to all major open-source sites.

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by fudadmin on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 21:01:30 GMT
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The conclusion: all those thousands downloaders left Ultimate because of forum color theme?

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by mirek on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 21:07:25 GMT
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zsolt wrote on Mon, 20 February 2006 15:53About documentation:
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With the lack of real reference, I'm using doxygen generated documentation. It is very useful, you can browse it very fast using the many cross-links. And you can read sources if the name of a method or function is not descriptive enough.
My personal opinion is that the documentation should be something similar with some descriptions.

Well, I am still putting things together with Topic++/Assist++, but the final solution should be something quite similar to doxygen - class browser seamlessly connected with the Topic++ browser.

Mirek

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by fudadmin on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 21:21:54 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

fudadmin wrote on Mon, 20 February 2006 16:01The conclusion: all those thousands downloaders left Ultimate because of forum color theme?
Ok, In order not to waste anyone's time I switched it to gray.

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by mirek on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 21:26:16 GMT
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fudadmin wrote on Mon, 20 February 2006 16:01The conclusion: all those thousands downloaders left Ultimate because of forum color theme?

Just one more reality check - do you think there is 3000 new wxWidgets programmers each day? (That is the download rate).

People generally have another duties and interests than testing new (and even existing) toolkits. Most of them just download it, play with it for a while and forget about it. That is IMHO normal.

Look at the competition. How many people are really brave (or stupid) enough to use fox toolkit for any real work? 100? 200? And VFC or Smartwin++?

Given those facts, I am in fact quite satisfied with community growth since 511 release (and I attribute it largely to forums, that was definitely a good idea, but also to the website redesign).

If 602 "PR bubble" would attract 3-4 new capable developers like Hojtsy, Zsolt or Pivica, it would be a huge success - and promise for exponential growth of both features and users.

Mirek

P.S.: I really do not thing that default forum colors have huge impact. But even if it is very minimal impact, the solution is as easy as 30 second administrative task....

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by fudadmin on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 22:14:20 GMT
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zsolt wrote on Mon, 20 February 2006 15:53About documentation:
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Yes, simplicity and productivity. But that should be accented, stressed, pressed etc. on the upp.sourceforge.net not only in one article which will be forgotten after a week or so!

Now the home page of U++ advertises for months:

Quote:C++ has the potential to be the most productive language in computing history. Its multiparadigm nature allows the effective development of almost any kind of software, from low level driver code to very high level business logic abstractions.

Unfortunately this potential has been left untapped, due to the lack of truly effective libraries, causing C++ evolution to be stuck somewhere between STL-iterator adaptors and smart-pointers. Ultimate++ finally uncovers this potential....

Who after reading this "untapped" simplicity of U++?

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by mirek on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 22:27:14 GMT
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Quote:
Yes, simplicity and productivity. But that should be accented, stressed, pressed etc. on the upp.sourceforge.net not only in one article which will be forgotten after a week or so!

Why not. But we definitely need that article. Nobody says it cannot be recycled in www (I have already done that with the Overview).

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I have no problem with improving that info. We have been "developing" frontpage text as community effort for more than month, but there is always a room for improvement. (If I remember well, that "untapped" phrase was suggested by Jan Wilmans and most of us liked it

However, this is too important for any quick fix posted over private message - any change there must go through another community review process.

You are welcome to start new forum topic with this mission.

Mirek

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by fudadmin on Mon, 20 Feb 2006 22:54:41 GMT
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luzr wrote on Mon, 20 February 2006 17:27Quote:
Yes, simplicity and productivity. But that should be accented, stressed, pressed etc. on the upp.sourceforge.net not only in one article which will be forgotten after a week or so!

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You are welcome to start new forum topic with this mission.

Mirek

It's not the word "untapped". Sentences and their wording sound like from philosophy lecture...

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by gprentice on Tue, 21 Feb 2006 11:07:14 GMT
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fudadmin wrote on Tue, 21 February 2006 10:21fudadmin wrote on Mon, 20 February 2006 16:01The conclusion: all those thousands downloaders left Ultimate because of forum color theme?
Ok, In order not to waste anyone's time I switched it to gray.

I think I shall remain permanently logged in so as to always get the purple and green scheme

---

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by gprentice on Tue, 21 Feb 2006 12:49:48 GMT
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luzr wrote on Tue, 21 February 2006 11:27Quote:
Yes, simplicity and productivity. But that should be accented, stressed, pressed etc. on the upp.sourceforge.net not only in one article which will be forgotten after a week or so!

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However, this is too important for any quick fix posted over private message - any change there must go through another community review process.

You are welcome to start new forum topic with this mission.

Mirek

Quote:- "The structure of the website and navigation is all boasting how ultimate clever we are. People see that childish."

Regarding the above sentence from the original post in this thread - it's good that the UPP website now says that "comparisons are tricky" when comparing U++ to other toolkits, and that you've tried to be fair (I hope this is true). The website also says U++ achieves RAD through "smart and aggressive"
C++. It's fair enough to say this if it's justified but it's open to the "boasting" criticism, though most people seem to think they write smart C++. Maybe "innovative" would be better than "smart".

Regarding the "C++ being most productive language in history ... " paragraphs - they honestly

makes me squirm - though I'm not sure how much my opinion's worth. I notice that Bjarne Stroustrup says there are way too few proposals for the C++ library and way too many for the core language.

There are many application domains other than GUI and SQL/databases so U++ is not the answer to the prayers of all C++ programmers. The statements pretty much trash all other C++ libraries, yet there's a ton of brain power and peer reviewing goes into boost libraries. What is so effective about the U++ libraries compared to other C++ libraries? I doubt that many people would agree that C++ evolution is stuck.

In my opinion it would be better to say something like ...

Ultimate++ is a radical and innovative GUI toolkit whose number one priority is programmer productivity. C++ is a great programming language but C++ programmers are sometimes hampered by the lack of effective libraries. U++ libraries enable genuine productivity gains with shorter development times and greatly reduced application source code size. U++ includes a full featured GUI library and an optimised STL replacement (the NTL).

Phrases like "most productive in history" and "U++ finally uncovers this potential" are hype that make me uncomfortable. Until you get to know U++ (and I still don't) it's far from obvious that U++ libraries really are more effective than other libraries (It's certainly a very big claim) and the average person would be very skeptical. Hype will only reinforce this feeling and give the impression that U++ developers are one-eyed zealots.

Now don't go changing the web page just coz I said I didn't like it . I'm only one opinion and I honestly have no clue about the productivity gains that are claimed as I haven't used U++ anywhere as much as I'd like yet.

Graeme

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by mirek on Tue, 21 Feb 2006 13:57:32 GMT
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Quote:
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Sounds great. Thank you.

Mirek

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by jadeite on Tue, 21 Feb 2006 14:52:44 GMT
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gprentice wrote on Tue, 21 February 2006 07:49
Regarding the above sentence from the original post in this thread - it's good that the UPP website now says that "comparisons are tricky" when comparing U++ to other toolkits, and that you've tried to be fair (I hope this is true). The website also says U++ achieves RAD through "smart and aggressive"
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Now don't go changing the web page just coz I said I didn't like it . I'm only one opinion and I honestly have no clue about the productivity gains that are claimed as I haven't used U++ anywhere as much as I'd like yet.

Graeme

FWIW, I agree completely with Graeme.

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by jadeite on Tue, 21 Feb 2006 14:55:46 GMT
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gprentice wrote on Tue, 21 February 2006 06:07
I think I shall remain permanently logged in so as to always get the purple and green scheme
But, you can change your settings in preferences to your preferred colors. Just login, and your colors appear.
That is what I was told to do a couple of weeks ago; now you are on that side of the fence.

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by hojtsy on Tue, 21 Feb 2006 16:17:14 GMT
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I see these issues as the main obstacles for U++:
1) documentation coverage is the worst I have ever seen for any library
2) there is no well known big application built on it which would prove the concept (theIde is not a well known app!)
3) navigation in the topic browser is so inconvenient that even a single text file with all the docs would be better. At least a searchable panel with the class names should be provided ASAP as the first step.

4) it is perceived as a one-man project, meaning that:
4a) if something would happen to the one or two developpers the development would be discontinued
4b) some uncommon personal preferences appear which might not seem justified for the majority of developers. For example several other GUI toolkits get along quite well withouth inventing an own rich text format. Or that a hundred other text editors save only when the user requests it, but theIde knows better and saves anyway. Or the ColumnList scrolling vertically, while multi-column lists scrolls horizontally everywhere outside U++. Or that the root namespace is contaminated with 2000 global functions! This list could go on and on. I don't want to be offensive: I also have strange uncommon preferences but these should be suppressed when a library is developed for the public.

5) I feel that organization of website is unprofessional and confusing, but I can not pinpoint what exactly makes me feel this way. Altough I recently accepted to administer the updating of the website from the uppweb source, I am a developer, and not a web designer. So most probably my attempt to reorganize the site would result in something which is not any better.

I think that the strenghts of U++ are:
- very fast runtime & compile time
- feature rich
- some library services are very polished and forces a "wow": for example serialization, Nformat, xml parsing, logging, callbacks
- RAD if you already know how to use U++ (but learning is not easy enough)

I tried looking around the web for U++ related discussions. There are very few. I added a few lines to the wxWidgets wiki, mentioning some factual errors in their comparison to U++.
http://www.wxwidgets.org/wiki/index.php/WxWidgets_Compared_T
o_Other_Toolkits#wxWidgets_compared_to_Ultimate.2B.2B
Quote: wxWidgets compared to Ultimate++
* Ultimate++ only supports Windows and Linux, not MacOS
* The comparision on http://upp.sourceforge.net/www$vswx$en-us.html isn't really fair. The (very old) wxWidgets sample they took is well-commented and well-structured to show the reader how to design a wxWidgets application. Their implementation is uncommented and doesn't even behave the same. Also, a small example like that doesn't show how the toolkit scales to bigger applications.

(The reference to code comments is incorrect. The 600 line wxWidget sample on U++ page contains a sum total of 4 comment lines, namely: 1 occurence of "// Constructor and destructor", and 3 of "//precompiled headers". This does not qualify as well-commented. Also the hidden hint to the U++ example being not well-structured is unfair: it just employs a more simple and straightforward structure. - Sandor Hojtsy)Could you comment on the "behaves differently" part? It would be more fair to reproduce the functionality of the example exactly.

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by mirek on Tue, 21 Feb 2006 16:53:50 GMT
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Quote:
Could you comment on the "behaves differently" part? It would be more fair to reproduce the functionality of the example exactly.

I am not 100% sure. Well, to tell the truth, I have just implemented minesweeper game with same settings possibilities.

My only clue is that somebody some time ago complained about U++ version not being able to set the size of mine-field, by studying the code. The it turned out that he just compared sources and setting the size of minefield is 3 methods in wxWidget version, while in U++ it is handled without any additional method using THISBACK1:

```
menu.Add("Easy", THISBACK1(Level, Size(10, 10)))
.Check(level.cx == 10);
```

Whether this is what they are refering or not I do not know.

Other points carefuly read and taken. Thank you for comments.

Mirek

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by mirek on Tue, 21 Feb 2006 17:44:39 GMT
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P.S.: I deleted comments in wxWidgets so that comparison is more fair (those 4 left my attention), so perhaps it would be more correct to state it that way "comments were removed from wxWidgets example)

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by unodgs on Wed, 22 Feb 2006 08:00:59 GMT
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hojtsy wrote on Tue, 21 February 2006 11:17I see these issues as the main obstacles for U++:
1) documentation coverage is the worst I have ever seen for any library

It is not so bad.. believe me I can even say that Bulider C++ which I am force to use at work is much worse in this case. Besides upp has only 2 main developers, who most of their time spend on developing commercial apps..
I think we need to write more tutorials. This what is the most needed at the very begining. I wanted to write one about creating own widgets but there is always lack of time..
Quote:2) there is no well known big application built on it which would prove the concept (theIde is not a well known app!)

what about 'application wrtitten in upp'. There are quite a few
Quote:3) navigation in the topic browser is so inconvenient that even a single text file with all the docs would be better. At least a searchable panel with the class names should be provided ASAP as the first step.

agreed. And if the text could be selectable.. And some docs in topic browser should be always visible (not only when that and no other package is open).. like docs for ide

One more thought: We could deliver the chm doc-file with an installation.
Quote:4) it is perceived as a one-man project, meaning that:
4a) if something would happen to the one or two developpers the development would be discontinued

Iteresting I think about it from time to time But the community is growing, the first patches appeared from outside. I hope it will be continual tendency.
Quote:4b) some uncommon personal preferences appear which might not seem justified for the majority of developers. For example several other GUI toolkits get along quite well withouth inventing an own rich text format. Or that a hundred other text editors save only when the user requests it, but theIde knows better and saves anyway. Or the ColumnList scrolling vertically, while multi-column lists scrolls horizontally everywhere outside U++. Or that the root namespace is contaminated with 2000 global functions! This list could go on and on. I don't want to be offensive: I also have strange uncommon preferences but these should be suppressed when a library is developed for the public.

Having your own rich text format is an adavantage in my meaning.. You have full control on your documents, raports, etc.. Besides qtf can be easily converted to any other format.
Saving the files is in fact different to any other editor but I don't think it is an very important thing. I didn't have any problems to get used to it (and now I even miss it in others editors)

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by unodgs on Wed, 22 Feb 2006 08:14:57 GMT
View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

fudadmin wrote on Mon, 20 February 2006 13:087. there is no Grid widget
8 there are no regular expressions

7 There is - ArrayCtrl. And I want to add my GridCtrl soon
8 I will be working on it (because I need it) and I will public my wrapper for pcre, but I think that Mirek probably will be interested in his own solution and better integration with the whole upp lib.

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by mirek on Wed, 22 Feb 2006 08:21:46 GMT
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Quote:
Quote:3) navigation in the topic browser is so inconvenient that even a single text file with all the docs would be better. At least a searchable panel with the class names should be provided ASAP as the first step.

agreed. And if the text could be selectable.. And some docs in topic browser should be always visible (not only when that and no other package is open).. like docs for ide

We had a chat about this with Tom and it seems like things can start improving there as soon as the next week. First two issues to solve: browser will show everything from current nests instead of active packages only (but active will be bold) and there will be the search tool.

Mirek

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
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View Forum Message <> Reply to Message

hojtsy wrote on Tue, 21 February 2006 11:17I see these issues as the main obstacles for U++:

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o_Other_Toolkits#wxWidgets_compared_to_Ultimate.2B.2B
Quote: wxWidgets compared to Ultimate++
* Ultimate++ only supports Windows and Linux, not MacOS
* The comparision on http://upp.sourceforge.net/www$vswx$en-us.html isn't really fair. The (very old) wxWidgets sample they took is well-commented and well-structured to show the reader how to design a wxWidgets application. Their implementation is uncommented and doesn't even behave the same. Also, a small example like that doesn't show how the toolkit scales to bigger applications.

(The reference to code comments is incorrect. The 600 line wxWidget sample on U++ page contains a sum total of 4 comment lines, namely: 1 occurence of "// Constructor and destructor", and 3 of "//precompiled headers". This does not qualify as well-commented. Also the hidden hint to the U++ example being not well-structured is unfair: it just employs a more simple and straightforward structure. - Sandor Hojtsy)Could you comment on the "behaves differently" part? It would be more fair to reproduce the functionality of the example exactly.

BTW, the have edited the entry, dropped comments claim and changed "well-structured" to "over-engineered to show the wx design"

Mirek

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by ccf_h on Thu, 02 Mar 2006 20:27:41 GMT
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You may consider this stupid or unworthy for true geeks. But in my opinion it would win some additional (emotional) sympathy to add a sort of "human" perspective to the (truly amazing) technological perspective offered by U++. IMHO, it does not need to be yet another mascot. In my view this can be done just by telling the story of how this software was developed where and by whom and perhaps adding two or three pictures and putting it on the web site. Just a thought...

Subject: Re: U++ public image - please read and discuss...
Posted by mirek on Thu, 02 Mar 2006 21:18:16 GMT
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ccf_h wrote on Thu, 02 March 2006 15:27You may consider this stupid or unworthy for true geeks. But in my opinion it would win some additional (emotional) sympathy to add a sort of "human" perspective to the (truly amazing) technological perspective offered by U++. IMHO, it

does not need to be yet another mascot. In my view this can be done just by telling the story of how this software was developed where and by whom and perhaps adding two or three pictures and putting it on the web site. Just a thought...

Well, if it is supposed to help U++, I could reveal my ugly face

U++ history might be an interesting reading as well... I am just not quite sure whether there is time for D&E of U++

Mirek
