

Game

Programming

By Jeff Lindsay
Staff Writer

Part II

It gets better! Even though many people are able to learn the DirectX APIs, many people can't. It's not an easy thing to do! This is why some developers have created pre-made engines that make many of the functionality of DirectX as easy as VB's natural language! These engines can be used to create more specific engines for a game developer's project. Better yet, some engines are open-source!

There is a downside. Many of these engines are written in VB. This means that the performance will be slower than using DirectX directly. You're just going through even more VB to get to the APIs. Some people don't mind; it really depends on the use of the engines. Then there are people with more demanding projects that just don't want to learn C/C++. With the growing popularity of VB game programmers and the use of these pre-made engines, some have started to port these engines to C++, but can still be used by VB as well as any other language! TrueVision3D is a very popular VB engine currently being ported to C++. Once in C++ form, it may be a little harder to use, but still drastically easier than writing the DirectX API calls directly.

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Digital -What Does It Mean?

The term 'digital' means anything represented by discrete numerical values, rather than approximations. In the high-tech world,

digital means information represented by streams of numbers, instead of waves.



Digital Toaster

Whirlpool Corp's. **KitchenAid** unit now offers toasters that use a microprocessor to time the browning process. The company labels them "digital toasters," and they are selling like crazy for \$89.99.

"We're able to get a premium," says Sri Guraraj, brand manager for KitchenAid's toasters and blenders. "In the digital economy, just about anything that says "digital" sells. Digital marketers are slapping digital monikers on products whether they're digital or not".

Who? What?



They stack up in my Living Room..., along with the Wall Street Journal.

DIGITAL STRATEGIES

The CEO and founder of Lucrum Inc., the second place winner of Inc.'s annual web awards 2000 in the category: of innovation has a company motto: "Digital strategies that improve your bottom line."

Formerly Client Server Associates, in recent years the company has caught the Internet wave and refocused on cool E-business.

One of the things that helped Lucrum Inc. win was their use of multimedia, plus Lucrum Radio, a weekly Webcast on timely E-business topics and customer relationship management.

Listeners can tune in live or listen to an archived version of the radio show. "Customers can throw their desired content on a CD and play it in the car on the way to work," says CEO John Bostick.

News of the Weird

Can anyone out there possibly guess what **Digivations** means?

Well, I wouldn't have been able to, either. It is **Global Digital Technology and Media Conference** by the University of California Systemwide **Digital Media Innovation Program!**

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As you can see, there are many paths a VB user can use to produce very high quality games. You can use an easy-to-use pre-made engine, or write the DirectX calls yourself. There will always be the performance factor of the VB code you'd write to interact with the engine, but if that's too much of a problem, you should just use C/C++ with a DirectX engine, like the upcoming C++ version of TrueVision3D. Just remember than being a Visual Basic programmer doesn't prevent you from making very high quality 2D and 3D games!

Thanks Jeff!

Next Month: **Multiplayer games** -- Watch for this feature article by *writer/programmer*

Tom Gurka

Digital Signature - What is it?

I can best explain it by saying it is an encrypted bit of text that serves as a digital guarantee that a document has not been altered, as if it were delivered to you in a sealed, FedEx envelope.

Digital Certificate - What is it?

This is like an ID Card, issued by a trusted third party known as certificate authorities. This process uses something called public key encryption, or 'digital ID' technology. The certification process varies among different certificate authorities, also known as CA's.

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Digital Secretary

Riverside, CA

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