From: David Cole
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 1996 11:40 AM
To: Kurt Eckhardt; Satoshi Nakajima; Chris Guzak; IE 4.0 Executive Team; Joe Belfiore; Julie Larson
Subject: RE: Browser and ActiveDesktop

In this model, we'd still own shell32.dll and we'd add features to it for the os release and perhaps hooks to make integration even better. Let's be clear, we own shell32.dll until we have everything we need there and are totally convinced we don't need it to win on the internet. Let's not start talking about handing it over at this point.

-----Original Message-----
From: Kurt Eckhardt
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 1996 9:15 AM
To: Satoshi Nakajima; Chris Guzak; IE 4.0 Executive Team; Joe Belfiore; Julie Larson; David Cole
Subject: RE: Browser and ActiveDesktop

One note on this: We also have external commitments to other groups (NT5/Memphis) to do several work items for them as we are suppose to be "The Shell Team", so we will still probably need to change shell32 to achieve these goals.

I do agree that we need to do something about robustness and the like, but I personally do not understand why if we turn off all of the features why the performance should be slower. There are some cases like: we load OLE at boot time, but if most people who have W95 also have office they will load OLE as part of startup anyway.

If we want to totally decouple the shell from the browser, maybe we should form two team, the shell team and browser team and have each one work on the corresponding parts. Potentially the platform team would then own the shell... I personally would hate this as we worked for N years to become the team and I would hate to lose it, but maybe that would be right model, especially if we keep shying away from wanting to fix the stuff in the originally shipped shell...

-----Original Message-----
From: Satoshi Nakajima
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 1996 9:00 AM
To: Chris Guzak; Kurt Eckhardt; IE 4.0 Executive Team; Joe Belfiore; Julie Larson; David Cole
Subject: RE: Browser and ActiveDesktop

It's good to have a decision like this. We need to investigate hard what we will loose if we don't update shell32.dll even in the full IE 4.0 install -- that's an option we've never considered. It will definetely simplify our testing metrix and is a good way to cut dev/testing cost. If we can achieve this, the packaging will be like this:

Browser-only IE 4.0: Same components as IE 3.0 (iexplorer.exe, shdocvw.dll, mshtml.dll, ...)
Full IE 4.0: Replaces explorer.exe (but not shell32.dll) + other new components for IE4 specific features

Regarding the robustness of the shell process, I wrote a memo to Lin yesterday, which is consistent with the decision for de-coupling.

<< Message: Robust IE: Browsing web in a different process >>

From: David Cole
Sent: Wednesday, December 11, 1996 6:36 AM
To: Chris Guzak; Kurt Eckhardt; Satoshi Nakajima; IE 4.0 Executive Team; Joe Belfiore; Julie Larson
Subject: Browser and ActiveDesktop

After thinking about this for the past couple of days, it's clear to me (and others) that we must de-couple the Browser from ActiveDesktop and the shell integration features. ActiveDesktop and the new shell UI must be a completely optional component for users and corporations. The default is the IE 4 browser without the shell enhancements. If the user installs the new shell, they will have some things to learn and pay a performance price.

By coupling these together, I think the overall effort has suffered. We've got a compromised new shell design that tries to be too Windows 95 shell compatible in my view. We don't have HTML on the desktop

because we are worried about performance. But even in compatibility mode, performance will degrade and there will be differences that could stall adoption of the browser platform.

The big question to answer is what does decoupling mean?

- Does it mean we always install a new shell32 but there's a mode where changes are turned off? This is good for testing since there's only 1 shell32 to test, but it will break some utility apps, performance will suffer, and some UI will not be exactly the same, even in UI compat mode.
- Does it mean producing a browser release which doesn't touch Shell32 and another which does? This is horrible for testing, and frankly I don't know how to get both of these done at the same time.

What I really want is a browser and ActiveDesktop which do not change shell32 at all, or at most some carefull hooks are added and we ship it everywhere. I do not understand why most of ActiveDesktop can't be done without any shell changes at all. Can't shdocvw just "take over" if the new UI/Activedesktop is turned on without changing shell32? All folders could be done by shdocview, the new UI startbars and such should just float on top or be activex controls in the desktop html.

I'm sure there are issues with this approach, but I am serious about us looking at this way of doing things. Shell people, please map this out asap and meet with me. I'm free all afternoon I think.

With no shell32 changes at all, tell me what ActiveDesktop features can be done and which can't. Tell me exactly which changes are needed, for each additional thing in the ActiveDesktop.

There is also this nagging issue of the shell and internet content getting run in the same process, which seems horrible to me. I realize these issues are contentious, but it's time we got over them so we can ship.

David

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