

Re: Session Variables – why aren't novice developers warned?

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- *From:* "Patrice" <scribe@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Wed, 18 Oct 2006 16:52:29 +0200
-

Also this is a browser dependant problem, not really something caused by VS/ASP.NET. Plus this is not necessarily a problem for most of us...

What is your scenario ?

—

Patrice

"Bille" <belgie@xxxxxxxx> a écrit dans le message de news:
et7L5Es8GHA.2120@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Marina, I certainly agree with everything you say – particularly in not putting the blame on others!

However, I also feel that this potential hazard is severe enough that it should be explicitly identified as a disadvantage. Worst of all, it is a shortcoming that can go undetected, compromising data until finally noticed. I expect there may be countless ASP applications deployed which are silently adding orders to the wrong customer and the like because the developer did not stumble across this issue.

You can research session state very thoroughly without finding any reference to this damaging problem.

Respectfully, can you tell me where this issue is raised in MSDN, for example, so that a developer responsibly researching the use of session state prior to implementation would be likely to find it? Search on "session state disadvantages" for example – performance is the only disadvantage mentioned.

Thanks!
Bill

"Marina Levit [MVP]" <someone@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message
<news:O%23AAO2r8GHA.940@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

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I am sure we can all identify hundreds of ways that a novice could screw up their entire application. It does not mean that MS can identify or document all of them.

It is best to not make assumptions and to research how things work before relying on them. That is what the job of a developer is – and sometimes you can only learn by making mistakes. You don't put the blame on others.

"Bille" <belgie@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:%23L4PAyr8GHA.4116@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Thanks for your response Mark.

I would ask why it is not a fundamental role of the Visual Studio documentation to identify the potentially damaging risks associated with the use of Session Variables?

I think it is a basic role of documentation to point out potential pitfalls and provide guidance on correct usage.

Thanks!
Bill

"Mark Fitzpatrick" <markfitz@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:%23i1s3or8GHA.4572@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Bill,
Unfortunatley, that's not the job of documentation. The docs are meant to instruct on a particular subject, not to speculate on the pros and cons. There are plenty of articles out there as well as books that discuss these pros and cons in–depth. The pros and cons have been discussed now for the better part of a decade so the information is there, it's just not the place of the documentation to inform you of comparisons with other technologies and with the pros and cons. It's the docs job simply to explain and instruct on the particular topic. Before attempting to implement something new, it's always useful to

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seek out some of the info that's out there on a topic. For example, there are plenty of articles out there on session variables, how to use them in web-farms, high-jacking of cookiless sessions, etc., as developers we just need to seek them out as the docs are never the be-all and end-all on a subject.

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Hope this helps,
Mark Fitzpatrick
Former Microsoft FrontPage MVP
199?-2006

"Bille" <belgie@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:OZ2foZr8GHA.2288@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

When a user opens a new IE browser window using File-New-Window the integrity of an application which relies on session state is COMPLETELY undermined. Anyone who overlooks the fact that File-New-Window creates an instance of IE in the same process with the same SessionID as the parent window is in big trouble. This fundamentally restricts the usefulness of using session state management.

I probably missed it somewhere – can someone please help me find where in the Visual Studio 2005 documentation this pitfall is PLAINLY mentioned? Such that developers seeking basic

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guidance will not fail to note the warning? There are articles which explain elementary concepts such as how to create a session variable, without pointing out this serious hazard.

I have read the articles entitled Session State Overview, Session Identifiers, Session State Events, etc. and I can't find this trap openly described. For example, the article ASP.NET State Management Recommendations identifies only performance considerations in the Disadvantage of Using Session State section.

Why aren't developers warned of this while the basics of ASP.NET development are being explained?

I agree that the injudicious use of global variables in any type of application is sloppy and can incur pitfalls. However, in most types of applications global variables are limited in scope to the instance of the application. If there are multiple instances of the same application open on one machine, each instance has its own scope. I think many (most?) asp

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developers may have naive expectations that this is the case when using session variables in an asp application hosted by Internet Explorer. I did.

–Bill

"GroupReader"

<newsgroups_01@xxxxxxxxxxx>

wrote in message

news:1161148121.175510.124660@xx

You'll have these issues *any* time you use global variables in *any* type of application. It's best to use local variables whenever possible. In asp.net this translates to passing your variables around from form to form. Use querystring variables or form variables instead. Sorry I don't have a decent solution, but one

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more
thought:
I think your
issue may
get worse
when IE7
introduces
"tabbed
browsing" ...
which
makes it
much easier
to "open
new
windows".
Maybe
there's an IE
setting that
tells IE to
start a new
session
when a new
window is
opened(?)