

## Re: Stand Alone EXE

**Source:** <http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/DotNet/microsoft.public.dotnet.general/2005-03/2296.html>

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**From:** Jim Hubbard (*reply\_at\_groups.please*)

**Date:** 03/20/05

Date: Sun, 20 Mar 2005 03:41:13 -0500

"Jon Skeet [C# MVP]" <skeet@pobox.com> wrote in message  
news:MPG.1ca737a5234ba24498be9e@msnews.microsoft.com...  
> *Jim Hubbard <reply@groups.please> wrote:*  
>> > *How does Thinstall help here? While Thinstall is available for Windows*  
>> > *95, I doubt that it magically lets you run .NET 1.1 applications on*  
>> > *Windows 95, for example. (If it \*does\* effectively change your*  
>> > *operating system capability, I'm even more worried about the*  
>> > *compatibility with the real framework.)*  
>>  
>> *It does run on Win95A+. It does so by basically creating a virtual*  
>> *machine*  
>> *that your original exe and dependencies run in. Since your application*  
>> *is*  
>> *running in a virtual machine (with a virtual registry) you actually don't*  
>> *alter the core OS at all.*  
>  
> *But .NET 1.1 requires things that W95A doesn't provide – otherwise MS*  
> *would have made it run there. If Thinstall is shipping the libraries*  
> *from other OSes in order to run, I think there's a serious potential*  
> *legal issue which would worry me considerably. (I think there already*  
> *is in shipping \*bits\* of the .NET framework, to be honest.)*

I had asked Jonathan about the legal issues long ago and he assures me that there aren't any that they are aware of. Microsoft has looked into Thinstall. You can read their review at <http://thinstall.com/help/index.html?msdnfeb2005.htm> .

If there were legal issues, I'm sure that Microsoft would not have issued this review, and would have surely contacted JIT with any concerns by now.

>  
>> *Being worried about a new technology is the sign of a good developer.*  
>> *Only*  
>> *sloppy developers aren;t concerned that a new technology will break their*  
>> *code. Overcoming this concern can only be done by trying Thinstall*  
>> *yourself.*  
>

- > *I don't think it can actually be done. I'd never trust Thinstall to run*
- > *exactly the same as the real .NET any more than I'd trust two OSes to*
- > *run exactly the same way.*

It does not seem that you would be interested in Thinstall. And, that's perfectly fine. Not everyone will be interested in Thinstall. Some people like to stick with the old methods of software distribution. I don't sell Thinstall. But, if I can point you to something that may help you, I am happy to do so.

So why all the questions about a product you are not interested in? IMHO, you really should try Thinstall (or any application) before you pass judgement.

- >
- >> *> That cuts out your financial argument too, as far as I can see – and*
- >> *> I'd suggest that the cost of using Thinstall (e.g. the double testing*
- >> *> that I mentioned before) is going to have to be passed on to the users*
- >> *> at some point...*
- >>
- >> *As a professional developer, you need to test your Thinstall apps on all*
- >> *supported OSs. But, you'd have to do that anyway – even without*
- >> *Thinstall.*
- >
- > *Yes, but if I'm going to have two different deployment models, one with*
- > *Thinstall and one without, that doubles the testing effort. I need to*
- > *test on XP with Thinstall, XP without Thinstall, 2000 with Thinstall,*
- > *2000 without Thinstall etc.*

You won't have 2 deployment models. The idea is to use Thinstall as your sole deployment model. This way you would still have the same testing that you have today.

If you could deploy your applications as a single EXE that requires no external dependencies, has built-in licensing, has auto-update functionality, does not require administrative privileges to "install" and run, encrypts your internal exes and data and will not be adversely affected by changes to the .Net framework – why would you also do a deployment without Thinstall?

- >
- >> *Thinstall is (in essence) a distribution application, much like an*
- >> *installer – except that Thinstall minimizes the changes to a user'*
- >> *system,*
- >> *allows a much wider distribution of your application and protects your*
- >> *application in ways that common distribution avenues cannot.*
- >>
- >> *Thinstall is not for everyone. It makes more sense for the professional*
- >> *developer of a widely distributed (sold) application and for desktop*
- >> *development and distribution inside large companies that wish to make*
- >> *sure*

>> *that newer applications do not have a negative impact on their current  
>> applications.*  
>>  
>> *In the later instance, Thinstall actually saves time. You know it won;t  
>> break what's already on the user's PC, so testing compliancy with other  
>> applications is eliminated.*  
>>  
>> *Like I said, Thinstall is not for everyone. But, professional developers  
>> will see the value of Thinstall very quickly.*  
>  
> *I think many will see some of the problems I've outlined too though.*

Maybe I've missed something. I don't see any problems. Could you please post the problems you see for the benefit of folks like me that may have missed them?

Jim Hubbard

"Every man, woman and child has something they can teach you. Be sure to listen."