

Re: Deployment under Vista

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/VB/microsoft.public.vb.general.discussion/2007-07/msg02787.html>

- *From:* "BeastFish" <no@xxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 28 Jul 2007 16:10:10 -0400
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Usually, top posting is appreciated in technical groups because one does not need to scroll down to see the reply. But when replying to a reply that was bottom posted (or vice versa), the appropriate courtesy is to "go with the flow" as to not be confusing.

"Sally" <me@xxxxxxx> wrote in message news:46ab94f6@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Thanks. That's made CDSIL clearer to me. BTW, your top post actually confused me! Was it your way of teaching me that it's best not to?

"Randy Birch" <rgb_removethis@xxxxxxx> wrote in message news:0D5687C7-622C-4AB0-BC3E-BC14C1B5796C@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Under the user security model of Vista, applications can not write to folders outside the folders assigned to the user's profile. This is a combination of a special path designated by Windows and the current

logged

on user's name. For example, my app-friendly folder is rooted at `c:\users\birchr\application data\<program name>`.

Now, note I use drive C for my Windows drive, as do a good number of people but not all. So while in my case it would be safe to presume the initial path is `c:\users\`, this is not always the case so must be determined on

a

per-machine basis. Similarly the user's name must also be determined in some fashion.

Thankfully Windows provides a mechanism – which I warn will look extremely

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complicated to a newbie – to determine these types of things.

Technically

the roots used to be called namespaces in Windows parlance; we (users

and

especially developers) typically call them "special folders". In Windows 95 through XP, each special is represented by and accessed using a special constant and a Windows API or two, and these constants are prefaced with the letters CSIDL, which stands for "constant special item ID list". Under Vista the name was changed (somewhat gratuitously I might add) to become "known folders" – I guess "special folders" was too technical for users. Consequently, under Vista CSIDLs were changed into KNOWNFOLDERIDs, although a CSIDL is backwards compatible. IOW, your app can call CSIDL values and get the expected results under Vista, which is a Good Thing since I've not updated my site with the KNOWNFOLDERID constants.

Anyhow, once you get your head around this you have to realize that

there

are two types of "special" (or "known") folders – those that return disk paths (such as CSIDL_MYDOCUMENTS), and those that return non-physical locations that can not be accessed by simply using standard path/file syntax (such as CSIDL_BITBUCKET – aka the recycle bin).

So ... this is a long introduction to the point: Under Vista it is your app's responsibility to only create working files in the folder(s) assigned to the user and marked as accessible for read/write by applications. The Program Files, while it can be used as an installation path by someone with admin rights (under Vista), is off-limits for the day-to-day record keeping a file might do. So is the Windows folder, which was traditionally

defined

by Microsoft as *the* place for saving INI files (application settings files – ini standing for initialization).

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In order to ascertain the correct path to write to under any Windows version, and especially Vista, you have to use** the Windows API to

obtain

the correct paths – a demo of this is presented at <http://vbnet.mvps.org/code/browse/csidl.htm>. (Check out the parent

folder

too for some other cool things that CSIDLs can be used for. And for

code

that just get's the name of the currently logged on user – not needed

with

the above since the user name is included in the data returned, but

often

useful nonetheless, see

<http://vbnet.mvps.org/code/core/getusername.htm>).

** Qualification: you don't *have to* — one could potentially consent

to

a level of flagellation that would astound even Silas, by blurting out

that

another possibility might be considering the use of the shell object to get this info. But I am not one to enjoy suffering, especially given the torrent of adverse, severe (and possibly fatal but definitely deserved) ridicule and abuse that would come forth from the more knowledgeable participants of this group for making such a sacrilegious suggestion. So please note that I have not advocated nor supported that you undertake this self-destructive

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path.

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Randy Birch
MS MVP, Visual Basic
<http://vbnet.mvps.org/>

Please respond to the newsgroups so all can benefit.

"Sally" <me@xxxxxxx> wrote in message
[news:46aa4934\\$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:46aa4934$1@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

Firstly, many thanks to those who replied in previous threads in an
effort

to guide this idiot along.

Unfortunately the sheer volume of information and some of the
(inevitably)

differing opinions made me even more confused. People who have pointed
me

at
what to them are obvious things understandably get annoyed when I appear
not
to have noted them, but in some cases their assertions have been

disagreed

with by others. Added to that is my habit of replying on the fly, when
there
are more posts to come. Also, I haven't figured out a way of going back
through a thread, so once I've replied to the last post I lose the

thread

(literally). I am using CTRL-U to advance through unread messages and my
Outlook (NOT Outlook Express) apparently does not easily allow me step
back.

As for VB, I've learned a few things, I hope, and I'll summarise here
just

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how far I've got and see if there's a way forward that's uncomplicated.

Let's call my app Fred.exe and it uses say two random access files, Ledger.Dat and Transact.Dat. (not difficult to fathom out what the app does!).

Anyway, this app works perfectly under XP Home. I have used the PDW

Wizard

to deploy it, and the result is

1) The Install suggests that the app is placed in C:\Programs. I accept that default.

2) As for the data files, I have hardcoded within my app to create a directory C:\FredData, and then lines like this

```
Open "C:\FredData\Ledger.Dat" For Random As #1 Len=255
```

As I said, it all works under XP Home.

Now, a colleague is running Vista and I want to post him a CD so that he can install my app and use it. BUT, I don't want to risk messing up his system, which runs many critical applications. It is not so serious if he has trouble running mine. But it would certainly be serious if in attempting to install mine some files or settings on his Vista were messed up. That

was

my anxiety.

So far, I think I have gleaned that

A) Any files apart from my app that PDW bundles on the deployment disc will not overwrite any of his that might be later (that cures one worry... IF I've got that right).

B) The app should not go in root (meaning C: direct). In that respect perhaps Vista makes a similarly appropriate default suggestion to the Programs directory in XP Home?

C) The data files should not go in root. In that respect, perhaps my hardcoded C:\FredData\... will do the trick?

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A, B and C really encapsulate my concerns.

If anyone has the time and patience to reply in as uncomplicated way as possible, I would be grateful. For those who are fed up with this stupid bird please do not reply! I guess if no-one replies the message is

obvious

and maybe I'll go back to my crochet (sniff)... no knitting here.

Perhaps

that challenge will encourage the experts who have difficulty coming

down

to a newbie's level not to reply. At times I felt like a 6 year old trying

to

understand how subtraction works being given the formula for the

resonant

frequency of an LC combination by a learned professor who knows all

about

electronics and nothing about 6 year olds.

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