

Re: How to get the documents in detail?

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- *From:* "Alexander Nickolov" <agnickolov@xxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 14 May 2007 14:33:22 -0700
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What you are describing is a good book. Not MSDN Library.
May I kindly direct you to amazon.com or your closest local bookstore?

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MVP VC FAQ: <http://vcfaq.mvps.org>
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"Jason S" <jmsachs@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message
<news:1179148851.531038.209050@xx>

On May 13, 9:48 am, "Igor Tandetnik" <itandet...@xxxxxxx> wrote:

Specifically what details do you feel are missing from MSDN documentation? Do you have any particular problem?

I have to agree with the OP's comment. MSDN docs are abysmal for anyone trying to learn how/when to use a particular interface (I guess they're vaguely OK as a reference if you are already familiar w/ the interface), and they are split apart into so many different webpages that it's extremely cumbersome to use them. IObjectWithSite (<http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms693765.aspx>) is discussed in abstract terms without giving any concrete examples of why/when you might want to use such a thing, and the web page took me 23 seconds to finish downloading. I clicked on the SetSite link and it took 22 seconds to download. They are also next-to-impossible to print out properly.

Microsoft seems to have architected the MSDN docs to be viewable online only, and autogenerated from some database without any attempt to make them understandable or useful to the novice programmer.

A halfway decent documentation on this interface would have put the method documentation in the same page as the overall interface

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description (there are few enough methods and they are each short enough to include inline) and would have explained a few sentences like, "For instance, in an application where there is a main window, blah blah blah is an example of a possible site and a yeah yeah yeah is an object which can be contained in the site. Blah blah blah and yeah yeah yeah should be in-process objects to avoid the cost of marshalling."

The root webpages for interfaces (e.g. <http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms693372.aspx> for OLE/data transfer) should give a list of these interfaces and a brief description of each.

These pages aren't too bad (<http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms692707.aspx> and <http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ms693383.aspx>) but again, they're split apart into so many different web pages, with each new link taking 15–30 seconds to download, that it becomes very cumbersome.

A really good documentation would be a white paper in .PDF format that includes all of the above along with some basic examples of use and some common pitfalls to avoid. I'm an electrical engineer and for semiconductor IC's it is the norm for component datasheets to be in PDF form with a minimum number of different documents; in many cases a single 8–10 page datasheet is sufficient, and sometimes there is a 2nd PDF file which is an "application note" so they split up the specification & suggested use information into 2 documents. Processor ICs tend to be a bit more complicated with maybe a half-dozen documents taking 1000–2000 pages total, but it is still possible to print them out and read them all without having to navigate a maze of webpage links. The same thing goes for MATLAB documentation; you can search and browse the Web if you want, but you can also print out PDF files for each general area of use (basic programming techniques, graphics, signal processing, etc.) and after you read a PDF file you have a decent general understanding of what's going on, and where to look if you have further specific questions.

Not true for Microsoft's MSDN. With all the billions of dollars floating around that company, I just don't see why they can't spend 0.001% of their money on good documentation for their standard interfaces so people can learn to use them without having to thrash around in the dark.