

Re: Recommend a debugger

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"Susan Rice" <srice1@xxxxxxx> wrote in message
[news:HHzxh.25996\\$u92.7325@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:HHzxh.25996$u92.7325@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)

What is VS? I have Microsoft Visual C++ 6.0, and Microsoft Visual C++ 2005 Express Edition installed. Can I debug using one of those?
How do I get it started, since all I have is the .exe and the .dll?
And is there a way to set a breakpoint in a routine in the .dll?

Susan, as others have said, Visual C++ is part of Visual Studio. The problem is you have VC6 which has poor remote debugging, and VC2005 Express which does not debug native code at all (I think... doesn't Express only produce managed programs?)

The easiest thing is if you could install VC6 on the PC that is crashing. Then build debug debug versions of your .exe/.dll that is crashing and debug them from within the IDE, normally.

If it isn't possible to install VC on the PC that is crashing, you can install something like WinDbg or OllyDbg. Both of these debuggers will show you symbolic info (only available in debug versions of your .exe and .dll) like variable names, function names in the call stack, etc. just as if you were debugging in the IDE, but you have to learn the UI of these debuggers.

Instead of having to learn a new debugger, I like to remote debug instead. This means installing a small "Debug Monitor" program (e.g. MSVCMON.exe) on the PC that is crashing which allows you to run the VC debugger on another machine and debug the program as if you were running the program on the PC that has VC installed. It's very nice, but I don't believe this is well supported on the 2 versions of VC that you have.

One final option is to start drwtsn32.exe (available in c:\windows\system32) which will produce "minidump" (.dmp) files containing crash info such as callstack and variable values. You then transfer this file to your PC with VC installed and load the .dmp file into VC. It will then show you the crash as if the program had crashed in the IDE. Very cool. Unfortunately, you need VC2002 or later to load .dmp files. Sorry. Have you considered upgrading your VC?

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Good luck,
David (MVP)

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