

Re: grid

Source: <http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/VC/microsoft.public.vc.mfc/2007-04/msg02120.html>

- *From:* Joseph M. Newcomer <newcomer@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Tue, 24 Apr 2007 20:57:23 -0400
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The notation was invented in the days before there was cross-boundary prototype checking in the C compilers (pre-ANSI C). Also, HN as originally designed did NOT include the representation type with the name; it used the LOGICAL CONCEPT as a type, but NEVER anything as stupid as 'dw' was used (I got this from private email from a developer who was there when it was invented, and who was part of the Word development team where it was used, but doesn't want his name disclosed. He says that the Windows group saw HN, completely missed the point of it, and misapplied it uniformly everywhere. I agree with him. As designed, it would actually have served a useful purpose. As used in Windows, it is merely noise, and often erroneous and misleading noise. Any programmer too lazy to look up the declaration of a variable has deeper problems that HN won't solve.)

HN should be discouraged, and the total disregard of it in C# is a significant step forward. HN as used in Windows is a colossal step backward, confusing the concept of interface and representation. It was a mistake. It was a misapplication of what was probably a reasonable idea in pre-ANSI compilers, but which is irrelevant in modern programming. Between Intellisense and the browser, it is nothing more than a waste of space and intellectual overhead. Think of the really, really, REALLY STUPID ideas, such as the name 'wParam' being a 32-bit or 64-bit value, or 'lParam' being a 32-bit or 64-bit value. We will ignore the huge number of failures in the PSDK, such as VOID psz, LPCTSTR dw, and so on that are easily findable (I found at least 30 such errors with minimal effort, which is 30 more errors than should have been allowed to exist. It is almost as bad as the horror of naming fields in structs with prefixes that indicate the type of the struct, such as tmHour, tmMinute, and tmSecond, a throwback to an exceptionally poor C compiler, the K&R compiler, that declared all field names as global names, because structs were an afterthought. This is the same design error that gave us "." and "->" as different operators for the same concept, field access of a structure).

Therefore, whatever purpose it might once have served, it is largely irrelevant today. Given how poorly it is used, it should be abandoned (consider BOOL fOption; if it is a BOOL, it is not an f-type! f- is for Flags, meaning some bit pattern derived from | logic. Or why is dwMask not fMask? Who CARES if it is DWORD declaration? The list goes on and on...)

Microsoft adopted it and has a tendency to not let go of bad ideas, and did it to death. Therefore, I consider its use in all Microsoft products as merely an example of how a corporate tradition can propagate fundamentally bad ideas long past their useful lifetime, and in any case since nearly ALL instances in Windows are a misuse of the original idea, all uses in Windows are suspect.

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I see no reason to continue to live with the mistakes imposed on us by obsolete and irrelevant software. We are living in a world of C with prototypes and C++, and we should live in that world, not the world of the mid-1970s or the mid-1980s. Otherwise, we should all be programming in FORTRAN, PASCAL, and Algol-60. Our tools mature, and we should mature with them, not carry obsolete methodologies around because they once had a purpose. And we should certainly not carry around perversions of what may have been sound ideas at the time.

joe

On Mon, 23 Apr 2007 08:53:10 GMT, MrAsm <mrasm@xxxxxxx> wrote:

On Sun, 22 Apr 2007 14:26:58 -0400, Joseph M. Newcomer
<newcomer@xxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Hi Joe,

```
int iWindowWid, iWindowHei;
```

Generally, it is good practice to avoid using commas in declaration lists. One variable, one line. It would be a lot better use of the names if you eliminated the 'i' (which conveys nothing useful) or the "Window" (which conveys nothing useful) and simply called them "Width" and "Height", which would mean the meaningless abbreviations of the most important part of the name would be eliminated.

So, it seems to me that you don't like the Hungarian Notation, or you don't consider HN useful.

I agree especially for simple cases like integers and the "i" or "n" prefix.

But, why was this notation invented?

And why Windows PSDK, and even some of the MFC and ATL sources [*], use HN? Is HN important in huge projects? (However, it seems that in the "new" C# world, HN has been discouraged by Microsoft coding standards.)

[*] I downloaded ATL Server shared-sources:

<http://blogs.msdn.com/vcblog/archive/2007/03/02/atl-server-shared-source-release-now-available.aspx>
<http://www.codeplex.com/AtlServer>

and they use prefixes like sz, str, wsz, etc.

Thanks in advance,

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MrAsm

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MVP Tips: http://www.flounder.com/mvp_tips.htm

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