

Teresa Jennings

From: Jonathan Lazarus
To: Paul Maritz; Jim Allchin
Cc: Bob Muglia; Doug Henrich
Subject: FW: OLE issues that could hit in coming weeks
Date: Wednesday, October 06, 1993 12:58PM

The real question is not PR but the sheer stupidity of it all. The OLE2 process has been molded to suit XL/Word and even that isn't good enough to gain any user oriented simplicity. Can we expect this to get any better in the Chicago or even Cairo time frames?

From: Dave Seres
To: Doug Henrich; Jonathan Lazarus
Subject: RE: OLE issues that could hit in coming weeks
Date: Tuesday, October 05, 1993 9:35AM

Here's some mail on Word/XL inconsistencies with our guidelines. The bottom line is that we don't even agree among ourselves on how OLE2 apps should interoperate -- a sad state of affairs. I think Collins is right -- we are exposed here sending mixed messages. A recent example of that was a question I got from PC Computing on Drag/Drop linking. The editor asked me about it and I said "sure, we support that". Then later I learned that XL doesn't plan to do it which doesn't help my credibility. How can we presume to tell the ISV community on how to be good OLE 2 citizens when we don't observe our own guidelines? I think there is zero chance to get Word/XL to change at this late date. The long term result will be that they will set the defacto standard and some of the ISVs will follow based on market forces. I think this requires some direction from the top to straighten this out.

-Dave

From: Tim Satalich
To: Beverley Flower
Cc: Adam Waalkes; Dave Seres; Doug Henrich; Randy Kerr; Steve Madigan
Subject: RE: Editors Review Guidelines for OLE 2
Date: Monday, September 20, 1993 5:57PM

Beverley,

Here's what you requested. I'm still checking on the "Activate as" issue with the Word people. I would not however expect to change the guidelines because of their response.

Tim

* Of course the Title bar issue:

It used to be that the active object's name was in the title bar. The current UI guidelines that will be published at the end of this month were changed explicitly so that Word and Excel would conform without doing any work. I lobbied heavily to have them changed to follow the Chicago/Cairo document centric model - see complete mail below. I think this decision by Heikki & Chris were the result of their closing issues in their lame duck period. This will be a big inconsistency at the Win 32 PDC in december where theoretically OLE 2 ui guidelines become a part of the Chicago guidelines and there will be differences between them. Simply stated, the current guidelines reinforces an application centric model. This may be satisfactory in the win 3.1 world but the guidelines should reflect where we want developers to be in the chicago timeframe.



Mail on Title bar

* I just noticed that when excel is inplace active, it places the File, Help & Window menu items to the far right. (e.g., Edit, View, ..., File, Help, Windows) This is definitely bad. If this is not a bug, I really have to scratch my head. If what they are trying to accomplish is placing the container level menus to the far right

they haven't even succeeded in this because Help belongs to the active object. This is really strange & I hope it's just a bug.

* Workspace menus — Word does not rename the File/Exit command to indicate that this will close the whole document.
-This guideline was changed to "Recommended" as a result of Word & Excel non-compliance. Users should know what this command really affects. If an in-place object is active and the user goes to File/Exit, the user should be able to determine that the effect of this action is to exit Word or Excel, NOT to exit the active object.

* Word and XL do not have a "Show Objects" option.
-This guideline was changed to "Recommended" as a result of Word & Excel non-compliance. Users should be able to determine at a glance whether something in the document is native data, embedded or linked without having to interact with it.

* Word and XL do not show possibly-out-of-date links in grey.
-This guideline was changed to "Recommended" as a result of Word & Excel non-compliance. Users should be able to determine that perhaps critical information is not up to date. Otherwise, users will continually update links when there is no need or mistakenly believe links are up to date when they are not.

* Word does not allow insitu insitu editing when it is the application in-between. (it would work fine theoretically in the scenario where WordArt is inside XL5 book inside a Word document.) This is a deficiency in Word that should have been caught, but did not until too late.
-This is a known and unanticipated deficiency.

* XL5 and T3 list Ctrl-X,C,V for shortcuts to cut,copy,paste on the pop-up menus.
-These are not particularly critical because they simply map to the standard Windows shortcuts. In general, however, keyboard interfaces to Pop-up menus are not needed because the menu items are a subset of the standard menu items that already have keyboard access defined. Pop-ups are simply accelerators for mouse users that allow them shorter navigation to common menu commands.

* links on the pop-up menu are: <Verb> <shortclassname> Link (e.g., Open Worksheet Link).
-The guidelines recommend <Verb> Linked <shortclassname> (e.g., Open Linked Worksheet). The rationale for this is two fold: 1) Readability, 2) We want the subject of the verb to be the object type (Worksheet) not the type of association (Link). In the current implementation, Worksheet is an adjective and Link is the subject. The guidelines make Worksheet the subject and Linked the adjective. See mail below.



Mail on Linked menu names

* There are no upgrade dialogs explaining the differences between this and the last version of an ole applet.
-This would help the user decide whether or not to upgrade.

* "Activate As" functionality is available only after setup in the Convert dialog.
-The guidelines state that an application at installation time should detect if an older version exists and if it does, the user should be given the option to upgrade all of the older version objects to the new version automatically the next time each is activated. An upgrade dialog should mention any important differences between the versions which might help the user decide whether or not to upgrade. The new application may offer to emulate the older version objects without actually converting them to the new format.

* There is no ability to tell if the user has used some XL5 (or T3) functionality when they are trying to save out as XL4 (or WW2). Therefore, there is no warning dialog in that event.

* Word will not have the dialog that can GOTO the Convert dialog when there is no server for the activated object.

-The guidelines provide the quickest way for users to get back to their task by allowing them to convert from this dialog then get back to work. The issue here is that we tried to avoid having the user figure out what is wrong and fix it then get back to work. This is a severe interruption to their work flow.

* Word can not select a table and then "Convert" it to a Graph.
-The intent here was not to be specific to Word's table and graph. It was to point out that if one object can interpret another object's data into its own structure, this could be used in the Convert dialog. An object would have to register itself as being able to convert one object's data type into its own structure. This is similar to the Cairo model of "Structure vs. Content". Perhaps a better example would be converting a Word Outline to a Powerpoint Presentation.

* Word doesn't move OLE commands to the top of their menus.
-This is what Word does (now):

Edit menu:
[Linked] <shortname> &Object -> verbs

This is correct.

but for Pop-up:
<verb> <shortname> [Link]

This is incorrect and inconsistent with the Edit menu. The OLE verbs appear beneath the clipboard commands on the pop-up rather at the top as recommended. As a general rule, commands which appear near the bottom of the menu are harder to discover for users, so if the container application wishes to emphasize its OLE abilities, it should locate the OLE dialog commands near the top of the appropriate menu. Word chose not to use this mechanism to emphasize its OLE abilities - This is most likely not a major deficit.

* T3 doesn't replace selected objects with the newly inserted ones.
-In their words, "We punted on the extra work." The user implication of this is that it will take more steps to "replace" an OLE object with another and the steps are manual. This also doesn't follow the paste over rules of Word's native data.

* T3 doesn't support Drag/Drop-linking (nor does XL5 plan to).
- They are currently being slammed by some editors on this and want me to take this out of the guidelines or at least play it down as a "Chicago" Timeframe feature.

From: Jonathan Lazarus
To: Dave Seres; Doug Henrich
Subject: FW: OLE issues that could hit in coming weeks
Date: Sunday, October 03, 1993 11:30PM

comments?

From: Collins Hemingway
To: Bob Atkinson
Cc: Beverley Flower; Heikki Kanerva; Jonathan Lazarus; Marty Taucher; Monica Harrington; Pete Higgins; Randy Kerr; Tim Satalich; Tony Williams; Marianne Allison
Subject: RE: OLE issues that could hit in coming weeks
Date: Friday, October 01, 1993 3:10PM

I understood the menu issue was resolved. I hope so or it will be a visible problem.

As for the other issues, let's not get into a long email exchange. Let's have some people take it off-line and try to resolve it.

collins

From: Bob Atkinson
To: Collins Hemingway
Cc: Beverley Flower; Heikki Kanerva; Jonathan Lazarus; Marty Taucher; Monica Harrington; Pete Higgins; Randy Kerr; Tim Satalich; Tony Williams; Marianne Allison

Subject: OLE issues that could hit in coming weeks
Date: Friday, October 01, 1993 12:53PM

1. OLE 2.0 spec: The apps division's implementation of OLE 2.0 in Office has a number of inconsistencies with the OLE spec. Many of the discrepancies have been resolved by systems changing "required" approaches to "recommended" approaches in the spec, but many small differences remain. Many are obscure or fairly trivial, but taken as a whole they could seem significant.

Beware: One or two on Tim's list (such as the menus when in-place) will be glaring if they don't get fixed before ship.

It's hard to say what a user would note or worry about, but there are several things that reviewers will probably note. And ISVs could complain that MS told them to do it one way but then our own apps guys did it another, and thus we got some kind of "secret advantage." Any "conspiracy"-leaning reporter could make hay of this, since it will be virtually impossible to explain what is and isn't compliant, or why. Shades of the "undocumented-API conspiracy."

(I personally don't care if this means changing the spec or changing the apps, but the spec has been out to a lot of people for a long time, and it will be transparent to the ISV community if we change very much in the spec just to suit MS apps -- such an action would generate Front Page controversy. A ticklish situation indeed.)

Indeed. It's important not to get this backwards:

Misimplementations are just that, misimplementations; they are not a 'secret advantage'.

But changing the spec to reflect what Word & XL ended up doing, as we have done, clearly *is* a 'secret advantage', for we do not accord (nor can we accord) the same privileges to all applications.

Bob

From: Randy Kerr
To: Tim Satalich
Subject: FW: Edit.[Linked] <shortname> &Object -> verbs
Date: Monday, September 20, 1993 12:37PM

From: Randy Kerr
To: Douglas Hodges; Heikki Kanerva; Larry Tseng; Rebecca Slivka; Tim Satalich
Cc: Alistair Banks; Jon Nicponski; Randy Kerr; Tim McCaffrey
Subject: Edit.[Linked] <shortname> &Object -> verbs
Date: Thursday, April 08, 1993 4:21PM

If mnemonics are a must, then I'd say the proposal below (thanks Tim!) is the best all around solution: stable mnemonic, correct use of "object", though it is slightly longer. (It also more naturally goes along with the disabled "Object ->" when no object is selected.)
For the word order I would recommend:

Edit.[Linked] <shortname> &Object -> verbs

(i.e. Worksheet &Object. and Linked Worksheet &Object). Seems to read more naturally than that proposed below. The pop-up version that follows would be:

POPUP: <verb> [Linked] <shortname>

('Object' isn't necessary since there are no mnemonics, though it could arguably still appear for uniformity with the Edit menu)

With this proposal, the command will most often be <10 chars avg> &Object -> (an average total of 18 chars wide). When the object is linked (granted rarer), its up to about 24 chars. Word's Edit menu already is 20-some chars wide and XL's is in the midteens which means <shortname> &Object will not appreciably add to their width. The linked version will add some to XL's Edit width.

Larry, Rebecca, Doug, can we do this? It offers a mnemonic that can *really* be automated by the power user (2 mnemonics won't) and doesn't cast "object" and "link" as opposing terms. This should simplify the code since 'Linked' just comes and goes without having to reassign the mnemonic. Thanks,

--Randy

From: Tim Satalich
To: Randy Kerr
Cc: Alistair Banks; Jon Nicponski; Tim McCaffrey
Subject: RE: Any word...
Date: Thursday, April 08, 1993 3:27PM

I am giving them three alternatives for mnemonics after explaining the issue.

At the first level.

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- 1) N mnemonics for each data type or class
- 2) 2 mnemonics L or O for Worksheet Link or Worksheet Object
- 3) 1 mnemonic O for each Worksheet Linked Object and Worksheet Object

By far he recommended 3) because of power user stability. He understood that the cascades would be different but at least these users wouldn't double their time on task. I also asked which of the following he would recommend:

Linked Object/Object vs.
<data type> Linked Object/<data type> Object

He chose <data type> Linked Object/<data type> Object because of its informativeness as long as the short form was used and it wasn't too long.

I think that all ISV's will give us the same feedback but I'll keep pestering them to get a few more.

Tim

From: Randy Kerr
To: Tim Satalich
Subject: RE: Any word...
Date: Thursday, April 08, 1993 2:53PM

Seems like we're missing each other by phone. What was your friend's opinion of the issue? Thanks,

--Randy

From: Tim Satalich
To: Randy Kerr
Subject: RE: Any word...
Date: Thursday, April 08, 1993 1:33PM

I'm having a hard time reaching anyone worthwhile. Seems poeple are taking a long holiday over Easter. I'll try to get as many as I can today but it may be tuesday for most. Is this too late?

Tim

From: Randy Kerr
To: Tim Satalich
Cc: Douglas Hodges; Heikki Kanerva
Subject: Any word...
Date: Thursday, April 08, 1993 1:28PM

from ISV's on the mnemonic issue? The spec will be printed soon. Thanks,

--Randy

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