Erik Stevenson

From:	Brad Silverberg
To:	davidcol; johnlu
Subject:	FW: 11/1 Technical Strategy Meeting
Date:	Tuesday, November 02, 1993 5:10PM

From: Steven Sinofsky
To: billg; bradsi; chrisgr; chrisp; darrylr; daveful; jimall; jonde; lewisl; mikemap; paulma; peteh; petern; rogerh; tomev
Cc: stevesi
Subject: 11/1 Technical Strategy Meeting
Date: Tuesday, November 02, 1993 2:53PM

A new alias will be in place this week: techsyn - Executive Technical Synergy Group. The recipients of this message are on the alias. If anyone else should be added, please let me know.

Forms Update (RogerH)
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On aligning VB4 and Cairo to use the same forms package, the following scenario was outlined by roger. ChrisZ (and team) implements a forms kernel as part of Cairo and does a Chicago version. This will be used as the basis for VB4, Access, and Fox. The requirements are being outlined by EricCa, JerryD, and GarthH currently. JimAll will also provide Mac support. A big concern is the ability to carry forth the current Access feature set. The forms group is in the tough position of trying to establish a new shared component when a number of groups already have solutions that work for them and that are very specialized.

The status of the VB3 forms work being worked on for VB4, which is independent of the above unification, is simply the extension of VB3 to support compound documents. There is no programmability of the forms objects and none is being worked on.

There was a discussion centered around the idea of asking if VB4 is being developed, today, as a foundation piece or as a delta for the VB "market". The conclusion that Bill reiterated is that VB4 is not a business, but a strategic piece of all of our applications and efforts. The current driver of the VB4 effort is getting a 32 bit NT version (though many customers would really like an NT hosted, Win 3.x targeted VB).

We need to better understand the VB4 ship date. What is in it, what are the items that would push it out and how much? How far do we push VB4 for alignment with CDE (can all objects be made first class?). The priority is that things need to align on component forms in Office '95: Word, Excel, Ren, VB, etc. If we need to move the VB4 date out, then there are lots of creative things that can be done to add value to VB3, a la VBAssist, in order to produce another product.

Although Component Forms will be in Office '95, it is not clear that SDM will be replaced in that time frame. The plan of record is to only support Component Forms through the programmability interfaces.

We need to be working towards a single rich design environment that can be extended by applications. This needs to be shared by VC + +, VB, Access, applications. DDT will be doing the design and implementation (the Cairo work will be a throw-away version of this for bootstrapping).

Synergy/3 Year Plans (PaulMa)
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The idea is to use the 3 year plan process to provide metrics and
scenarios to aid product groups in determining why/how to exploit
synergy across the groups. This small group of people (headed by
Paul/PeterN) will be working on gathering scenarios which will be used
by business units to derive requirements and features that will help
their products to be part of solutions sold by MS (in addition to the
normal work of being best in category).

For a framework, the following releases are being used:
      Chicago 3Q94
      Cairo 1H95 (along with a Chicago update)
      Chicago 2 96

Two hard issues being thought about are:
(1) How much can Office do to look good on Chicago (32 bits, u/i, *the*
thread, lfn's, etc.) There is plenty of input going on for this issue.
MAPI was raised as a possible leverage point.

(2) How do Office '95 and systems releases reinforce each other? The
goal is to get Cairo like functionality into Office. The 3 main parts
of Cairo:
      a. component forms u/i -- major feature that is part of VBA in all
apps using VB4
      b. OFS
      c. distributed OLE
We know we can do (a), but how much of (b) and (c) can we do? The
problem is that Office '95 is in August, which isn't in sync with
systems releases.

12/24: There was a discussion of 12/24 and trying to decide if we are
actually working to be on such a plan or not. We need to do work to
determine the feasability and when this is starting. Systems is on
more of a 9/18 plan, which doesn't overlap with the apps dates right
now. PaulMa indicated that systems has been planning based on
functionality and not being caledar driven, to date. We need to do a
better job of syncing up systems functionality. Bill said we're not
rich enough to send messages describing what applications/apis work
with which OS (i.e. NT and Chicago).

A major issue for all was the role of Ren in these plans. When (and
how) will Ren objects be exposed as OFS objects in Office '95. There
are forms and database objects currently in Ren and these need to be
brought into synergy. Currently Ren is at best a December 94 product.
Office really needs a PIM for the Chicago Office box. Ren has done
some good u/i work which ChrisGr's group has incorporated into their
thinking for the Office shell.

The 1994 plan seems pretty clear. PaulMa is focusing on what to do
post '94. The current thinking is:

A. Plan of Record - what can be done for Office '95 to be Chicago
resident and Cairo affinitive. The goal is to prestage Cairo
functionality (Ren as an example) This includes OFS functionality.
B. Perhaps look at different strategy--maybe a 4Q95 release of office
and make Chicago 2 part of this release cycle.

Paul is looking for feedback on these scenarios. The questions for
Office '95 are what is the u/i and how are the objects exposed?

The three alternatives outlined:
1. PRE-EXPLOIT: Office '95 in 3Q95; Chicago 2 1H96

2. DELAY OFFICE: Office 96 in 2Q96; Chicago 2 1Q96 (perhaps have two minor app releases)
3. "UNREALISTIC": Office 3/4Q95; Chicago 2 3/4Q95

Text Synergy (ChrisP)
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In the next couple of weeks, there is a BillG review of a plan
ChrisP/BillJ have been working out. This includes feedback from many groups.

DAO (RogerH)
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DAO is an effort to align the database work and the Cairo work. Cairo
will be implementing this first. The table/DB spec is being finalized
this week. The next step is to work on query models.

Bill mentioned that when groups get together to solve these problems,
they often fail to communicate what problem they are actually trying to
solve. It might help if there was some communication of what the goals
are and what the plans are in light of some initial meetings and
brainstorming. RogerH promised a brief write up on DAO.

Notes and Notes Competition (BillG/TomEv)
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[If you haven't received the BillG Notes memo, please let me know]
We are charging full speed ahead with EMS and SFS2 + Capone as the
Microsoft answer to Notes. We will br drawing on the success of Mail,
Chicago and VB to provide a better combination than Notes and cc:Mail.

The central piece of this is VB3 + EForms designer + Wizards and glue
that will make it easy to create and manage public folders/forms.
(MikeMap is working on staffing)

We will be making a lot of noise about this early next year. We're
working now on what to call this product, how to refer to it, and how
to describe it to people.

EMS is on a May RTM, which is can do since it can release the 3.x mail
client although the Capone Chicago client is the more compelling one.