Windows Forms Programming In C#

"Chris Sells has done it again. This book has everything a developer
needs to know to write serious WinForms applications.
— Jeff Prosise, author of Programming Microsoft .NET

Windows Forms Programming in C#

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Series

Chris Sells
Foreword by Mike Blaszczak,
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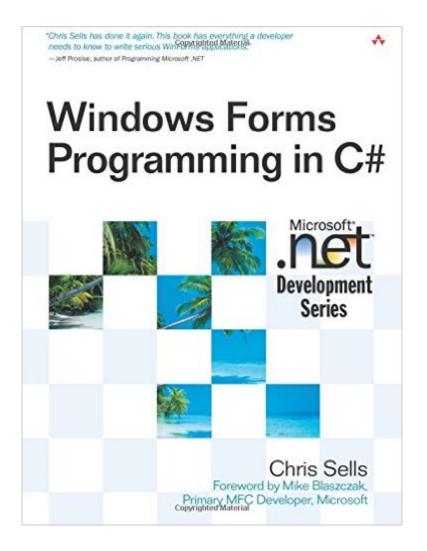
Synopsis

Striking a balance between theory and practice, this text covers WinForms programming. The content and structure are based on years of experience both building applications with WinForms as well as teaching other developers about WinForms.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Windows Forms Programming in C# doesn't disappoint.The book quickly dives into the basics of form development, layout and resources. Even though the topic is somewhat introductory to someone who's done a lot of Windows Form development, the book is written in such a way that there was several times still found myself learning something new. I particularly enjoyed the chapters on drawing, there's always something interesting to be found when working with GDI+.200 pages later, I found myself in a chapter that discusses a topic that you rarely see in any Windows programming book - Printing. This chapter is worth the price of the book alone to have it on your shelf as a reference guide. You won't find a more detailed coverage of printing anywhere else.While I could go on and on about each individual chapter, I wanted to point out one that I particularly found helpful - Chapter 14 on Multithreaded User Interfaces. I had originally read part of this in an MSDN article, and was looking forward to the full content - and wasn't disappointed: Asynchronous operations, Safety and Multithreading, Callbacks (synchronous and asynchronous), etc. are all covered.Anyways, I could go on and on - there are plenty of tasty .NET morsels in here to keep both the novice and experienced developer consumed with this book.

No where in the title, cover or product description does it explain that this covers a very old version of Windows Forms programming that is no longer relevant today. I had not looked for the publication date when choosing this book (silly me). The author put the manuscript to bed in April 2003 and the book was published in September of 2003.If you are completely new to Windows Forms, realize that this book was written to about Visual Studio 2003 .NET standards. Huge changes have been made to Visual Studio and .NET since then (major revision being Visual Studio 2005 and 2008).When you read the assorted reviews here on , you'll note that most reviews are dated around 2004 or so.This book should be fully updated to a new edition or taken off the market. Being six years old, and with .NET and Visual Studio both having undergone several revisions since then, this book has limited relevancy in 2009. I regret that I purchased this book.

Before buying Chris's book, a friend recommended another book as the best C# WinForms book, so I bought that one. It was my second one on this subject. I didn't find anything useful in it, and I almost concluded that all WinForms books were going to be worthless for me.However, I still needed some good answers to WinForms questions, and resources such as the newsgroups weren't giving them to me. So I bought this book and a few others as a last effort to find intelligent coverage of this topic. Chris Sell's book totally changed my opinion of WinForms books -- Chris has shown that it is possible to cover this subject the way Troelsen covered an introduction to C# (Troelsen's book was voted best .NET book in the world, btw.)This is a highly useful book full of intelligent information. It covers the basics, but also provides depth and detail.I'm a good C# programmer, but I have done very little with WinForms. This was definitely the book I needed. I really think it is the right book for almost any level of WinForms experience. There are good tips in here that will benefit experienced WinForms developers. For example, I've seen smart people debate certain WinForms issues on the newsgroups in lengthy threads, without a clear resolution -- one quick read of a section in Chris's book could have clarified and resolved the issue(s). For every topic like this that I needed to understand, Chris took me from the basics to a full and in-depth understanding.(I almost feel like going back to all those newsgroup threads and posting answers out of Chris's book. It would make me look like a genius. If you want to be smarter than the average WinForms "expert", read this book.)

What stands out for me after reading this book is the quality of the code examples (which you can download from the author's website). There are complete sample programs for every chapter. For

example, there's a dialog program that shows you all the different types of common dialogs, examples of SDI / Multi SDI / MDI applications, and a controls program that demonstrates all of the different types of user controls. I think the author's intent with these examples (and the book in general) is to try to cover as much of WinForms features as possible, rather than focus on detailing every which way to use a TreeView control. For such details you need to go somewhere else, or look it up on MSDN.I thought the second half of the book was better, with its coverage of more advanced topics such as integration of custom components within Visual Studio, multithreaded UIs, and application settings. Where I think the book falls short though is in the presentation, and its usefulness as a tutorial for beginners. First of all, it's important to note that the book does not teach you the basics of C# or .NET. So if you have never heard of WinForms before, you really should start off with an introductory Visual C# book before looking at this one. Problems with the presentation include the fact that the author does not really reference the code examples in the book itself. Typically, only partial code snippets are shown and there is this convention of using "..." in the code sections throughout the book which makes it difficult to follow - I found myself having to flip back and forth between pages to recall exactly what code the author has now considered "superfluous" (in his words).Basically, the content and coverage are there. But the book doesn't seem to be as polished as its MS Press counterparts. I would recommend waiting for a future edition that will likely use VS 2005 examples.

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