

TopSpeed's Clarion for Windows First RAD to Add 32-Bit Compiler

Pompano Beach, Florida August 20, 1995 - TopSpeed® Corporation today announced that it will ship Clarion for Windows 1.5, which adds a 32-Bit compiler to the Rapid Application Development environment, on September 1, 1995. The new release, in addition to building applications for Microsoft® Windows® 3.x, 95™ and NT™ from the same development environment and project files, also features a new application wizard. The wizard generates multi-threaded, full featured applications at the press of a single button, based on the developer's database dictionary which may contain file definitions, their relationships, and optional pre-formatting preferences for window and report controls. TopSpeed contends the level of automation in creating applications surpasses that of other RAD tools, calling Clarion for Windows 1.5 "the Next Level" in RAD products.

"The new Application Wizard builds complex applications with no intervention necessary. You get more than simple listbox dialogs. It creates multiple-order browse lists selectable by tab; synchronized parent-child dialogs with a form for the parent on one tab, and a listbox displaying related child records on another. One developer took a database dictionary with couple of dozen files defined, then generated and compiled a 399 procedure application cleanly. To borrow a phrase, 'Welcome to the Next Level!,' said Bruce Barrington, TopSpeed's CEO.

The push-button programming aspect of Clarion frees programmers to concentrate on the data model and business rules. By emphasizing pre-planning and design within the database dictionary, the development environment makes it easy to generate robust, tight business database applications with a common look and feel. Because the dictionary can store pre-formatting options, for example, specifying that the window control for a particular field always utilize a text control with a certain font and font style, the developer can set a common look for as many applications as will be made to maintain the same set of tables. Clarion also makes it easy to create the database dictionary, as it will automatically import file or table definitions from any data source via its assortment of direct drivers or via ODBC. Whether a .DBF file on a local PC, or a database on an Oracle, AS/400, or MS SQL Server DBMS, the data dictionary automatically imports the table or file layout.

By emphasizing the data definition in the development process, Clarion achieves a level of code maintainability that other RAD tools can't match. Rather than using one-way wizards to define a database, as other tools do, changes made in the data dictionary migrate via live links to the application file. If the Clarion developer has to, for example, add a field to the database, it's only necessary to regenerate the code and recompile. Using other RAD tools, it's often best to start over from scratch.

The new 32-bit compiler makes Clarion, which was also the first 16-bit RAD with a compiler, the first RAD tool to compile applications in the new Win 32 Portable Executable format. TopSpeed is positioning Clarion for Windows 1.5 as an evolutionary tool for database programmers who expect to support both 16 and 32 bit Windows for a transitional period. Developers don't have to worry about what version of Windows either their end users—or they themselves—run. They can build apps for any platform, from any platform, simply by selecting an option. Clarion clones features across 16 and 32 bit Windows. Windows 3.x end users can be provided a Windows 95 look and feel via 16-bit versions of controls such as property sheets, tree, and progress controls. Windows 95 and Windows NT applications can safely and reliably incorporate 16-bit .VBX controls.

As a traditional, structured language, Clarion represents an alternative for programmers who seek the reusability of objects without the conceptual leap required to move from, for example, COBOL or Xbase, to Smalltalk or other OOP languages. Clarion templates provide functionality equivalent to base object classes: they contain pre-written data and code. Moreover, Clarion templates include another layer consisting of a design-time user interface, enabling the Clarion developer to customize its properties and functionality without writing code. The application generator processes the template and developer customizations, and generates the Clarion language code necessary to implement the behavior selected by the developer. The developer can optionally write code to execute at events embedded in the template code, providing total control over the application.

Clarion for Windows 1.5 includes new template functionality. The standard browse template includes a new option to display records in a grandparent-parent-child relation within a collapsible tree control. A new combo box template automatically updates a child file when the end user types a new value in the combo box. The Clarion built-in template functionality supports a level of code reusability that other RAD systems with Visual Design tools don't match. Instead of placing a simple user interface object, such as a button, which other tools then require the developer to attach code to, Clarion templates allow the developer to place a complete business solution which doesn't require coding. This can take the form of the tree or combo box controls mentioned above, or can be a file lookup or validation attached to another control.

Clarion 1.5 continues the business-centric development approach to development. It continues to support Btrieve, still one of the most widely used business data formats. It uses binary-coded decimal fixed point arithmetic, to provide a level of accuracy in currency calculations not easily matched by tools which rely on floating point math. With a natural database grammar built into the language, rather than grafted on as an

extension as in other RAD tools, the Clarion language lends itself to production coding by those who do it as a job, rather than as an art form.

Applications developed with Clarion for Windows are small, fast, and may be distributed royalty-free. Clarion for Windows 1.5 will have an introductory price of \$499.

TopSpeed Corporation, an international company based in Pompano Beach, Florida, is a leading provider of advanced technology programming, database and compiler products. Founded in 1982 as Clarion Software Corporation, the company became known for its integrated development environment for database applications. Clarion merged with JPI (started by former members of the Borland team that developed Turbo Pascal) combining JPI's superb compiler technology with their award-winning database development environment. TopSpeed products are available by calling (800) 354-5444.

TopSpeed is a registered trademark of TopSpeed Corporation. Clarion for Windows is a trademark of TopSpeed Corporation.

Microsoft and Windows are registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation. Windows 95 and Windows NT are trademarks of Microsoft Corporation.