

: Just Released: Guidance Automation Toolkit and Extensions - July 2007 CTP



Microsoft *patterns & practices* is pleased to announce the latest addition to the p&p library of architecture guidance:

Guidance Automation Toolkit and Guidance Automation Extensions

July 2007 Community Technology Preview

Resources

- MSDN site: <http://msdn2.microsoft.com/en-us/teamsystem/aa718948.aspx>
- Community Forum: <http://forums.microsoft.com/msdn/showforum.aspx?forumid=78&siteid=1>

About the Deliverable

The Guidance Automation Extensions (GAX) expands the capabilities of Visual Studio by allowing architects and developers to run guidance packages, such as those included in Software Factories, which automate key development tasks from within the Visual Studio environment.

The Guidance Automation Toolkit (GAT) is a guidance package which allows architects to author rich, integrated user experiences for reusable assets including Software Factories, frameworks, and patterns. The resulting Guidance Packages, composed of templates, wizards and recipes, help developers build solutions in a way consistent with the architecture guidance. In order to use the Guidance Automation Toolkit, you must first install the Guidance Automation Extensions.

New In This Release

The July 2007 CTP of the Guidance Automation Toolkit and Guidance Automation Extensions is a minor update to the previous February 2007 CTP, and includes the following fixes and improvements:

- Support for both Visual Studio 2005 and Visual Studio 2008 Betas 1 and 2 (Orcas)
- Improved installer (using The Windows Installer XML (WiX))
- Support for Registration as Normal User (RANU) and experimental hive
- Enhanced support for installing Visual Basic templates

Roadmap

The next version of the GAX functionality will be delivered as part of the factory platform that will be jointly developed by the Visual Studio Team Architect team and the Visual Studio SDK team in cooperation with the patterns & practices.



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Information on patterns & practices

- Visit us at <http://msdn.microsoft.com/practices/> to see the full line of existing patterns & practices
- If this mail was forwarded to you, you can sign up for automatic notification through the pagnurel alias

FAQ

Do I need to upgrade?

Upgrade is recommended but not required as there are no critical fixes. If you wish to design and run guidance packages on Orcas, this version of GAX/GAT must be installed.

How do I upgrade?

If you are running previous releases of GAX, you must

- 1) unregister all existing guidance packages (including GAT),
- 2) uninstall previous version of GAX
- 3) install the new version of GAX
- 4) reinstall the guidance packages.

This is far from ideal installation experience, but improving it is not trivial and was beyond the scope of this release.

Will existing guidance packages and software factories still work with this release?

Yes, if you run them on Visual Studio 2005.

However, any current guidance packages built against February 2007 CTP under Visual Studio 2005 (including all software factories provided by Microsoft patterns & practices on the date of this release - Web Client Software Factory, Smart Client Software Factory, Mobile Client Software Factory, and Web Service Software Factory) will NOT work on Orcas. Should you plan to design and run your own factories/guidance packages on Visual Studio 2008 Beta 2, those will need to be specifically designed as such.

What kind of enhanced support is there for installing Visual Basic templates?

We have modified the GAX installation classes so they will not try registering VB templates at installation time if VB is not installed on the box. Previous versions of GAX did try this, and if no VB was in the box the entire installation failed. Now the installation will not fail and VB templates will simply not be shown.

Why is this still branded a CTP?

Like the previous releases, this new release is still labeled a Community Technology Preview. This is because the deliverables are still unsupported. Keep in mind that both GAX and GAT are only designed to run on development machines, not production servers. That

said, we've gone through the same quality gates with GAT and GAX as we do with any other p&p release, and we are confident we have a high quality release.