Component Object Model (COM) - Win32 apps

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In this article

COM is a platform-independent, distributed, object-oriented system for creating binary software components that can interact. COM is the foundation technology for Microsoft's OLE (compound documents) and ActiveX (Internet-enabled components) technologies.

COM objects can be created with a variety of programming languages. Object-oriented languages, such as C++, provide programming mechanisms that simplify the implementation of COM objects. These objects can be within a single process, in other processes, even on remote computers.

For information on which operating systems are required to use a particular interface or function, see the Requirements section of the documentation for the interface or function.

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Controls and Property Pages	Describes ActiveX controls and property pages.
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Automation	Automation enables software packages to expose their unique features to scripting tools and other applications. Automation uses the Component Object Model (COM), but may be implemented independently from other OLE features, such as in-place activation.
Microsoft Interface Definition Language (MIDL)	The Microsoft Interface Definition Language (MIDL) defines interfaces between client and server programs. Microsoft includes the MIDL compiler with the Platform Software Development Kit (SDK) to enable developers to create the interface definition language (IDL) files and application configuration files (ACF) required for remote procedure call (RPC) interfaces and COM/DCOM interfaces. MIDL also supports the generation of type libraries for OLE Automation.
Structured Storage	Structured Storage provides file and data persistence in COM by handling a single file as a structured collection of objects known as storages and streams.
COM+	COM+ is an evolution of Microsoft Component Object Model (COM) and Microsoft Transaction Server (MTS). COM+ builds on and extends applications written using COM, MTS, and other COM-based technologies.

Additional resources

Training

- Last updated on 08/21/2020