Install Aware NET Bridge Project

First I will discuss the content of the Archive.

Inside you will find the following folders:

- **_bin** – Here are located all the compiled dlls with their configs and the test application

- **NET-EXEPlug-Delphi** – here you will find the source of the Runtime Plug-In written in Delphi 2007 for NET.. It is based on the sample from the Install Aware Setup. And is there just to demonstrate that the loading and executing of NET Assemblies works.

- **NET-IDEPlug-Delphi** – here you will find the source to a sample IDE Plug-in written in delphi 2007 for NET

- **PlugInTest** – here you will find a the sources for an application which helped me to test the whole project.

- **NETBridge** – here you will find the sources for the Runtime and the IDE Plug-In Bridges.

How to test

In the _bin directory you will find the PlugInTestTool.exe.

This is my test program.

It loads the Bridge DLL and tries to emulate any of the function calls from InstallAware. There is a btn for each function to be tested. For testing it is better to have an isolated environment. Sources are attached, so you can play a bit with it.

If you want to place the Plug-ins in a different directory you can do it by modifying the PlugInTestTool.ini file.

How To Use it

I tried to make it as simple as possible. There is no need to registering the assembly into the global assembly cache using ms gacutil or to register the assembly for COM using the ms regasm . The Bridge can work without it, which makes the usage so much easier.

The EXEPlug_NetBridge.dll is the Bridge for the Runtime plug-in. It can be renamed to whatever you like.

Inside the EXEPlug_NetBridge.ini you have to configure the name of the NET assembly and its internal name-space. This way the Bridge will know what to load.

The ini file must have the same name as the Bridge dll, so if you rename the Bridge dll please do not forget to rename the ini file as well.

You should place the bridge and its ini file inside the same directory as the NET Plugin. Alternately you can place it anywhere and configure a relative path to the NET Plug-in, but that might cause some complications during the set-up build process, when files have to be moved.

IDEPlug.dproj_NetBridge.dll is the bridge for the IDE Plug-In. It requires the same configuration as the Runtime plugin.

In the windows registration you should place a reference to the Bridge and not to the NET Assembly. This is important.

Install aware will look up the windows registry and will load the Bridge. The Bridge itself will look up its ini file and will load the NET Assembly.

Notes

During the build process, the NET IDE Plug-in have to copy the NET Runtime Plug-in as well the Runtime Bridge and its ini File. This is done in my sample IDE Plug-in written in delphi for NET.