

preface

In my younger days at school and later working with various startup companies, I thought Unix ruled the world and never expected to find myself working with “the dark side” of the computer industry: that is, Microsoft Corporation. So I find it amusing that here I am publishing not a first but a second book in support of Microsoft technologies. I guess you go where the road leads, and my paths have carried me fully into the depths of Windows-based development. Fortunately, I am happy with my conversion, which I suppose is the way of the dark side.

As to this publishing idea, it is a very curious thing. The excitement of writing wears off after a while, and you realize that you not only want to write a book, you want to write a good book. This changes your approach and mentality, in that you put in the extra effort and time to make it “good.” Then one day you have another revelation: you not only want to write a good book, you want to write a book people actually like and are willing to purchase.

Such was my journey for both the first and the second editions of this book. The first edition was reasonably well received, and a second edition for .NET 2.0 seemed apparent. Unfortunately, those clever folks at Microsoft added and changed so much of the Windows Forms namespace that I found myself rewriting pretty much the entire book.

While you might think the journey involved for a second edition is easier than the first, don’t kid yourself. It is true that I knew how to approach the text and the basic format is the same, but as a “seasoned author” I wanted to create a better design for both the book and the sample application built throughout. The chapters are more concise and I attempted to apply my experience with .NET enterprise application development at Unisys Corporation to generate a better program design. I added more diversions from the main MyPhotos application to cover additional material and to present code samples for alternate or interesting topics.

Another curious fact was that while writing the first edition of this book I was a consultant, and it was fairly easy to take weeks off here and there to devote to writing. As a full-time program manager these days, finding such time for the second edition was not easy. My family and friends were equally supportive for both editions, for which I am very thankful.

In the end, I find myself quite happy with this second edition of the book. Some key concepts and classes, such as encryption, custom controls, and progress bars, found their way into the text. I like the chapter layout for the second edition, from 18 chapters in the first edition to 23 chapters in this book. I am also much happier with the index, which I'm sure you'll find easier to use than in the first edition.

Another big change between the first and second editions of this book is the title. This edition has been renamed *Windows Forms in Action* to differentiate it from other books and to work with Manning's new "in Action" titling theme. The Action-Result table format used throughout this book lends itself to our new name. New title, new cover, new chapters, and we appear to have a book.

Enjoy.