

Ada on the NET!

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Thump, Thump, Thump... It's ALIVE!

Contrary to popular lore in the software world, Ada is not a "has been" of the military, but is a vibrant living language with an active community and new developments. A stride through the NET hopping from site to site instantly shows its vitality. Joining a few mail lists and lurking on comp.lang.ada introduces a community alive with active discussions on every issue surrounding Ada and a constant flow of announcements. There may be no way to put on paper the full perspective of how things are moving and shaking, but a mention of some interesting projects and announcements is certainly a good way to get started.

AdaBroker - <http://adabroker.eu.org/>

AdaBroker is a set of tools and libraries that can be used to develop CORBA, applications in Ada. It provides an IDL parser, Ada code generator, and the CORBA predefined Ada support packages (defined by the Ada mapping). This project has been chugging along with regular announcements and releases. There is currently a third 1.0 pre release available on their web site and an active mail lists.

GNATCOM - <http://www.adapower.com/gnatcom>

GNATCOM is the Ada tool kit and framework that opens up all of Microsoft's latest technologies. It allows use of and creation of COM, COM+, DCOM, OLE, ActiveX, and even the new .NET objects. GNATCOM uses and exposes objects using both dynamic automation interfaces and the fast "custom" VTBL interfaces of COM, making Ada code as competitive as C/C++ code in performance with the new technologies. GNATCOM also includes tools to automatically generate bindings and create new objects. There is an active mail list and there will be a full day tutorial at SigAda 2000 on GNATCOM.

GtkAda - <http://gtkada.eu.org/> or <http://www.adapower.com/gtkada> (US mirror)

GtkAda is an Ada graphical toolkit based on Gtk+ (a cross platform GUI toolkit), providing the complete set of Gtk+ widgets using Ada 95's Object-Oriented features.

GtkAda currently supports the latest 1.2 stable releases. It is also available on Win32 systems using an enhanced 1.3 version. GtkAda binds all of the Gtk widgets, has a GUI builder and is already being used for major projects. There is an active mail list with lots of discussion about how to use GtkAda and new developments in GtkAda. There will also be a tutorial on GtkAda at SigAda 2000.

GVD: The GNU Visual Debugger - <http://gtkada.eu.org/gvd/gvd.html>

GVD is an extensible graphical debugger for Ada 95 and other languages licensed under the GNU General Public License and written in Ada using GNAT and the GtkAda graphical toolkit. A quick look at its early feature list makes any serious developer excited, but it hasn't been released yet. There are some screen shots on the web site and I heard rumors of C/C++ people going insane after having been given an opportunity to play with a stable solid cross platform visual debugger that would have taken years to produce in their language of choice, but only months in Ada :-). GVD is also in the running to become the official GNU and GNOME visual debugger not just for Ada, but for C and C++ too!

GWindows - Win32 RAD GUI Development - <http://www.adapower.com/gwindows>

GWindows is a thick binding to the Windows 32bit APIs offering the Ada 95 developer multiple forms of Object Oriented GUI programming techniques. The current working prototype on the website has bindings to all of the basic Windows widgets and most of the common controls like list view and tree view controls. It also offers ActiveX controls and even Tk widgets through an ActiveX bridge. It is under heavy development and moving rapidly. There is active discussion of GWindows on the GNATCOM mail list and there will be a half day tutorial on new directions in Windows GUI programming that will touch on GWindows.

So Much More

There are many other great living Ada 95 projects on the NET like an operating system written in Ada (<http://www.AdaOS.org>), OpenToken (<http://www.telepath.com/dennison/Ted/OpenToken/OpenToken.html>), The Booch Components (<http://www.adapower.com/booch>), AdaCGI (<http://www.dwheeler.com/adacgi>), an Ada Web Server (<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/pascal.obry/contrib.html>) and so many others that are missed here. Most Ada projects can be found on or linked from <http://www.adapower.com>.

The Team-Ada mail list (see <http://www.acm.org/sigada>) and comp.lang.ada are good places to lurk to find out about the latest announcements of project releases and Ada events. One exciting announcement recently posted was for an Ada 95 programming

contest.

----- N E W S - F L A S H -----

www.AdaDeveloper.com and www.AdaPower.com

Announce the Ada 95 Software Challenge

\$500.00

To be awarded to the software developer or team of developers that develops the best video game using Ada 95 as the primary language of development that runs on the x86 based machines using either Windows or Linux. The software must be released under the GPL copyleft or other less restrictive pre-approved license. The source and binary will be made available on the internet.

The exact details of how the winner will be determined, contest dates and other rules, will be made available soon.

If you are interested in participating in the contest please send an e-mail to contest@adapower.com

Please feel free to re-post this announcement and pass it on to co-workers, students and friends!

----- N E W S - F L A S H -----

Details will be sent to Team-Ada, comp.lang.ada and posted at <http://www.adapower.com/contest.html>

The announcement has already been responded to enthusiastically. Tons of contestants both familiar faces to the Ada community and those not yet known have already signed on to give it a go. The contest will end sometime after the spring university semesters to allow maximum participation of students, professors, and professionals.

Ada 95 is a living language with an active community of developers. Many projects are looking for participation and there is always room for new ones. Every project is looking for users. There is no better way to work out the bugs and get the word out about a project than to have it pounded on by other developers and nothing motivates them more.