

Microsoft .NET Micro Framework is now available

by *Bend_Weekly_News_Sources*

New platform allows developers to build embedded applications for smaller devices using .NET and Microsoft Visual Studio tools.

Today at Embedded World 2007, Microsoft Corp. announced the availability of the software development kit (SDK) for the Microsoft .NET Micro Framework. With its ability to work seamlessly with Visual Studio, the .NET Micro Framework extends the power of Microsoft's embedded offerings into the realm of smaller, less expensive and more resource-constrained devices.

"The .NET Micro Framework was built from the ground up as a .NET solution for small embedded devices," said Colin Miller, director of the .NET Micro Framework at Microsoft. "It brings the reliability and efficiency of the .NET environment to a new set of applications such as home automation systems, industrial sensors, retail displays and healthcare monitors. Development on this platform works seamlessly with the same tools that are used throughout the Microsoft family of platforms. This decreases the distinction between embedded application development and other application development tasks and helps reduce the cost and risks of these projects."

"The .NET Micro Framework is a proven platform that opens up a new area of embedded development and adds to the momentum of Microsoft embedded technologies," said Pieter Knook, senior vice president of the Mobile and Embedded Devices Division at Microsoft.

The .NET Micro Framework SDK enables developers to take full advantage of the C# development language and the rich development and debugging experience that Visual Studio provides. In addition, the SDK offers user-extensible hardware emulation and seamless, graphical debugging of emulated and real hardware to deliver robust solutions in less time than ever before.

The .NET Micro Framework SDK not only works seamlessly with Visual Studio and offers an extensible emulator, but is also supported by a number of hardware platforms based on the ARM7 and ARM9 processor cores. The framework also enables device developers to connect these hardware platforms to virtually any peripheral hardware through industry-standard communication connections and custom-managed drivers.

Those interested in receiving a copy of the SDK for the .NET Micro Framework can visit <http://msdn.microsoft.com/embedded/netmf>. A minimum of 256 KB of RAM and 512 KB of flash ROM is required for development and deployment.

Partners Unveil Support and Offerings for .NET Micro Framework

Also at Embedded World, Digi International Inc. revealed plans for a preview release of the Digi Connect ME Development Kit for Microsoft .NET Micro Framework. The Digi Connect ME includes support for Ethernet networking, a serial port and general purpose input/output signals. It is the first solution available for .NET Micro Framework to support Ethernet networking. The kit, priced at \$299, is available now from Digi's online store (<http://www.digistoreonline.com/gstore.asp>) and through its global network of distribution partners.

EmbeddedFusion, which delivers integrated hardware and software core solutions for embedded systems developers, announced the Meridian CPU, which is a core CPU module that incorporates a Freescale i.MXS processor, RAM, Flash and the .NET Micro Framework. To further assist developers in learning how the .NET Micro Framework is applicable in various embedded scenarios, EmbeddedFusion also created the Tahoe development platform, which enables experimentation and exploration of the .NET Micro Framework right out of the box.

Freescale also introduced a development kit for the .NET Micro Framework to allow customers to deliver differentiated solutions in the marketplace with ARM9 performance at very low power.

"Our expectations for .NET Micro Framework are high, so we continue to add features to enable OEMs, ODMs and others to create a new class of smaller, cost-efficient devices, or add Windows SideShow connected wirelessly to existing consumer devices," said Brad Hale, manager of product management for Freescale's multimedia applications division.

In addition, Rhode Consulting, a specialist in Microsoft Windows Embedded technologies, announced the availability of the FlexiDis Evaluation Kit with the .NET Micro Framework installed. The FlexiDis platform uses Atmel ARM7 and ARM9 processor cores with speeds of up to 180 MHz. The combination of these speeds, up to 16 MB of flash and SDRAM memory, and a 2.2-inch QVGA display makes the FlexiDis display a component of choice for various kinds of industrial applications in which an embedded HMI or visualization solution is required.

System Requirements for Developing on the .NET Micro Framework:

- Microsoft Windows(R) XP, Microsoft Windows Vista or Microsoft Windows Server(R) 2003
- Microsoft Visual Studio 2005 Standard Edition or greater

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