

Appendix C

Some Important .NET Resources

I DESIGNED THIS APPENDIX as a repository of sites where you can find additional information about .NET. I include links for a variety of topics, including some that focus on C#. You can find the latest copy of this link list on the companion Web site for this book at www.hungryminds.com/extras/.

Microsoft Sites

This section highlights the many Microsoft sites and a few that closely ally themselves with Microsoft or Microsoft technologies.

MSDN

The Microsoft Developer Network site is the granddaddy of Microsoft development sites. It contains a full copy of the Microsoft Developer Network library, along with copies of MSDN magazine. The sections of interest are shown in the following table.

Section	Address
Main page	http://msdn.microsoft.com/
Library	http://msdn.microsoft.com/msdnmag/
.NET	http://msdn.microsoft.com/net/
XML	http://msdn.microsoft.com/xml/
Visual Studio	http://msdn.microsoft.com/vstudio/
SOAP	http://msdn.microsoft.com/soap/

Technet and the support site

From a developer's perspective, these two sites go hand in hand. Technet is Microsoft's premier site for questions relating to all the OS and server products that

Microsoft makes. The support site provides a simple search engine that enables you to search its knowledge base. Having a problem with your computer? Visit the Microsoft support site. You may need to make a few attempts to find what you need, but I'd bet that this site has something there for you. And make sure that you check out the DLL Hell (oops, Help) Database to find out which versions of system DLLs are the latest. Finally, the Security site is a must visit if you want to keep up with the latest security patches for your Windows OS.

Site	Address
Technet	http://technet.microsoft.com/
Library	http://support.microsoft.com/
DLL Help Database	http://support.microsoft.com/servicedesks/fileversion/dllinfo.asp
Security	www.microsoft.com/security

Microsoft .NET sites

You currently can access two official Microsoft .NET sites. Got Dot Net offers a variety of samples, white papers, and general information on .NET and the various .NET languages. The second site focuses on ASP.NET. Go to the samples section if you don't have enough space to load the .NET Framework samples on your own machine.

Site	Address
Got Dot Net	www.gotdotnet.com
ASP.NET	www.asp.net

Affiliated sites

Microsoft has been the forerunner in a lot of technologies, such as UDDI (Universal Description, Discovery, and Integration) and SOAP (Simple Object Access Protocol). Following are some sites that are very closely affiliated with Microsoft and some of its new technologies. Although these sites focus directly on .NET, the technologies presented are essential to Web services taking off.

Topic	Site
UDDI	www.uddi.org/
BizTalk	www.biztalk.org/

Usenet sites

Although not technically sites, the .NET Usenet groups are a great resource for answers to your questions. The .NET groups tend to attract the MS folks who're working on the .NET platform and languages, along with MVPs (Microsoft Valuable Professionals) and other heavyweight coders. To access the newsgroups, point your Usenet reader to msnews.microsoft.com. This list provides just a small sample of these sites. You can find a more complete list at <http://beta.visualstudio.net/>.

Framework and ASP.NET

microsoft.public.dotnet.general
microsoft.public.dotnet.framework
microsoft.public.dotnet.framework.adonet
microsoft.public.dotnet.framework.aspnet
microsoft.public.dotnet.framework.asp
microsoft.public.dotnet.framework.clr

Languages and Visual Studio .NET

microsoft.public.dotnet.languages.csharp
microsoft.public.dotnet.languages.jscript
microsoft.public.dotnet.languages.vb
microsoft.public.dotnet.languages.vb.upgrade
microsoft.public.dotnet.languages.xml
microsoft.public.dotnet.vsnnet.ide

ASP.NET Sites

This section deals with sites that focus on ASP.NET, although some of the sites also offer some information on other .NET technologies and languages.

Indexes

The first and foremost index site for ASP on the net has always been the ASP Index. This site has expanded to include specific ASP.NET content. You can't find a more comprehensive set of links anywhere else on the Web.

The Search VB site, run by TechTarget, is also a nice site to look for links, although the interface is a bit strange. The DevX .NET resources site, currently a bit out of date, is also a good starting point. It's divided into sections, which makes

finding what you're looking for a bit easier. Finally, the ASP Free site is a virtual cornucopia of news and links. Click on the ASP.NET folder on the left-hand side to get started.

Site	Address
ASP Index	www.411asp.net/home
Search VB links	http://searchvb.techtarget.com Click on the topics or do a search.
DevX .NET	www.devx.com/dotnet/resources/
ASP Free	www.aspfree.com

Mailing Lists

I personally tend to shy away from mailing lists, because I never seem to find enough time to read the e-mail that I get on a daily basis. The main problem is that the lists are a bit too generic, in most cases, and items are sent that have nothing to do with the topic at hand. Charles Carroll has solved this problem with his moderated list server, ASP Friends. If you want a question answered, be sure you get the right list, because this list server has groups that are very specific.

If you would like to do a search of ListServ lists, LSoft has an interface available, as well. Do a search for .NET and you'll find a few choice lists. These lists are likely to have more noise (useless messages) than moderated lists, but it is worth a shot.

Finally, Wrox has a site for programmers called P2P (programmer to programmer). The site focuses on discussion groups and mailing lists, but you'll also find some articles and learning exercises there.

Site	Address
ASP Friends (moderated)	www.aspfriends.com
ListServ search	www.lsoft.com/lists/list_q.html
Wrox Programmer 2 Programmer	http://p2p.wrox.com

News

Internet.com has some of the more comprehensive sites on news on programming topics. Its ASP Wire, VB Wire, and SQL Wire sites are decent places to look for new

information. The sites are not completely news-oriented. The last site listed in the following table has the wire name (dotnetwire.com), but is not run by Internet.com. Dotnetwire.com follows the same basic format, however: A front page with links to various news articles about .NET.

Site	Address
ASP and ASP.NET	www.aspwire.com
Visual Basic and Visual Basic .NET	www.vbwire.com
SQL	www.sqlwire.com
.NET	www.dotnetwire.com

Sample sites

The number one sample site for .NET is the I Buy Spy site. This clever site mimics a spy gadget e-commerce site but also has a portal to work with (there were plans for a news site, as well, but they appear to have been shot down). All the sites are written in ASP.NET with both Visual Basic .NET and C# code to look at.

For those who want to start with a bit less code, the Margie's demo travel site is a much smaller site than the I Buy Spy applications. You can also find a couple Microsoft Duwamish samples and a Fitch and Mather sample in the MSDN code library.

I've included a couple of code library sites that have some .NET code.

Site	Address
I Buy Spy store and portal	www.ibuyspy.com
Margie's Travel demo	www.margiestravel.com
Free VB Code (.NET section)	www.freevbcode.com/listcode.asp?Category=16
MSDN Code Center	http://msdn.microsoft.com/code/

General-interest sites

This section deals with sites that cover a variety of ASP.NET topics. ASP Free, although not the prettiest ASP.NET site on the Web, is always full of content. Since the release of Beta 1, this site's been inundated with articles, most with code samples.

It's well worth a look. The 4 Guys From Rolla is one of the mainstays in ASP programming. This site contains a lot of links to a variety of articles, many of which include code.

I'm not sure that I like the look of the ASP 101 Web site, but I've used this site on numerous occasions for its articles. Although it doesn't focus completely on ASP.NET, it provides enough articles to give you a good start. The ASP Next Generation site, run by Charles Carroll, has a few free lessons.

There are a couple of additional sites, run by Microsoft MVPs, that are worthy of mention. Manohar Kamath has a nice site (www.dotnetbooks.com) that lists and reviews .NET books, and Wayne Berry's 15 Seconds (named for the amount of time the average Web user will wait for a page to render) has some ASP.NET content.

Site	Address
ASP Free	http://aspfree.com/aspnet/
4 Guys From Rolla	www.4guysfromrolla.com/webtech/LearnMore/ASPPlus.asp
ASP 101	www.asp101.com
ASP Next Generation	www.aspng.com/aspng/index.aspx
.NET books	www.dotnetbooks.com
15 seconds	www.15seconds.com
