

Hibernate 2.1

JBoss



Thanks to the constant care of Lead Developer Gavin King and the continuous input of a dedicated user community, for the second year in a row, Hibernate has won the Jolt Award and become a state-of-the-art tool for bridging the infamous object-relational impedance mismatch.

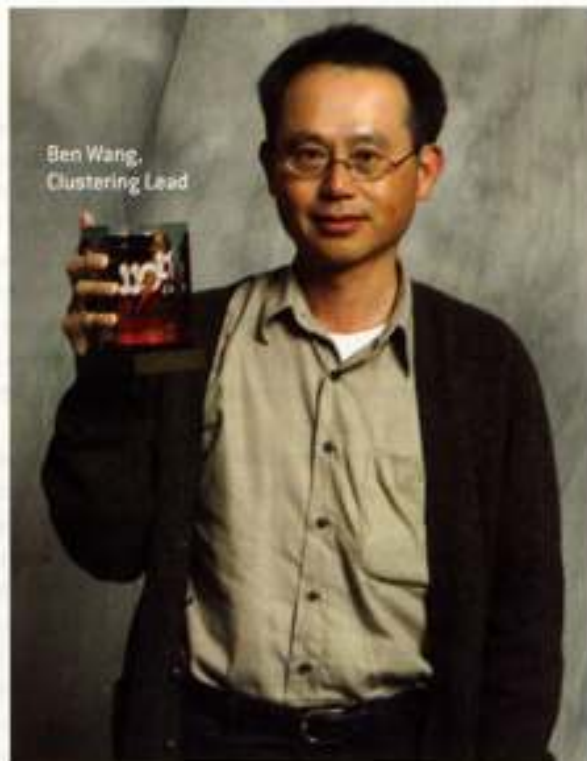
Unlike other more generic mapping tools that target different kinds of repositories, Hibernate works only for relational databases, but does this one thing very well. Indeed, it speaks the dialects of 20 different databases and supports subtleties like explicit pessimist locks. This tool is minimally invasive—an XML file and a few lines of code are all you need for hibernating!

Hibernate offers customizable strategies for mapping object hierarchies to tables, managing relationships and optimizing data retrieval. And Eclipse users will enjoy the complementary plug-ins that include a mapping editor and development wizards for increased productivity.

Who said that you get only what you pay for? Hibernate and tools are released by Atlanta, Ga.-based JBoss under the LGPL license, which means that they're free, and you can use them in closed-source applications development.

Note: At press time, the brand-new version 3.0 should be available.

—David Dossot



Ben Wang,
Clustering Lead

ImageGear Professional 14

AccuSoft

In ImageGear, Northborough, Mass.-based AccuSoft has released just about the biggest imaging toolkit we've seen, with support displaying and creating more than 100 different graphic file formats on a variety of different platforms including Windows, Mac, Linux and Unix—but that's what you'd expect from a 14-version, mature, capable product.

For the developer, it's more than image display: ImageGear's more than 1,500 API calls can be used to embed image processing capabilities into your programs. It supports version control with full multithreading, multiple bit-depth images, built-in GUI functionality and animation. It's a simple matter to rotate, crop, and resize images as well as pan around inside an image, magnify it, or create thumbnails for it. For Windows programmers, it offers optical character recognition support for scanned images, as well as tools for reading a variety of standard bar-code formats.

—Robert DellRossi

Sun J2SE 5.0

Sun Microsystems

Java 2 Standard Edition (J2SE) is probably the most significant update to the Java Platform since JDK 1.2. After years of development, Santa Clara, Calif.-based Sun's J2SE has grown into a large application-development platform with many powerful features. But Java application development has also become increasingly complex. One of J2SE's important design goals is the introduction of new language facilities that simplify Java application development; among them generics support, metadata support, enhanced loop syntax and autoboxing of primitive types. The standard Java class library is enhanced with an elegant concurrency package and the JMX API. J2SE also ships with a very easy-to-use utility (JConsole) to examine and manage JVM internal state at runtime via the JMX API. These new features could profoundly affect the evolution of other Java platforms to improve productivity.

—Michael Yuan

Xtreme Toolkit 9.51

Codejock

It's become incredibly easy to develop desktop applications, but distinguishing your product from the competing hordes clamoring for attention—that's a wee bit harder. One way to stand out is to offer users more options for making the application peculiarly their own, and Owasso, Mich.-based Codejock Software is ready to help you do that. Incorporating its Xtreme Toolkit GUI components into your Visual C++ applications can give them a polish that sets them apart from the herd.

The Xtreme Toolkit Professional Edition contains toolboxes, dialogs, views, shortcut bars and many other controls considerably enhanced over what comes off the Visual Studio palettes. Theme support for toolboxes, a hexadecimal edit control, a tree control that allows for multiple selections—Xtreme Toolkit offers just too many refinements to list. The controls look and run great, and source code is included. What more can you ask for?

—Rick Wayne