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In this tutorial we will learn about the Eclipse WindowBuilder which is a powerful and easy to use bi-directional Java GUI designer and Swing Designer and Swing Designer and layout tools to
create simple forms to complex windows; the Java code will be generated for you. Easily add controls using a property editor, internationalize your app and much more. 1. IntroductionThe WindowBuilder is available at Eclipse WindowBuilder. It is
composed of WindowBuilder Engine, SWT, eRCP, XWT & Swing Designer. WindowBuilder Engine provides a rich API for creating UI designers. It is very modular with dozens of extension points. It provides a rich API for creating UI designers. It is very modular with dozens of extension points. It provides a rich API for creating UI designers. It is very modular with dozens of extension points. It provides a rich API for creating UI designers. It is very modular with dozens of extension points. It provides a rich API for creating UI designers. It provides a rich API for creating UI designers. It is very modular with dozens of extension points. It provides a rich API for creating UI designers. It provides a rich API for creating UI designers. It is very modular with dozens of extension points.
Android) based UI frameworks. Window Builder is built as a plug-in to Eclipse and the various Eclipse 
libraries to compile and run: all of the generated code can be used without having WindowBuilder Pro installed. WindowBuilder Pro can read and write almost any format and reverse-engineer most hand-written Java GUI code. It also supports free-form code editing (make changes anywhere...not just in special areas) and most user re-factorings (you
can move, rename and subdivide methods without a problem). 2. OverviewIn this section we will provide some overview of WindowBuilder. 2.1 History of WindowBuilder. 2.2 History of WindowBuilder. 2.3 History of WindowBuilder. 2.3 History of WindowBuilder. 2.4 History of WindowBuilder. 2.5 History of WindowBuilder. 2.6 History of WindowBuilder. 2.7 History of WindowBuilder. 2.8 History of WindowB
Smalltalk release by ObjectShare 1997 - VisualAge Smalltalk release by Instantiations 2003 - New Eclipse/Java version for SWT/RCP (SWT Designer) 2006 - Google Web Toolkit (GWT) support added (GWT Designer) 2009 - Eclipse community awarded for the best Commercial Add-on 2010 - Acquired by
Google and released free to the world2.2. ComponentsWindowBuilder is composed of the following major components: Source View: Embedded version of Eclipse Java editor provides all of the services you normally find in the Java editorDesign ViewComponent TreeProperty PanePaletteWizardsToolbars & Context Menus 2.3 FeaturesWindowBuilder
supports WYSIWYG & Bi-directional Code Generation. It supports Powerful & flexible Code parser. It supports Morphing, Widget & layout managers and graphical menu editing. Install WindowBuilder on the Find
text box enter WindowBuilder. Figure 1. Eclipse MarketplaceSince the WindowBuilder plugin is already installed we don't get the Install button but instead we get the Update button. 4. Create New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 2. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 2. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 2. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 3. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 3. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 3. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 3. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 3. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 3. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 3. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 3. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create: Click on File=>New=>OtherFigure 3. New ProjectIn this section we will see how we can create the contract of the contra
choose SWT/JFace Java Project. Click Next. Figure 3. Java Project name: text box give the project name. We will use WindowBuilderProject. Leave the other options as default and click Finish. Figure 4. Project Details 5. Create New SWT Application In this section we will see how to create a new SWT application. Click on
File=>New=>Other. Browse to WindowBuilder=>SWT Designer=>SWT and choose 'Application Window'. Enter the Name and click on Finish. Figure 5. Create SWT Application Eclipse.swt.widgets. Display; import
org.eclipse.swt.widgets.Shell; public class HelloWorld { protected Shell shell; /** * Launch the application. * @param args */ public static void main(String[] args) { try { HelloWorld (); window. */ public void open() { Display display =
Display.getDefault(); createContents(); shell.setSize(450, 300); shell.setText("SWT Application"); } } /** * Create contents () { shell = new Shell(); shell.setSize(450, 300); shell.setText("SWT Application"); } } } /** * Create contents () { shell = new Shell(); shell.setSize(450, 300); shell.setText("SWT Application"); } } } /** * Create contents () { shell = new Shell(); shell.setSize(450, 300); shell.setText("SWT Application"); } } }
sketchpad. You can add or remove components, edit layout properties, direct edit labels, and see what your overall design looks like as it evolves. Select a component in the Design View to make it appear in the Property Pane, where you can edit its properties. This will also activate selection handles for the component. Selection handles allow you to
change layout properties of the selected control and, for some layout managers, also be changed in the Properties of sibling controls. All properties that can be changed in the Properties of sibling controls. All properties that can be changed in the Property Pane. Depending on the layout manager in effect, row and column headers may be visible in the header area. Right-click on component to
access the same context menu available in the Components may be added by choosing them from the Palette and deleted using the Delete key. You can go to the design view by opening the HelloWorld class and clicking on the Design tab at the bottom. Figure 6. Design View TabThis window is divided into three main parts. The first
part is the Structure where you can see your components and there properties. The middle part is the Palette section where you can see lots of Composites, Layouts and Controls. This right most section is your main app window. You can see lots of Composites, Layouts and Controls. This right most section where you can see lots of Composites, Layouts and Controls.
Layout 5.2 Running the application This application application for the Application application for the application application for the formula for the formula for the application for the application for the application for the application for the formula for th
see how we can add controls in our application. Let's say we want to create a login form which will have two text boxes, Username and Password and one Login buttons. We can change the text which is displayed for the item from the Properties
window. Once you have added the above mentioned items in the application window, your Design Window will look something like below: Figure 9. Application window. If you click on any item you can see the properties of that item in the
Properties window. Now if you save your changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method. You will see that Eclipse had added code to reflect the changes are in the createContents() method.
lblNewLabel.setBounds(76, 69, 108, 15); lblNewLabel 1 = new Text(shell, SWT.BORDER); text = new Text(shell, SWT.BORDER); text 1.setBounds(152, 69, 76, 21); Label lblNewLabel 
76, 21); Button btnNewButton = new Button(shell, SWT.NONE); btnNewButton.setBounds(153, 169, 75, 25); btnNewButton.setText("Login"); To add the action listener to the button press event, right click on the button press event, right click on the button setText("Login"); To add the action listener to the button press event, right click on the button press event, right click on the button setText("Login"); To add the action listener to the button press event, right click on the button press event.
this section we will see how we can perform actions on the Components in Design view.6.1.1 Component Select multiple widgets. Hold the Alt key and start dragging
to automatically activate the Marquee tool.6.1.2 Editing ComponentsThere is a quick way to edit the text property of buttons (including check and radio buttons), labels, text fields, groups, and table columns. First select a component's text
property. Figure 10. Editing Components 6.1.3 Moving Components Whenever a component is moved in the Design View, drag feedback is provided that is layout manager specific. In an x,y oriented layout like absolute layout, the live component is shown moving with a tooltip showing its current location. Dynamic snap / alignment points are provided
to make it convenient to align the component with other components or the window margin. In grid oriented layouts different feedback is shown depending on which cell the cursor is positioned over a row or
column border, the row or column border is highlighted in yellow indicating that a new row or column will be inserted. If the cursor shows a red minus sign. 6.1.4 Resizing Components Whenever a component is resized in the Design View, size feedback is provided
that is layout manager specific. In an x,y oriented layout like absolute layout, an outline of the new size is shown with a tooltip showing its current size. Dynamic snap / alignment points are provided to make it convenient to align the component with other components or the window margin. Resizing a component also snaps to the preferred size of the
resized component or to the size (vertical or horizontal) of any other component on the same parent. In grid oriented layouts, resizing a component will be occupied by the component are outlined in green. 6.2 Component Tree The Component Tree shows the
hierarchical relationship between all of the components in the Design View. Each component in the tree shows is icon (with potential decorators), its variable name and text label. Components may be represented as local variables or fields, and variables or fields, and variables or fields, and variables or fields.
used to indicate whether a component defines and events or is exposed as a public components in the tree using the Expand All button, and collapse them using the Expand All button, and collapse them using the Expand All button. Right-click on an entry in the tree to access the same context menu available in the Design View. Components may be re-
arranged in the tree via drag/drop and deleted using the Delete key. Multiple components may be selected in the tree by holding down the Ctrl key to add individual selections or the Shift key to add contiguous selections. Figure 11. Component Tree7. Property Pane The Property Pane displays properties and events of the selected components and
provides editable text fields, lists and other controls to allow you to edit properties and events. Select the control in the Property Pane. Once visible in the Property Pane. Once visible in the Property Pane. Once visible in the Property Pane.
Property Pane. If not all the selected controls have the Show advanced properties are shown in talics (click the Property Pane will be blank. By default, the Property Pane displays normal properties are shown in talics (click the Show advanced properties button to reveal them). A grey
background indicates a property set to its default value while a white background indicates a property that has been set to a non-default value. You can select a property by clicking on the property title or value. When a property is selected, an editor is displayed instead
of the value, so you can change it value. In most property editors Enter should be used to apply the value, and Esc to return to the previous value. If you select some properties such as Strings and ints and complex properties that consist of several
other properties, such as layouts and layout datas. Complex properties in several different ways:double click on the property and press (+) to expand, (-) to collapseSome properties, such as
strings, colors, fonts and images, provide a custom property editor which can be access by clicking the button. The state of a property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls, so if you expand the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls and the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls and the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls and the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls and the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls and the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls and the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls and the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls and the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections of controls and the property (expanded or collapsed) is preserved between selections 
quickly change the style value for several properties, i.e. properties, i.e. properties, whose values should be selected from some list. For
example "type" property of complex "style" property of complex "style" property and press Space to expand list and then use arrows to change value; select property
and press Delete to change value to default. Right-click on the Property Pane to access the property Pane to acces
components. The tool makes it very easy to add and remove event listeners to your components are two ways to add an event handler the Component Tree or the Design View. Click the Show Events button to reveal the
events list in the Property Pane. Expand an event and double-click or press Enter on the event handler you wish to implement. Figure 13. Add Event Handler you wish to implement. Figure 13. Add Event Handler you wish to implement.
the event handler to implement]. Figure 14. Add Event HandlerA quick way to add event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and menu items is to simply double-click on the button or menu items is to simply double-click on the button or menu item. When double-clicked, a selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and menu items is to simply double-clicked, a selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and menu items is to simply double-clicked, a selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and menu items is to simply double-clicked, a selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and menu items is to simply double-clicked, a selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and menu items is to simply double-clicked, a selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and menu items is to simply double-clicked, a selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and menu items is to simply double-clicked, a selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and menu items is to simply double-clicked, a selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and the selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) and the selection event listeners to buttons (including check and radio buttons) are selection event listeners.
Design View. In the Property Pane, click the Show Events button and expand the event. Then double-click or press Enter on the event method to return to the code. The events' list in the Property Pane is a list of all the event method to return to the event method to return to the code. The events' list in the Property Pane is a list of all the event method to return to the event method to the event meth
implemented, its property value is the line number in the source code where its event-handling code begins. The other way to quickly return to the event-handling code is to right-click on a component (either in the Design View or in the Component Tree), and then select the menu item for the correct method that was implemented. 8.2 Deleting an
Event HandlerThere is only one way to delete an existing event handler in the editor. Select a component in either the Design View or in the Component Tree. In the Property Pane expand expand the event, click on the event method you wish to delete and then press Delete. If there are no other methods that have been implemented for that event, the
tool will also delete the event listener for that event.9. Layout ManagersA program written in Java may be deployed on multiple platforms. If you were to use standard UI design techniques, specifying absolute positions and sizes for your UI components, your UI won't be portable. What looks fine on your development system might be unusable on
another platform. To solve this problem, Java provides a system of portable layout managers. You use these layout managers to specify rules and constraints for the layout positioned components that are independent of fonts, screen resolutions,
and platform differences. Intelligent component placement for containers that are dynamically resized at runtime. Ease of translation. If a string increases in length after translation, the associated components stay properly aligned. When writing Java applications, you may need to use layouts to give your windows a specific look. A layout controls the
position and size of children in a container. Layout classes are subclasses of the abstract class Layout classes are subclasses of the abstract class Layout managers in each panel type. In Java, positioning and sizing does not happen automatically. Applications
can decide to size and place a container's children initially, or in a resize listener. Another option is to specify a layout class to position and size the children are not given a size, they will have zero size and they cannot be seen. The layout manager sets the sizes and locations of the components based on various factors such as: The layout
manager's layout rules. The layout manager has characteristic strengths and drawbacks. Grid-based layouts are the most useful and powerful of the standard layouts, but they are also the most
complicated. When using the design view, you can change the layout whenever you like. The tool adjusts the code as needed on the fly. Change the layout for the composite on the design surface. 10. PaletteThe Palette provides quick access to
toolkit-specific components as well as any custom components installed by the user. The Palette is organized into categories which may be expanded, collapsed or hidden. To add a component tree by clicking in the desired location. Use the Choose
Component command to select the widget type from Choose Component dialog. Multiple widgets of the same type may be added to the Design View by holding down the Ctrl key when selecting the widget in the Palette context menu or by opening the
the toolkit-specific palette to be fully configured. Categories and entries may be added, edited, rearranged and removed and JAR files imported. Items may be rearranged using the Up and Down buttons or via drag and drop. The Collapse All and Expand All buttons show or hide all of the elements in the list. Items may be hidden from the palette by
unchecking the checkbox next to their category or component name. 10.1 Swing Designer Palette Swing Designer provides the following palette for creating Swing applications. The palette may be fully configured using the Palette Manager. 10.1.1 Containers J Panel – A generic lightweight container. J ScrollPane – Provides a scrollable view of a
lightweight component. A JScrollPane manages a viewport, optional vertical and horizontal scroll bars, and optional row and column heading viewports. JSplitPane is used to divide two (and only two) Components can then be
interactively resized by the user. JTabbedPane - A component that lets the user switch between a group of component by clicking on a tab with a given title and/or icon. JToolBar - A component that is useful for displaying commonly used Action's or controls. JDesktopPane - A component that lets the user switch between a group of component that is useful for displaying commonly used Action's or controls.
desktop. JInternalFrame - A lightweight object that provides many of the features of a native frame, including dragging, closing, becoming an icon, resizing, title displays components with specified bounds. FlowLayout - A flow layout arranges components in a
left-to-right flow, much like lines of text in a paragraph. Flow layouts are typically used to arrange buttons in a panel. It will arrange buttons fit on the same line. Border Layout – A border layout lays out a container, arranging and resizing its components to fit in five regions: north, south, east, west, and center. Each
region may contain no more than one component. GridLayout – The GridLayout class is a layout manager that lays out a container is divided into equal-sized rectangle. GridBagLayout – The GridBagLayout class is a flexible layout manager that aligns
components vertically and horizontally, without requiring that the component occupying, one or more cells. CardLayout object maintains a dynamic, rectangular grid of cells, with each component in the container as a card.
Only one card is visible at a time, and the container acts as a stack of cards. The first components will not wrap so, for example, a
vertical arrangement of components will stay vertically arranged when the frame is resized. FormLayout – JGoodies FormLayout is a powerful, flexible and precise general purpose layout manager. It aligns components vertically and horizontally in a dynamic rectangular grid of cells, with each component occupying one or more cells. SpringLayout – A
SpringLayout lays out the children of its associated container according to a set of constraints for each side. GroupLayout mixes an implicit horizontal Box - Creates a panel that uses an implicit vertical BoxLayout.
Horizontal strut - Creates an invisible, fixed-width component. Vertical glue - Creates an invisible, fixed-height component that's always the specified size. Glue - Creates an invisible glue
components 10.1.4 Components JLabel – A display area for a short text string or an image, or both. A label does not react to input events. As a result, it cannot get the keyboard alternative but can't display it. JTextField – A
lightweight component that allows the editing of a single line of text. JComboBox - A component that combines a button or editable field and a drop-down list, which appears at the user's request. If you make the combo box editable, then the combo box includes an editable field into which the user
can type a value. JButton - An implementation of a "push" button. JCheckBox - An implementation of a check box — an item that can be selected, and which displays its state to the user. By convention, any number of check box — an item that can be
selected or deselected, and which displays its state to the user. Used with a ButtonGroup object to create a group of button at a time can be selected or deselected, and which displays its state to the user. JTextArea - A JTextArea is a
multi-line area that displays plain text. JFormattedTextField - A lightweight component that allows the editing of a single line of text where the view indicates something was typed, but does not show the original characters. JTextPane - A
text component that can be marked up with attributes that are represented graphically. JEditorPane - A text component to edit various kinds of content. JSpinner - A lightweight component that allows the user to select one or more objects
from a list. [Table - The [Table is used to display and edit regular two-dimensional tables of cells.] Table on [ScrollPane - A control that displays a set of hierarchical data as an outline. [ProgressBar - A component that, by default, displays an integer value
within a bounded interval. A progress bar typically communicates the progress of some work by displaying its percentage of completion and possibly a textual display of this percentage. JScrollBar – An implementation of a scrollbar. The user positions the knob in the scrollbar to determine the contents of the viewing area. The progress of some work by displaying its percentage of completion and possibly a textual display of this percentage.
adjusts the display so that the end of the scrollbar represents the end of the displayable contents, or 100% of the contents. JSeparator – A horizontal or vertical line used to separate other controls. JSlider – A component that lets the user graphically select a value by sliding a knob within a bounded interval. The slider can show both major tick marks
and minor tick marks between them. The number of values between the tick marks is controlled with setMajorTickSpacing and setMinorTickSpacing and setMinorTickSpacing. 10.1.5 MenuJMenuBar – A menu bar. JPopupMenu – A popup menu. JMenu – Either a pull-down or cascaded menu. JMenuItem – A simple menu item. JCheckBoxMenuItem – A checkbox menu item.
IRadioButtonMenuItem - A radio button menu item. 10.1.6 AWT Components a blank rectangular area of the screen onto which the application can draw or from
which the application can trap input events from the user. ScrollPane - A container class which implements automatic horizontal and/or vertical scrolling for a single child component. Button - This class creates a labeled button. The application can trap input events from the user. ScrollPane - A container class which implements automatic horizontal and/or vertical scrolling for a single child component.
placing text in a container. A label displays a single line of read-only text. The text can be changed by the application, but a user cannot edit itdirectly. Checkbox – A check box is a graphical component that can be in either an "on" (true) or "off" (false) state. Clicking on a check box changes its state from "on" to "off", or from "off" to "on". Choice –
The Choice class presents a pop-up menu of choices. The current choice is displayed as the title of the menu. List - The List component presents the user can choose either one item or multiple items. Scrollbar - The Scrollbar class embodies a scroll bar, a familiar user-interface
object. A scroll bar provides a convenient means for allowing a user to select from a range of values. TextArea object is a multi-line region that displays text. It can be set to allow editing or to be read-only 11. MorphingIt can be frustrating
to suddenly want a Group instead of a Composite or a Combobox rather than a List after you have already completed the design of the composite. It is very easy to remedy this by using the tool. The editor allows you to morph similar components from one type to another. When a component is morphed from one type to another, the properties that are
the same between the two types are kept. This allows quick design changes without having to recreate all the component type to morph a component type to morph a component from one type to another, right-click on the component and select a component type to morph a component type to morph a component from one type to another, right-click on the component from one type to another, right-click on the component from the Morph cascading menu. In addition to morphing to common sibling types, you can also morph a
component into any subclass or into any subclass or into any other arbitrary component type. Figure 15. Morphing 12. ConclusionIn this tutorial we saw how we can make use of WindowBuilder plugin of Eclipse to make UI applications easily and quickly. We discussed the various sections of the Design View panel and also we discussed the usage of each on of them. We
have also examined about various other features such as Event Handling, Morphing etc. In short WindowBuilder is a very powerful tool to design and develop an interactive UI application from Scratch.
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