Spin, Slide, or View Your Data

by Bruce Gardner

With each new version of BBj®, BASIS provides developers with powerful new language features and enhancements. BBj 7.0 delivers on these expectations with a set of new features that will help streamline and modernize your application: BBjSlider, BBjHtmlView, BBjPrintPreview, and a variety of BBjSpinner controls. As with all BBj GUI controls, developers can create these controls programmatically or include them in a FormBuilder resource file requiring little or no coding.

Sliders

Sometimes, less is more. To represent a relative quantity in an application, a slider is the best control to use. Sliders are among the most natural and intuitive of interfaces. The user absorbs the information at a glance – right is more, left is less. If the slider orientation is vertical, up is more, down is less.

Microsoft Windows users are familiar with the slider in volume controls, seekers for sound and movie files, and color choosers. The new BBjSlider control displays a value based on the position of the slider in either horizontal or vertical orientations. The control is customizable, as shown in **Figure 1**, to meet the specific needs of any application including data binding, labeling, major and minor tick spacing, and more.

Spinners

If the ability to select specific values or strings is required, spinners are just the ticket. Spinners allow users to roll or 'spin' through a list of available options or type the input directly. Users often prefer spin controls because it allows them to make changes without moving their hand from the mouse.

BBj 7.0 meets this demand by adding spinner functionality to EditBox, InputD, InputN, and InputE controls as shown in **Figure 2**. As with their non-spinning brothers, these controls can be databound and support data filling. Users can increment or decrement a value displayed and see resulting record set changes instantly. With fewer messy lists to open and a cleaner form, BBjSpinners make it easier than ever to provide quick and concise updates, insertions, and modifications of records.

HTML View

Recently, one of the most requested features was to add the ability to display HTML on a form. Not to be confused with full-blown browser functionality, the BBj 7.0 BBjHtmlView control delivers the ability to display HTML or the contents of a URL in a BBj-constructed window.

Most modern applications mix local and internet resources to provide their customers with up-to-date help and support information.
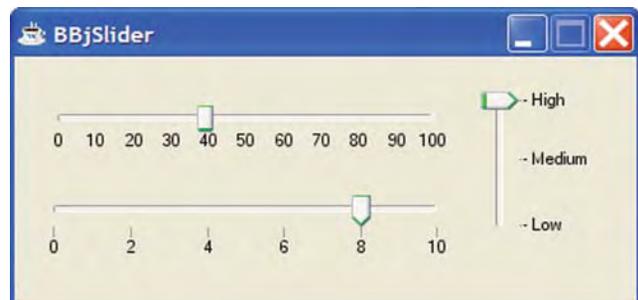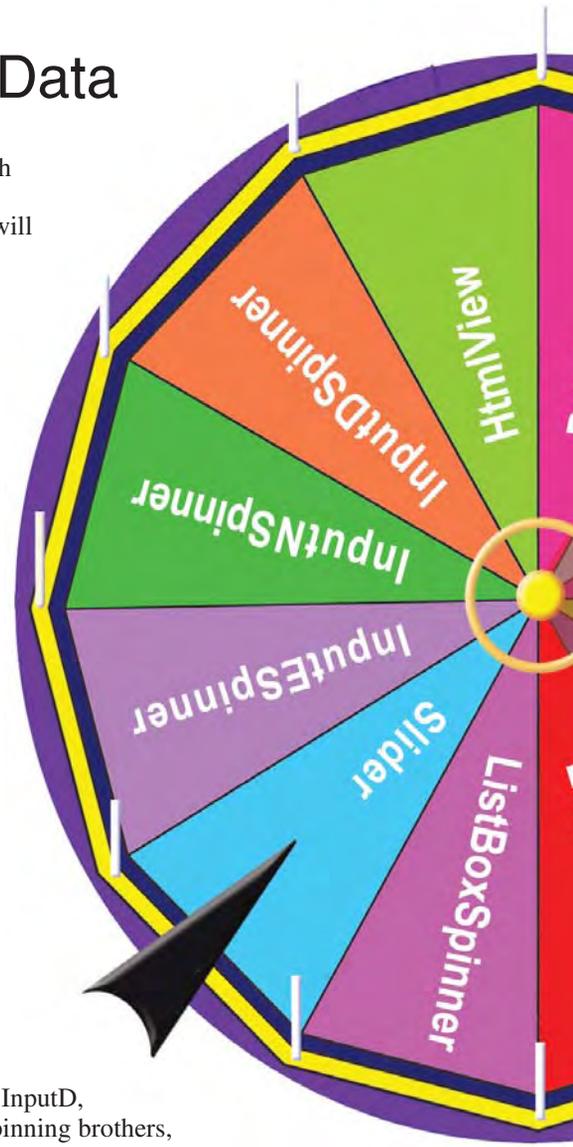
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Figure 1. Various examples of BBjSlider controls

Figure 2. Example of InputN, InputD, and InputESpinners

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Perhaps the most common implementation of this feature is to display online documentation as shown in **Figure 3**. New callbacks – HYPERLINK_ACTIVATE, HYPERLINK_ENTER, and HYPERLINK_EXIT – provide the developer with a host of options to respond to user clicks and mouse moves within the control.

Figure 3. A BBjHtmlView displaying online documentation

Print Preview

Almost all applications have a print preview feature. Modern applications require more sophisticated methods to preview, navigate through, and display their output. With the new BBjPrintPreview control, BASIS provides an alternative to the default print preview allowing for a quick and easy way to add a fully customizable print preview to display the output of a BBjForm print job.

To create a customized preview similar to the one shown in **Figure 4**, use custom buttons, including the new MenuButton, and the many new methods now in BBj to navigate and display pages in any number of ways. Choose to display first and last pages or two pages at a time, utilize a page count, set the zoom factor, or localize the display, to name a few of the options available to the programmer with this new control.

Figure 4. Zoom capability and custom navigation buttons in a print preview

Summary

BASIS continues to bring developers powerful new features and enhancements. Download BBj 7.0 today at www.basis.com/products/bbj/download.html and see how these new features can extend, streamline, and modernize any BBx application.