

The new Uniface Integrated Development Environment .. more than just a new term

(Original creator: HenkVanDerVeer)

Uniface 10 is all about the new environment for developing Uniface applications. To underline that, we have given it a new name: the *Uniface Integrated Development Environment*, or *Uniface IDE*.

For thirty odd years, we have referred to our development environment as 'the *IDF*'. What does the term *IDF* stand for? How is *IDE* different from *IDF*? Is the difference relevant at all? Here in the Lab, we use the terms *IDF* and *IDE* to make the following distinction:

- *IDE* is the development environment for Uniface 10
- *IDF* is the development environment for all Uniface 9 versions.

The *IDE* in Uniface 10 has its own new executable, called *ide.exe*. You can find it in the common/bin folder. This new *IDE* uses a new assignment file, named *ide.asn*. This file is in the uniface/adm folder.

So, some things have changed, others have not. The logical path to the database that stores the repository is still called \$*IDF* in Uniface 10.

IDE and *IDF* are totally different applications with their own characteristics and a very different user interface. Added to that: the repository has been changed substantially to cater for new functionality in the *IDE*. So, it's important for us to distinguish between *IDE* and *IDF*. The Uniface 10.2 *IDE* is largely composed of a completely new set of editors. Editors for components, modeled entities and projects, to name a few. And yes, the *IDE* still contains a subset of editors that also exist in the *IDF* - you will find these under 'More Editors' in the *IDE*'s top menu. Over time, the old style editors will be replaced by new style editors, i.e. *IDE* style editors

Where does the term *IDF* come from?

Way back, in the late eighties and early nineties of the previous century, the days of Uniface versions 4 and 5, the Uniface development tool was called *Information engineering & Design Facility*, *IDF* for short. Here's a screenshot of the *IDF* start screen, taken from the Uniface 5.2 manual (and notice that other terminology has changed over time!)

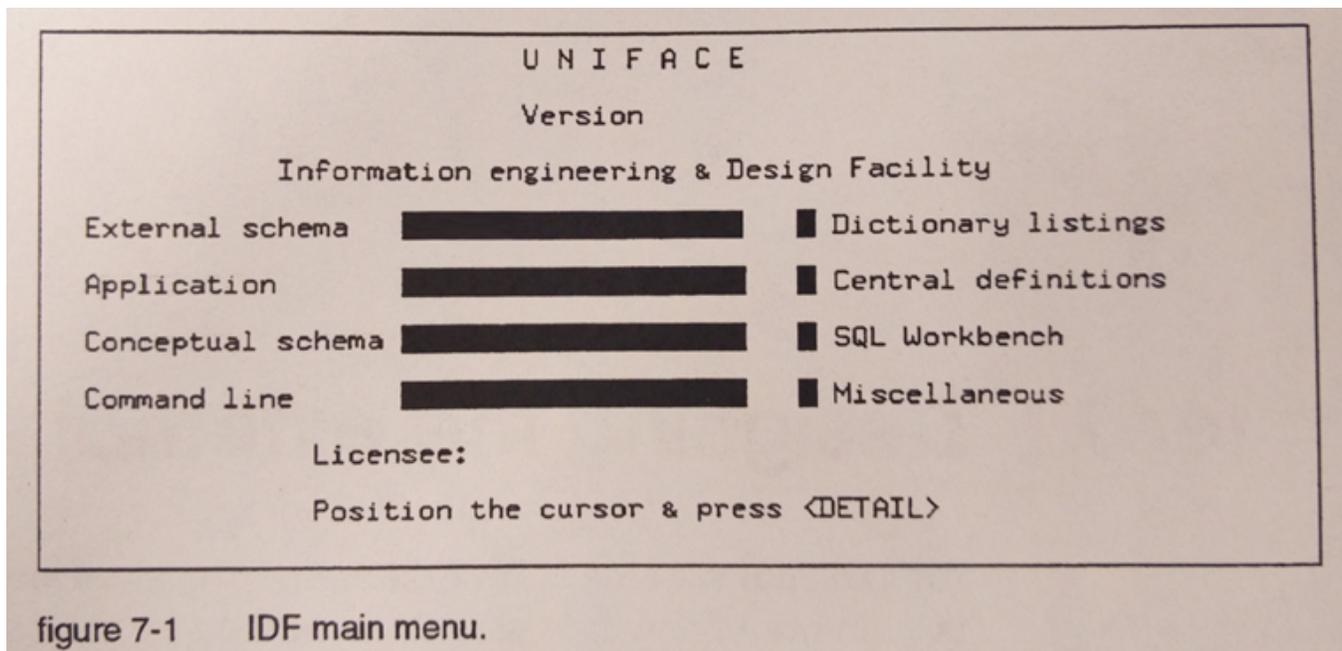


figure 7-1 IDF main menu.

The name *idf* was also used for the executable that started the development tool: *idf.exe* on Windows and VMS, or just *idf* on Unix. To use the development tool on Unix in those days, you would typically use the environment variable *\$idf* that was defined by the install scripts. And to keep things simple, a predefined logical database path *\$IDF* is used by Uniface to this very day to define where the repository is stored.

In later versions the term **Information engineering & Design Facility** disappeared. We introduced the term **UDE**, short for **Uniface Development Environment**. The terms *UDE* and *Uniface Development Environment* were used all over the place in the documentation, but I don't recall ever having seen the term **UDE** in the tool itself. The executable that started the *UDE* was still named *idf.exe* - we're talking Windows only in the meantime - and the assignment file for the *UDE* was still named *idf.asn*.

Enter the *\$UDE* function in the Uniface Proc language in Uniface 9. A function that helps the developer define custom actions on repository data, including compiling, exporting, importing, and converting. On disk, you will find a file called *ude.exe*. This executable is not used to start the Uniface Development environment, but is used by the *\$UDE* function. There is no *ude.asn* file for the *ude.exe*.

And for completeness sake: for a short period in the Uniface 9 lifetime we used the term *Uniface Application Platform Suite*, or *APS*. The *APS* is the workbench that integrates Uniface application development with the BPM product Uniface Flow. Note that as of Uniface 9.7, Uniface Flow is no longer delivered.

Summary

Term	Explanation	used by
IDE	Integrated Development Environment	Uniface 10
ide.exe	The executable on disk that starts the IDE	Uniface 10
ide.asn	The assignment file used by the IDE in a default installation	Uniface 10
IDF	Development Environment for Uniface 9	Uniface 9
	Information engineering & Design Facility	<i>deprecated</i>
idf.exe	The executable on disk that starts the IDF	Uniface 9
idf.asn	The assignment file used by the IDF in a default installation	Uniface 9
\$idf	Environment variable on Unix to start the IDF	<i>deprecated</i>
\$IDF	logical path to the database that holds the repository	Uniface 9 and Uniface 10
UDE	Uniface Development Environment	<i>Documentation Uniface 8 and 9</i>
\$UDE	Uniface function to perform actions on the repository	Uniface 9 and Uniface 10

Uniface IDE vs IDF

Confused? Naah, not anymore, I hope