Uniface 10.3: the version to go for

In case you've missed the summer's exciting news from Uniface headquarters, Uniface 10.3 has now arrived.

I've already been working with this new version for a while, initially using a couple of pre-releases, but then for the past few weeks the live release. This experience has convinced me that Uniface 10, and version 10.3 in particular, is the version the Uniface community has been waiting for. I'm writing this blog post to explain why, and especially to share my experiences with the new IDE.

Background: Uniface 10

Uniface 10 was designed and built based on the wishes of the Uniface developer community. Hundreds of questions and requests from Uniface developers all over the world were taken into account during this extensive design exercise. The result is a complete overhaul of the Uniface development environment. Uniface 10 has a whole new look and feel, comparable with any modern IDE. Although it's still recognizably Uniface, developers may need a little time to get used to the new version, but in my experience that will be time well spent. There's no way I'm going back to Uniface 9! A major difference from earlier versions is that Uniface 10 is a *non-modal development environment*, which means you can work with as many Uniface objects as you like in parallel. Being able to switch between components with just one click makes development easier and more efficient. This by itself is a great reason to start using Uniface 10. \\

Highlights of Uniface 10

Here are some of the enhancements that you'll notice immediately when you start using Uniface 10 for the first time:

- The *IDE's performance* has significantly improved, making the non-modal concept a pleasure to work with.
- The *graphical form painter functionality* is drastically improved – a strong argument for client/server developers to switch to Uniface 10.
- *Debugging* is faster: every error and warning message in the compiler output contains a hyperlink to the relevant line of code.
- There's a completely *updated and stable meta-dictionary* so developers can safely port their existing custom-written utilities to Uniface 10. The additional menu items in previous Uniface versions can be used to launch these utilities.
- Uniface 10 now also has *user-defined menus* and *user-defined worksheets*. My experience shows these are very powerful. Yes, you might need to modify your tools, but again it's worthwhile.
- The new *Transport Layer Security (TLS) network connector* makes the network connection between client and server secure – vital for business-critical applications.

I'll discuss many of these enhancements in more detail in future posts. As well as all these major improvements, Uniface 10 brings some smaller "nice to haves". For example, I'm pleased to have the option to set the title bar text of the IDE application window.

Migrating to Uniface The migration process from Uniface 9.7 to Uniface 10 has been run by the Uniface team over and over again. Many huge Uniface 9 customer applications have been migrated successfully to Uniface 10. So for those currently on Uniface 9.6 or 9.7, migration is likely to be a smooth process. If, on the other hand, you are currently considering migrating to Uniface 9.7.05, my advice would be to move directly to Uniface 10 instead because of the advantages described above and (This is also Uniface's advice) it means one migration rather than two and ensures long-term support. Conclusion: based on my experience, I believe Uniface 10.3 is the version to go for.

Blog: Peter Lammersma

Peter Lammersma is an entrepreneur and IT and business consultant. Peter works extensively with Uniface 10. As a long-serving member of the Uniface community, he's kindly agreed to give his independent perspective in this blog series.