

MiddleWare SDK for ACT Premium by Sage (for ACT Versions 10 and upwards)

MIDDLEWARE SDK - DOCUMENTATION

This document is intended for the Licensed ACT User as well as the aspiring software developer – for it's aim is to illustrate how the product may be used to make it possible for any programmer in the world to write applications in any programming language to "link to" and otherwise integrate ACT with any application.

MiddleWare SDK provides data input, update and access for a wide range of CORE Functionality as derived from ACT using the Sage SDK for ACT.

MiddleWare SDK for ACT can also be used for some degree of "Remote Control" as well. For example, to POP ACT Contacts and Companies too.

MiddleWare SDK will only work if ACT Version 10 and up (2008) is running in that it is actually a true ACT.APP Plugin DLL itself. Albeit, completely 100% *TRANSPARENT* in use. Rather like the old Symantec ACT! App Object did.

It is called MiddleWare SDK because it lies in the middle between ACT and external programs written to LINK any application to ACT.

In a manner similar to the way in which the famous programming genius, Dmitry Streblechenko put an *envelope* around Microsoft Outlook's security feature and created the REDEMPTION (as used by ACT and thousands of other applications) MiddleWare SDK provides an easy way to do things with ACT that would otherwise involve a huge learning curve.

Except – and this is fundamental, with MiddleWare SDK, the method is fully *universal* and does not involve any objects that need to be registered in Windows, nor are there, any components to be instantiated either. In fact no knowledge of .net nor of the ACT SDK itself either, needs to be learnt.

The software developer who uses MiddleWare SDK will need to have an understanding of the ACT data structure and should peruse an entity diagram for the ACT database as well having a good comprehension of the ACT product as well as Contact Management software in its whole genre.

Given that the programmer who uses MiddleWare SDK is familiar with existing mass data import and export add-ons, it will follow that the purpose of MiddleWare is absolutely **not** to replace existing functionality with or without various ACT Add-ons in the market – but, moreover, to facilitate integration with Corporate Database Systems and Applications that are otherwise stand-alone from ACT.

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PRODUCT DISCLAIMER NOTICE – PLEASE READ!

OK – At this point I am boring the non technical users, so I will make an immediate point here:

MiddleWare SDK for ACT by Sage is completely FREE.

We have not, therefore, any funding set aside for any legal issues and it must be accepted by anybody using MiddleWare SDK that in spite of the fact that great care has gone into the ERROR trapping to avoid the application falling over – it may only be used by anybody on the clear understanding that there is no warranty of merchantability or suitability for use for any purpose and the developer and anybody associated with MiddleWare SDK for ACT by Sage, irrevocably disclaim any and all liability for any issues or costs that may arise through its use.

PERIOD.

The prospective user of MiddleWare must accept this disclaimer outright and make their choice whether or not to use it or allow it to be saved into the ACT Plugins folder.

This statement means exactly the same thing as the Sage Disclaimer, and for that matter, any Software Development Kit or software that may be used.

As with ALL development tools, MiddleWare SDK may be compared to a hammer in a workman's toolbox. Even a hammer may break a thumb.

It is expected that in initial use, MiddleWare SDK will be operated when using the standard ACT Demo Database for ACT 2008 (and upwards) so that any and all development make be tested to the fullest extent on non-important data in a safe environment.

It is further expected that any software developer who uses MiddleWare SDK will liaise with an ACT Certified Consultant whose professional knowledge of ACT will be crucial in avoiding functionality issues.

Having said all of the above, please enjoy MiddleWare SDK for ACT by Sage as a unique development tool to make it possible to link systems in a way that would otherwise require a very long and expensive learning curve.

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PRODUCT OVERVIEW – BASIC FEATURES

Unlike the traditional DLL that requires registration within Windows, the MiddleWareSDK.dll is simply SAVED into the ACT Plugins folder.

When ACT is executed, MiddleWare SDK just runs instantly, in the system background quite transparently.

Every second, MiddleWare SDK checks a designated Binary Shared flat ASCII text file called "JobControl.txt" to see if another application needs it to perform a service.

Jobs such as providing information, popping Contacts or Companies, advising which contacts are in the Current Contact Lookup are just some of the tasks MiddleWare SDK can do.

The Current ACT User's information is available for an instant "ACTOLEDB" connection string, their "My Record" information, the current ACT Database reference (PAD File) and other data such as Field Name Lists and so forth are within the brief of MiddleWare.

In addition, pulling out Sales Opportunity data for the Current Contact, adding new contacts, secondary contacts, new companies, activities and history records are other things you can do with MiddleWare SDK.

Yes, you can even change field data for existing contacts, secondary contacts and companies too.

Altogether, with the first release of the product, over 30 Powerful Core Features of ACT are at your fingertips.

We have provided a set of example programs written in Microsoft Visual Basic 6.0 that can easily be used by any programmer using **any** language to translate and code in their own preferred development environment.

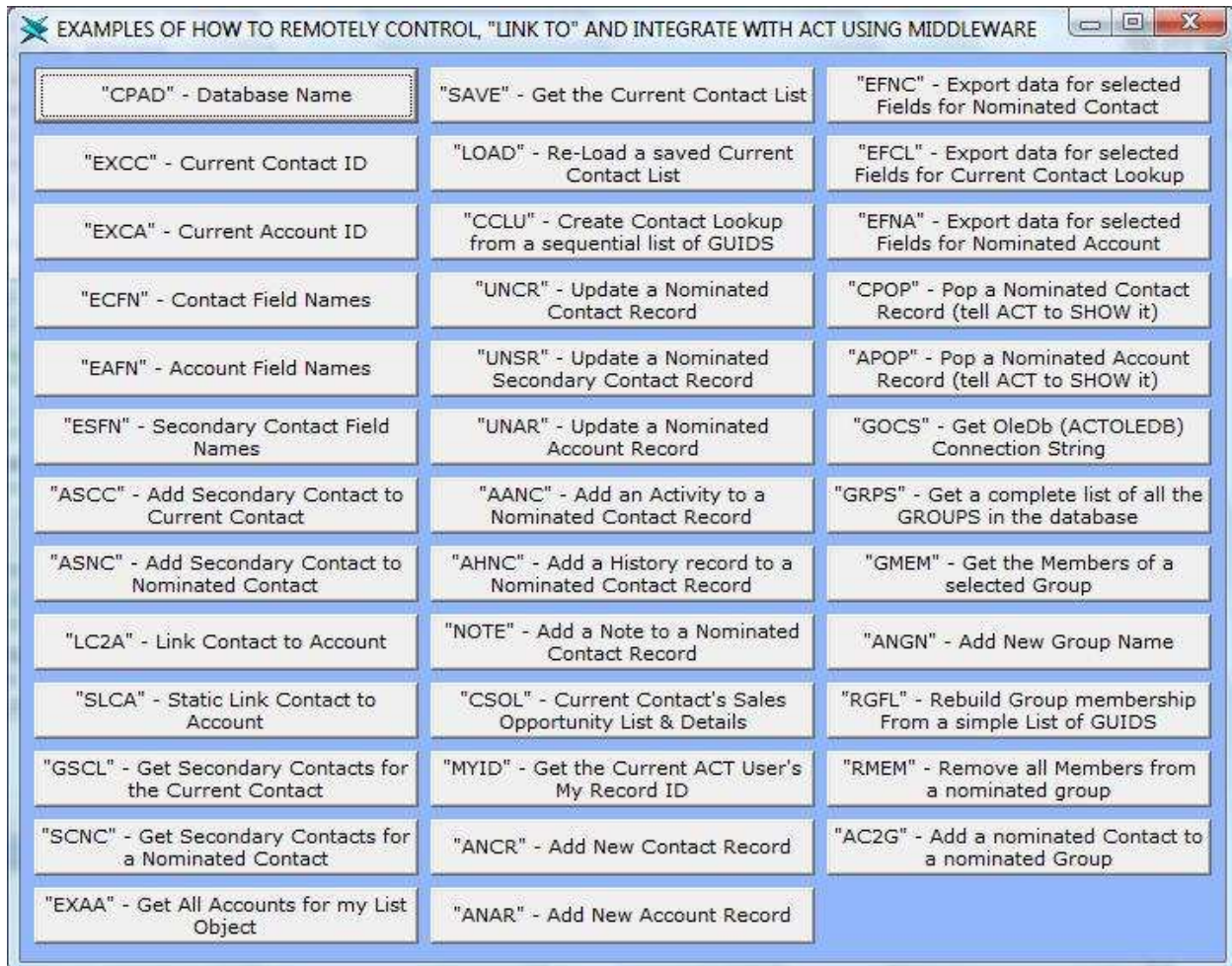
The VB 6.0 examples really *are* very simple so that anybody who has a good command of programming will understand them all with ease.

And we have also converted the same examples software into VB 2008 .net as well so that the seasoned .net programmer can understand the simplicity too.

Please review the screen-shot on the next page.

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SCREEN-SHOT OF THE EXAMPLES SOFTWARE



Under each button lies the simple example.

All examples SHARE a Global Variable for the PATH to the systems working directory within the computer's "Program Files" folder.

In addition, we have created just TWO FUNCTIONS that need to be Publicly available to keep coding down to the minimum.

This PDF document you are reading right now must be supported by a print-out of the source code within the downloadable examples software.

Without actually performing the download and printing out the code, you will simply not be able to make any real use of MiddleWare SDK for ACT by Sage.

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HOW THIS PRODUCT WORKS

This section will make you smile, if you are a real program developer or a casually technical reader. Why?

Because once the concept is understood, you will realize that everything is obviously just too easy for words.

And I mean that. ANYBODY can do it. No exceptions.

As I said in an earlier heading, MiddleWare SDK runs whenever ACT is running and it *polls* or *reads* a **SHARED** Control File to see what it is being *commanded* to do.

All programs written by you will follow this general syntax:

1. Store your requirements in an ASCII text file (if applicable)
2. Save your COMMAND STRING (always 4 Bytes) to the Control File.
3. Wait until the **SHARED** Control File content changes to "DONE"...
4. Collect the output (if applicable)

That's all there is to it. It's honestly, just like *magic*.

You advise, you command, you wait and you collect.

IT'S JUST LIKE GOING OUT TO DINNER...

When you go to a restaurant, you simply advise the server what you want, who then takes your list of desired grub to the chef, and places your order.

When your order is ready, the server delivers the meal to you.

So it's *exactly* the same with MiddleWare SDK for ACT by Sage.

You might advise, "I want the Contact, Company and Phone Number for everyone in the Current Lookup in ACT" writing sequential to a text file.

Then you issue a command, and when it's ready, you read the results!

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THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

TABLE STRUCTURES

You need to understand the file table structure of ACT with regards to Contacts, Secondary Contacts, Companies (I call these Accounts BTW) and have a general understanding of GUID's (the record id's) that are always 36 character strings.

HOW TO DOWNLOAD LISTS OF FIELDS

It's important to know that the field names in the DB Browser that comes with MiddleWare on the ACT Lookup Menu are NOT the same as the field names used by MiddleWare SDK.

Sorry about that, but the ACT SDK uses different field names.

To get the Field Names for SDK purposes, please look at the examples software in VB. Then use them.

UPGRADED ACT DATABASES

Old ACT Databases that have been upgraded from Symantec ACT do not always have the same field names.

For example, the ZIP CODE Field. Beware and work around this!

Also, I use the FIELD NAME "GUID" when requesting a GUID for a record in MiddleWare SDK.

HISTORY AND ACTIVITY TYPES

These are added to this PDF as a reference on the following pages.

FIELD NAME - CASE SENSITIVITY

ACT Field names are CASE SENSITIVE and must be entered exactly as they come out of the results when you request field names using MiddleWare SDK.

GETTING HELP – Just email Support@V8Software.com

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ACTIVITY TYPES

When you add a new Activity to ACT, you will use one of these Activity Types:

“Call”

“Meeting”

“To-Do”

In the future, these will be expanded, but for the time being, please be advised that these are all you have right now.

HISTORY TYPES

The Left-Most Column of the following table should apply:

Name	Description	IsUserRecordable	IsCustom	IsActive
Library Document		False	False	True
Call Attempted	Phone call was attempted but no answer	True	False	True
Call Completed	Phone call was attempted and completed sucessfully	True	False	True
Call Received	Phone call was received	True	False	True
Field Changed	Field is tracked and the value changed	False	False	True
Access		False	False	True
Letter Sent		True	False	True
Meeting Held	Meeting was completed	True	False	True
Meeting Not Held	Meeting was not completed	True	False	True
To-do Done	To-do was completed	True	False	True
To-do Not Done	To-do was not completed	True	False	True
Timer		False	False	True
Contact Deleted		False	False	True
Contact Updated		False	False	True
Activity Updated		False	False	True
Activity Deleted		False	False	True
E-mail Sent		True	False	True

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Call Left Message	Phone call and either left a message or a message was left	True	False	True
Personal Activity Completed	Personal Activity was Completed	True	True	True
Personal Activity Not Completed	Personal Activity was not Completed	True	True	True
Personal Activity Postponed	Personal Activity was Postponed	True	True	True
Personal Activity Cancelled	Personal Activity was Cancelled	True	True	True
Vacation Completed	Vacation was Completed	True	True	True
Vacation Not Completed	Vacation was not Completed	True	True	True
Vacation Cancelled	Vacation was Cancelled	True	True	True
Fax Sent		True	False	True
Sent Sync		False	False	True
Received Sync		False	False	True
Replace Fields Log		False	False	True
Error	A general application error occurred	False	False	True
Opportunity Won	Opportunity was won	False	False	True
Opportunity Lost	Opportunity was lost	False	False	True
New Opportunity	A new Opportunity has been added	False	False	True
Opportunity Inactive	Opportunity has changed to Inactive	False	False	True
Opportunity Stage Update	The Stage for an Opportunity has been updated	False	False	True
Quote	A Quote has been produced for an Opportunity	False	False	True
E-mail Not Sent		True	False	True
Fax Not Sent		True	False	True
Data Moved	A Move Contact Data operation occurred	False	False	True
Opportunity Opened	Opportunity was opened	False	False	True
Contact Linked	A Contact was Linked to a Company Record.	False	False	True
Contact Unlinked	A Contact was Unlinked from a Company Record.	False	False	True
Attachment	A File Attachment	True	False	True
E-Mail	An E-Mail attachment	True	False	True
Library Document Attached	A Library Document was attached	False	False	True
Completed	Completed	True	True	True
Not Completed	Not Completed	True	True	True
Completed MyActivityType	Completed MyActivityType (Description)	True	True	True
Not Completed MyActivityType	Not Completed MyActivityType (Description)	True	True	True

Please understand that whilst this documentation may seem to be very limited, it is expected that you will immediately begin exploring how to use MiddleWare SDK for ACT by Sage with the examples I have written in VB6.

Happy programming!

Kevin Ritch (V8Software.com) ~ Contact information on the website!