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# One Last Compile...

## *Bad news from DCon*

**I**t was with a heavy heart that I returned from DCon 2001, the Delphi Developers Conference.

It was not that I didn't enjoy it, you understand. Nor was it because my longing, hopeful glances aimed at the blonde Delphi programmer from Sweden had, for the third year running, gone unnoticed and unreturned.

No, the reason is this: I didn't want to like Delphi 6. I didn't want to have to buy it. I didn't want to have to go through the teeth-gritting tedium and irritation of migrating all my component libraries. I didn't want to spend the next six weeks finding weird bugs in the Delphi IDE that won't be fixed until I've spent three days downloading the first 80 ka-billion-megabyte update pack.

I was fairly confident that Borland wouldn't let me down. As I've commented before (and the view is shared by many), the even-numbered versions of Delphi have, in the past, tended to be the ones you could safely skip. What I wanted to see was a competent but uninspiring new release, featuring a few nice-to-have new components, but nothing to make my jaw drop to the floor and start me ferreting for the credit cards.

If, horrors, I did like it, the next best thing would be that all the good stuff would be in the Professional Edition. I really, really, hate spending all that extra money on the Enterprise version. No way I was going to do that.

So, to recap. Goal One was not to like it. Goal Two was to only like it enough to get the Professional version. Off I went to DCon, chanting this as my mantra.

Guess what? I loved it. Delphi 6 was everywhere I looked and, every time I saw it, it looked a little better. And, what do you know, everything I liked is in the Enterprise Edition. And, guess what else, I've already bought a copy.

Last month in these hallowed pages you will have already read various reports on the new release by those more learned than I. Since I'm writing this rather early, I haven't seen these reports yet and I have no idea what their verdict is, but I can give you mine: If you do any kind of web development, you need to get Delphi 6.

Users of the Pro version get fobbed off with a combined TEdit/TLabel component (at last!) and a few new colours in the IDE. Actually, they get a bit more than that, after all, there's all that CLX stuff, and I understand some poor souls even tweaked up the compiler, which is sure to keep us knee-deep in Dave Jewell articles for the foreseeable future. But, on the surface, there didn't seem to be much more than window dressing to me. A new tool for doing diagrams? Ho hum. I never used the last one they gave us, to be honest. A new combobox with images and indents? Yawn. Being able to edit the properties of a linked component in the object inspector? Yes dear, very nice.

Just about everything new and worthwhile in Delphi 6, it seemed to me, is in the top-end version. Borland has done what looks like a lot of work on making XML and SOAP very easy indeed: now I just need to figure out what I'm supposed to do with them. We finally get a reliable way of debugging web applications. And WebSnap looks like everything WebBroker should have been the first time round.

So, yes, I've bitten the bullet, or should that be pillow? I have lashed out. I spend my spare hours, which were few enough to start with, rampaging through the excellent help trying to remember what a WSDL document does (and, more important, do we pronounce it double-you-ess-dee-ell or whizz-dull?). Yes, I will probably regret my impulsiveness. Yes, there are many dark and difficult hours ahead. But hey, you're only middle-aged once.