Quick answers to common problems

Microsoft Silverlight 4 Data and Services Cookbook: LITE

17 practical recipes for creating rich, data-driven business applications in Silverlight

Gill Cleeren Kevin Dockx

[PACKT] PUBLISHING enterprise professional expertise distilled

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BIRMINGHAM - MUMBAI

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As MVP and Regional Director, Gill is also very active in the Belgian and international community as a speaker and user group leader for Visug, the Belgian .NET user group. His blog on .NET, ASP.NET, and Silverlight can be found at `http://www.snowball.be`.

Writing has become a new passion of mine. Over a year ago, Kevin and I published our very first book, the full edition of the lite edition you're holding now. Writing a book is a lot of work but seeing the result of my hard work on a shelf in a bookstore is worth it. I hope this lite edition can introduce you to building small business applications with Silverlight!

Of course, writing a book is not the work of a single person! During the writing period, the people of Packt have been most helpful in every way. I really want to thank Kerry George for replying to the countless mails we have exchanged! Of course, a very big thank you to both my mother and my lovely girlfriend Lindsey, for the patience during the days I spent more time writing than being with you.

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After our previous book, Packt Publishing asked us if we'd like to take part in their "Lite" book program: short, to the point books that provide part of the full books' content, a useful introduction to what the full book offers, and a great starting point for developers. Sounded like a great idea to us, but let me tell you: It's not easy at all to select the correct chapters/recipes for a Lite edition. However, I'm confident this book offers a good taste of the full one: a good introduction to Silverlight, Data & Services - I hope you'll enjoy reading it!

I'd like to thank anyone who helped me out with this book. Besides that, I'd also like to thank my friends for sticking around while I was busy spending my time writing this book instead of socializing ;-)

About the reviewers

Kevin DeRudder is a .NET trainer and consultant at U2U, mainly focusing on the WEB. In the recent years, Kevin was involved in lots of Silverlight and ASP.NET projects for a variety of clients and projects.

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I would like to thank my wife Anna, my parents, and my three sons Taran, Kyle, and Ryan for their love and support.

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Preface

This short, fast-paced cookbook teaches you how to build data-rich business applications with Silverlight that draw on multiple sources of data. Most of the features covered work both in Silverlight 3 and 4. However, we cover some that are specific to Silverlight 4, which will therefore not work with Silverlight 3. Where this is the case, it will be clearly indicated.

Packed with reusable, real-world recipes, this short book is designed to provide immediately useable recipes for building data-driven applications designed to show you how to interact with and handle multiple sources of data, how to solve particular data problems, and how to interact with services. The book specifically focuses on an introduction to Data Binding, and talking to Services.

This book is the LITE edition of a longer book, Microsoft Silverlight 4 Data and Services. With the full edition you will create rich, data-driven business applications in Silverlight with over 85 practical recipes.

To find out more about upgrading to the full edition, visit `www.packtpub.com/liteupgrade` and log into your account for offers and help. If you don't have an account on PacktPub.com, visit today and set one up!

What this book covers

Chapter 1, *An Introduction to Data Binding* will explore how data binding works. We'll start by building a small data-driven application that contains the most important data binding features, to get a grasp of the general concepts. We'll also see that data binding isn't tied to just binding single objects to an interface; binding an entire collection of objects is supported as well. We'll also be looking at the binding modes. They allow us to specify how the data will flow (from source to target, target to source, or both). We'll finish this chapter by looking at the support that Blend 4 provides to build applications that use data binding features. In the next chapter, we'll be looking at the more advanced concepts of data binding.

Chapter 2, *Talking to Services* talks about the rich set of options that Silverlight provides to communicate with services.

What you need for this book

To work with the recipes in this short book, it's required that you have Visual Studio installed. This book targets Silverlight 4, which works only with Visual Studio 2010. Many of the recipes in the book will also work in Silverlight 3, so for these recipes, you have the choice of Visual Studio 2008 or 2010. We do recommend using Visual Studio 2010, as it features a lot of enhancements for developing with Silverlight. In both cases, you'll of course need to install the Silverlight Tools, which will update your Visual Studio instance to work with Silverlight. Some recipes also require Blend 4 to be installed on your machine (again, if working with Silverlight 3, Blend 3 will suffice here as well).

Who this book is for

If you are a .NET developer who wants to build professional data-driven applications with Silverlight, then this book is for you. Basic Silverlight experience and familiarity with accessing data using ADO.NET in regular .NET applications is required.

Conventions

In this book, you will find a number of styles of text that distinguish between different kinds of information. Here are some examples of these styles, and an explanation of their meaning.

Code words in text are shown as follows: "Finally, the `DataReader` and connection are closed and the `StoreDTO` object is returned."

A block of code will be set as follows:

```
public MainPage()
{
  InitializeComponent();
  //initialize owner data
  InitializeOwner();
  SetOwnerValues();
}
private void SetOwnerValues()
{
  OwnerIdValueTextBlock.Text = owner.OwnerId.ToString();
  FirstNameValueTextBlock.Text = owner.FirstName;
```

```
    LastNameValueTextBlock.Text = owner.LastName;
    AddressValueTextBlock.Text = owner.Address;
    //other values go here
}
```

New terms and **important words** are shown in bold. Words that you see on the screen, in menus or dialog boxes for example, appear in our text like this: "Do this by right-clicking, selecting **Add New Item**, and then selecting **LINQ TO SQL Classes**.".

Warnings or important notes appear in a box like this.

Tips and tricks appear like this.

Reader feedback

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