

CLARION TECHNICAL BULLETIN

Bulletin #111

Microsoft Link Version 3.6 Information

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Overview

This article describes several useful new features of Microsoft LINK.

Microsoft Link Version 3.6 Information

New releases of Microsoft's LINK contain added features that may be useful to developers of translated programs. You may want to upgrade to a recent version to take advantage of these features. Here's an explanation of some of these features:

`/E[XEPACK]`

The `/E` option allows LINK to compress sequences of repeated bytes and to optimize the load-time relocation table contained in the header of an .EXE file. This allows you to create smaller .EXEs which will load into memory faster than files that are not packed. However, the `/E` option does not guarantee a smaller .EXE file (although I've never seen a translated program which was larger after packing). If you aren't sure, link the file both ways and compare the sizes.

`/M[AP][:number]`

The `/M` option creates a map file containing all the global symbols. The number option allows you to specify the maximum number of global symbols that will be sorted in the map file. This is useful if you notice that your symbols are no longer sorted (which will occur when the number of global symbols to be sorted is greater than 2048).

`/F[ARCALLTRANSLATION]`

The `/F` option translates far calls (to functions) to near calls, assuming that the called function is in the same segment. Since a far call instruction generates an entry in the load-time relocation table and a near call instruction does not, translating far calls results in smaller, faster-loading programs. The Clarion libraries used in Translator use the large memory model and will benefit from far call translation to near calls.

`/PAC[KCODE][:number]`

The `/P` option combines segments into one segment. Using the `/P` and `/F` option will produce smaller and faster programs. The number option specifies the maximum size of a combined segment. The default value is 65,530.