

Random internal Windows terminology: IDW, Razzle, and their forgotten partners IDS and Dazzle

 devblogs.microsoft.com/oldnewthing/20181224-00

December 24, 2018



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In the Windows team, you'll see the term IDW. You don't see it much in the outside world, though. [Here's an ISO image called 6.0.5383.1.1.WindowsSDK_Vista_idw.DVD.Rel.img](#), so it does get out once in a while. (You can see the file name if you expand the *Installation Instructions* section.) It also appears [on this Web page about performance tips when developing network drivers](#).

The Kernprof.exe tool is provided with the developer and IDW builds of Windows that extracts the needed information

The abbreviation IDW stands for Internal Developer Workstation. This is a term applied to builds stable enough to be self-hosted by the development team.

Razzle was the code name for Windows NT (or NT OS/2 as it was then known), and it is the name of the script that prepares the command line environment for developing Windows. You open a fresh command prompt, then run the `Razzle.cmd` script, and it gets your machine ready to work on the Windows source code. It sets the environment variables used by the build tools, it adds the build tools to your `PATH`, it installs test signing certificates, it lets you specify whether you want to build free or checked builds, optimized or unoptimized builds, all that stuff.

Razzle is still alive and well, but the term IDW is not used much any more because we use Windows Insider rings nowadays to declare which builds are suitable for developer self-hosting. There was also an abbreviation IDS which stood for Internal Developer Server, but that abbreviation died out a long time ago.

And while Razzle provided the software half of the Windows NT story, the hardware part originally came from a project called Dazzle. Dazzle was a [single-board i860 computer](#).

[Larry Osterman](#) actually used a Dazzle, though "used" might be a rather generous term. It was basically a breadboard with a VGA port in the back. As Larry recalls, they had Reversi running on it, but the pieces were squares rather than circles.

Why squares and not circles?

Because GDI didn't support circles yet!

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