








Methods In Excels' Dot Net and Office Technology Summary Wall Chart! Version 1!

Technology.	Notes.	Pros.	Cons.	Real world: Use it for ?
Visual Studio Managed Com Addins Managed DLLs Office Automation 	Versions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2002, 2003, 2005, 2008 Edition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team , Pro, Standard, Student Each Version targets a different frame work, 2003, was 1.1, while 2008 uses 3.0 and 3.5!	An excellent place to write code. MS make really good IDEs, with lots of useful tools, arguably the best IDE around. Use VB or C# languages -use VB for office stuff. Managed com addin should work with all XL versions from 2000 onwards (disregarding PIA issues ;)	Costs quite a bit. Ties you in to the framework versions up to the point you purchased (IDE not forwardly compatible) Deployment is a bit of a mess!	Use VS to write Managed com addins with the shared addin template.
Visual Studio Tools for Office Aka VSTO Managed Com Addins 	Versions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2003, 2005, 2005 SE, 2008 Used to be able to buy as a stand alone product, VSTO 2003, 2005, now 2008 is a free addin that can only run inside a full version of visual studio. VSTO might be seen as the replacement for Office Dev Version.	Was a bit of a dog to use up until VSTO 2005 SE, but after that they have really smarten it up. 2008 is probably the best place to write .Net code for office. Importantly deployment and packaging of addins has been made a lot simpler, and easier than for a managed com addin. Has tools specifically for Office Devs, like ribbon designers and task panes.	Same issues with frameworks, needs lots of runtimes and things to work on the client pc. The big issue is that VSTO only really targets 2003 and 2008, although I think you can fudge it to work with old versions some how.	Managed com addin targeting office 2003 and 2008
Visual Studio Express VB/C#/C Managed DLLs Office Automation 	Versions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2005, 2008 In essences this is a lite weight version of the corresponding full version. It doesn't have all the features of the full version, so you can't (easily) build managed com addins, and VSTO is not an option. It also only comes in one langue at a time, so it's VB, or C# or C++. Developers.	Free, and like the full versions a wonderful IDE. Good tool for learning .Net, and to be fair you could easily write commercial standard programmes with this IDE.	Not much you can do if you want to extend Office, no VSTO option and managed com addins are difficult and not recognised as a capability of this Tec – i.e., no shared addin template (no C for shimming either!)	Building applications and getting to kwon .Net, un-shimmed managed DLL's, and Office automation from an external application. Actually it's a really useful product. If you want to build an application by yourself, then it has everything you need and more. Sadly not a lot for Office
#develop Managed DLLs Office Automation 	An alternative <i>free</i> .Net IDE	You can get access to the newest frameworks for free each time the product is updated. Lies somewhere between the Express eds and the full product. You can expand you .Net skill over to languages like Boo, and Mono, for cross platform development	Not quite as good an IDE as MS VS, many of the tools that make working with VS so good, are understandably missing. Not as much support available – although there is a healthy support forum. No VSTO, or managed com support	Much like the Express editions Again, no great boon for the Office Dev.
Visual Studio Tools for _ Applications Aka VSTA 	.Net version of VBA. Shipped with InfoPath 12. Information on VSTA is like hens teeth, MS have been absolutely shocking with VSTA, in-fact it's a bit of a disgrace if you ask me!	In theory you get all the good ness of .Net, with all the ease of code behind, like a fresh new face for VBA.	Secretly I think MS don't know what to do with VSTA. With VSTO around, is there any room for VSTA, and what exactly is VSTA going to look like in the major apps, no-one knows because MS never say anything about it!!!! Currently only ships with that killer application – “Info Path” – I think!	Making Info path forms! (Or you can licence it if you're an ISP.) At the moment useless, could be an absolute diamond for the Office Dev <i>if</i> MS get it right – don't hold you breath though, who knows when it's coming, if at all.
Visual Basic/Studio 6 Unmanaged com addins Unmanaged DLL Office Automation 	Versions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> VB 6, (VB 5), (VB 4) Stick with VB 6 unless you have 5 or 4, they use slightly different run time and might not be on all PC, normally you as save as houses with VB 6	Absolutely mega for office development, com addins are a well known beast and threes a lot of info on how to write them, and with VB 6 it's a peace of cake, as is deployment. Use all your Excel VBA skills as the languages are almost identical. You can also write windows DLL's	Not supported, MS have stop producing it, can't buy it easily, last updated in 2003 –ish!	Still the first choice for office addins when you need fully compiled code and a GUI. Works with all versions of office from 2000 onwards, basically as solid as a rock, easy to use, and not to much messing around – those where the days eh!
Delphi Com addins XLL(?) 	Version Loads: From 1995 to now, current version is Delphi 2009, which is about it's 10 th releases since 95 Think VB6, but in Pascal	Not a MS product Much cheaper than VS Some support for Office Devs wanting to write com addins etc.	Not quite a good as VS, although it is a very accomplished product. Not quite as much support as for MS products, but that's not really a fair comparison.	If you want to try out something else, then why not give it a go, you can write DLL's, Com addins and XLL's (I think, although these night actually be DLL's now I think about it) and it will probably be easier to deploy than any .Net stuff! Also if you can get hold of a copy of VB6 this might be the answer your looking for – that or e-bay, or MSDN!