Draft VDT Policy for Software Submissions

This is a draft written by Alain Roy, roy@cs.wisc.edu. Please share any comments with him and the VDT team by sending email to software@ivdgl.org.

VDT is the delivery and distribution vehicle for GriPhyN project software deliverables to be used by the collaboration. This policy covers additional software contributed to VDT that additional to the scope of the GriPhyN deliverables.

Question: How do we decide what software should be part of the VDT?

Three parties are involved in the decision process:

1) The party that would suggest a piece of software should be added.
2) The VDT maintainers and iVDGL Core Software team leads.
3) The GriPhyN and iVDGL steering committee (I’m not sure about this choice. Who should it be?—Alain)

There are three steps to make the decision:

Step 1: Proposal

In this step, the party that proposes that a piece of software should be added to the VDT writes a brief proposal — how about fills out a web form that VDT maintainers provide. that answers several important questions that are needed to decide if the software should be part of the VDT. The VDT maintainers can request further information and clarification.

Questions:

1) Describe the software, briefly:
   a. What is the software named?
   b. Who is responsible for maintenance of the software? Who can answer questions about this proposal?
   c. What platforms does the software run on?
   d. How stable and mature is the software? — how can one answer this. I think one can ask how many independent groups have used the
   e. Has the software been used in production before?
   f. What does the software rely on to run correctly? This might include other pieces of software or particular hardware.

2) Benefits from including the software as part of the VDT?

3) The VDT team is responsible for supporting the VDT. If your software is accepted you will be expected to become part of our team and help support your software. We — the team leads — will help support your software, but this becomes a bigger challenge with each new piece of software. Ease our worries:
a. What documentation is available for users to learn about the
b. When the VDT team is unable to answer users’ questions or solve
   their problems, who can they turn to for further support?

4) The VDT team is responsible for integrating each version of software
   into each version of the VDT, but complex software can be a challenge to
   integrate well. Ease our worries:
   a. Who can help the VDT team integrate the software for each release of
      the s/w and VDT?
   b. If the integration is complex, is someone available to visit the VDT
      team for a day to work with the team to integrate the software and to

5) The VDT team is responsible for deciding when the software is both robust
   and can interoperate successfully with other parts of the VDT so that it can
   become part of the stable VDT release. Ease our worries:
   a. We expect you to provide a test suite to test the functionality of the
      software. How complete and stable is it?
   b. We expect you to provide any test suites to test how well the
      software inter-operates with other pieces of the VDT? How much of
      such testing is needed?

6) What portion of the VDT should the software be part of? Right now, there
   are four:
   a. Server
   b. Client
   c. SDK
   d. Experimental
   We realize that answers these questions is time consuming, but it will aid the
   team in making sound technical decisions and provide good support.
   It will also help weed out the software that shouldn’t be part of the VDT.

**Step 2: Technical Review of Proposal**

When the questions from Step 1 have been answered, they should be mailed to
the VDT team: software@ivdgl.org.

The VDT team will promptly reply and let the submitting party know how long it
will take to make a review. Usually, this should be less than five business days.
The VDT team will include discussion of the software with you at at least one of
the regular biweekly phone meetings. It is possible that we will arrange a face-to-
face meeting.

The VDT and Core Software teams will review the proposal, ask clarifying
questions, and write a recommendation accept, modify or reject the proposal. In
general, this will be based on technical feasibility and the VDT team’s
assessment of the utility of the software for the VDT.

The VDT team will forward the proposal and their recommendation to the GriPhyN
and iVDGL steering committee of for discussion in a management meeting.
Step 3: Decision about the Proposal

The GriPhyN and iVDGL steering committees will review the proposal and recommendation and will make the final decision about whether the software will be included in the VDT. They will inform the VDT team and the submitting party.

If the software is accepted for the VDT, the VDT team will let all interested parties know approximately how long it will take for the software to become part of the VDT. If this timeline is missed by more than a few business days, the VDT team will update all interested parties.

Note that the software will initially be part of a VDT development release, and will not become part of a stable release until it passes the necessary testing and another stable release is made. Stable releases are usually not made frequently because of many people’s desire to have infrequent stable releases.