Note from the author re: updates to Microsoft Visual Studio 2013

Microsoft Visual Basic 2013 Step by Step teaches essential development techniques related to the Visual Basic programming language and key features in the Microsoft Visual Studio 2013 development system. Readers of this book (and all Visual Studio-related programming titles) should be aware that features change from time to time in the Visual Studio product as it evolves and is enhanced. Some of the product enhancements take place during periodic "updates" to the software. When this happens, it is possible that the instructions in your programming tutorials will not match exactly what you see on the screen in the Visual Studio IDE. This can sometimes be disconcerting, but the Microsoft Visual Studio group usually does an excellent job of describing these feature changes and enhancements in "readme" files and other document on the Web that accompanies the product updates.

Since the release of Visual Studio 2013 and Visual Basic 2013 in November, 2013, there have been three major updates to the Visual Studio software. These free downloads have offered feature enhancements and bug fixes that have produced a few important errata notices for *Visual Basic 2013 Step by Step*. If you find that something in your book does not exactly match the update Visual Studio software, new feature changes are likely the reason. Please know that in November, 2013, the contents of Visual Basic 2013 Step by Step *exactly* matched the final release software.

To learn more about Visual Studio 2013 Update 2, Update 3, and Update 4, click the following links to the Microsoft Visual Studio pages that describe the downloads. I think you will like what Microsoft has done with these, and in many ways these revisions provide useful access to important upgrades and bug fixes.

Update 2 (Spring 2014): http://www.visualstudio.com/news/2014-may-12-vs

Update 3 (Summer 2014): http://www.visualstudio.com/news/2014-aug-4-vs

Update 4 (Fall 2014): http://www.visualstudio.com/news/vs2013-update4-rc-vs

Specific Errata for Visual Basic 2013 Step by Step

Update 2 offered a revised IDE for ASP.NET and Web programming, as well as some new features. These changes impact what you will see when you work through Chapter 19: Visual

Studio Web Development and ASP.NET. However, although the New Web Site dialog box and default templates and have changed, the core features of ASP.NET are still the same. However, you will need to adapt the instructions in the chapter somewhat to the new design of the IDE and the default Web page templates. In general, you should also know that Web programming is changing faster than almost any other area of technology in Visual Studio programming, so prepare for additional enhancements and opportunities.

Update 2 also added a few new templates for Windows Phone 8.1 programming, which you can use to write programs for newer (larger format) Windows Phone models. These changes are useful, but do not change the core instructions in Chapters 20 and 21 of this book, which focus on Windows Phone programming opportunities and development walk-throughs.

Finally, Updates 2, 3, and 4 continue to modify in subtle ways the Integrated Development Environment (IDE) of Visual Studio—changes that are designed to make Visual Studio programming more natural and efficient. When you complete Chapter 3: Your First Windows Store Application, you will see a slightly different list of menu names in the IDE, and there will be subtle changes in the New Project dialog box—for example, Windows Store apps are now referred to as Store Apps. In the list of Store App templates, the Blank App (XAML) template is now referred to as Blank App (Windows). (For an example, see page 45 of this book.) These differences simply reflect how the product has changed through updates since the original debut of Visual Studio 2013 in November, 2013.

You should also note that the Visual Studio IDE is customizable based on how you use it, so your own programming practices will gradually change how the IDE looks on screen. What Visual Basic 2013 Step by Step shows is an "out of the box" setup for the initial Visual Studio 2013 RTM.

If you would like to chat about additional changes that you see, or concerns that you have about the book, feel free to email me at michael@michaelhalvorsonbooks.com!