

Differences in the Flex SDK: Open Source vs Built-in

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A brief note regarding a difference in the Flex SDK of the same version depending on how it was obtained.

I have Flex Builder Professional installed which shipped with Flex SDK 3.0 as the highest version. I wanted to update it to use the latest Flex SDK so I went to opensource.adobe.com, downloaded the latest stable build of 3.2, and unzipped it next to my existing 3.0 SDK. In Flex Builder under my project properties I then added 3.2 SDK as a new Flex compiler option, and set the project to use the 3.2 version.

Everything was going fine until I went to use charting I discovered that FB couldn't find the component implementations of things like mx:PieChart.

I later realized that the downloadable Flex SDK 3.2 is different from the Flex SDK 3.0 that shipped in Flex Builder in a rather broad way having nothing to do with version number. The open source SDK does not contain the subdirectory fbpro/ which includes "Data Visualization" components for AdvancedDataGrid and Charting.

It would have been my expectation that the SDK bits of any specific version would always be identical, and that a license key would unlock functionality not available to those without a license, similar to how the bits for ColdFusion Enterprise are identical to ColdFusion Standard, and your license determines the available feature set. However, this is not the case with Flex.

Upon updating Flex Builder to 3.02, I confirmed it installed a new Flex SDK 3.2 with it (yes, the versioning of the two products is confusingly similar unfortunately). A diff of the directory structure for that 3.2 SDK against the open source 3.2 SDK proved that fbpro/ was only present in the one that shipped with FB.

So, the only way to update your SDK *and* get the Advanced DataGrid and Charting components is to update your Flex Builder to get the built-in SDK. Even if you are using a licensed FB Pro, the open source SDK does not provide all the functionality that your Pro license entitles you to. There was no warning about this difference on the open source site when I went back to research the issue. A big blinking warning would have been helpful.

UPDATE I [tweeted a brief rant](#) about how to do this with useful links:

Adobe should be MUCH clearer about how to get Flex data visualization comps for newer SDK. Not here <http://bit.ly/HGhf4>, Here: <http://bit.ly/1BYjx>