

Write code in a browser with Microsoft Visual Studio Online

There are situations where you may need a focused work environment. This is where remote development tools like Visual Studio Online appear.

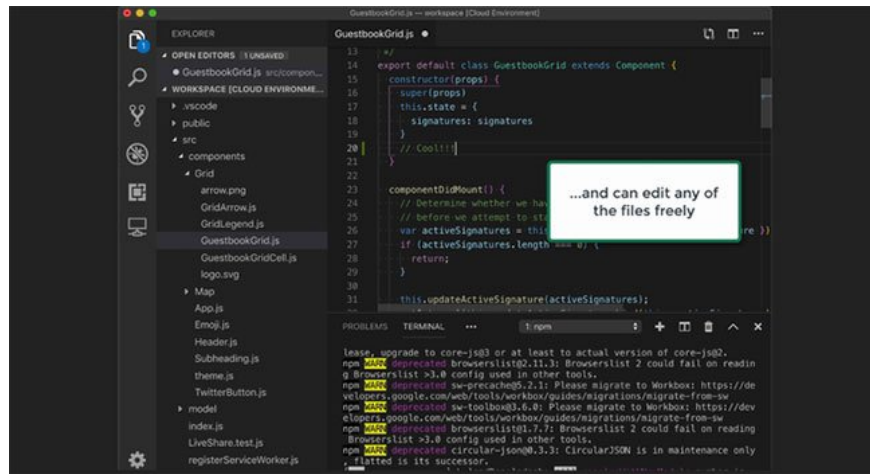
Software and web development have completely changed in recent years. Groups no longer have to sit in the same place. In addition, the tools available to those who are developing software, applications and websites have also been improved.

Even so, there are situations where you might need a focused work environment. This is where remote development tools like Visual Studio Online appear. Today, this article will look at how this tool affects every member working in a remote development team.

Learn about Microsoft Visual Studio Online

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Go to Visual Studio Online

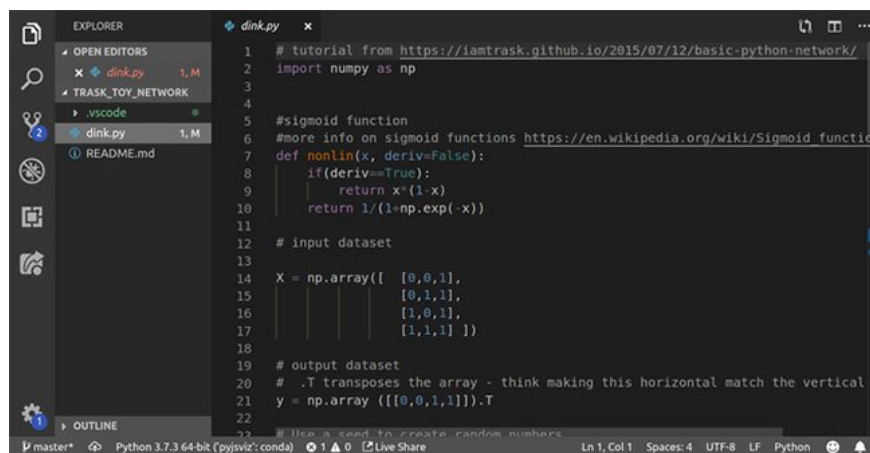


In a recent announcement, Microsoft revealed that Visual Studio Online allows real location encryption. Visual Studio Online has both a code editor in a full browser and a central role to sync with the user's local editor.

Visual Studio Online is a name that has been around for a while. That was the original name of the Azure DevOps service, an online project management system.

This name makes a lot of sense in this context, because what Microsoft seems to be launching is a completely remote server, hosted in conjunction with Visual Studio Code and Visual Studio.

What is Visual Studio Code?



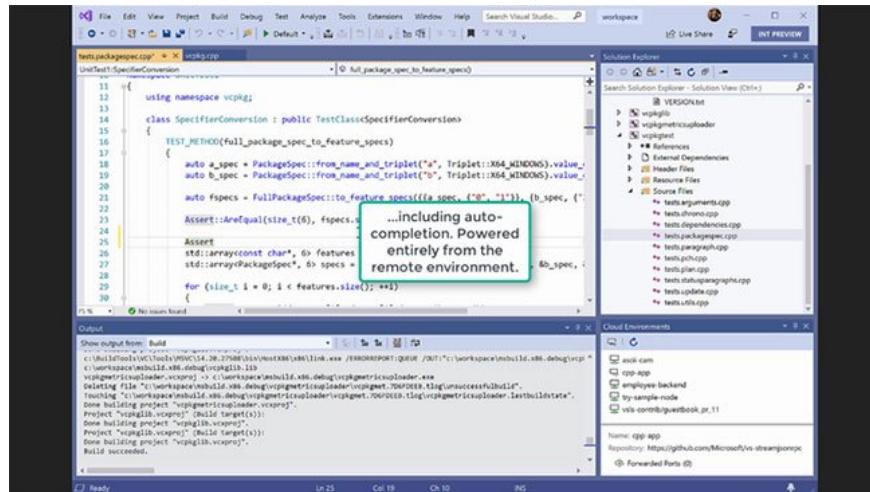
To understand the meaning of Visual Studio Online, you will need to familiarize yourself with Visual Studio Code (VS Code).

VS Code is Microsoft's free code editor for developers. Contrary to Visual Studio (Microsoft's flagship IDE), VS Code is open source and closer to text editors like Sublime Text and Atom than a full Integrated Development Environment (IDE).

Available for Windows, Mac and Linux, it provides a compact and full-featured programming environment. Extensions help code completion and error checking in source code (linting). Visual Studio Live Share enables collaborative encryption through an Internet connection. Visual Studio Online is set up to further narrow the gap,

allowing shared coding environments.

How will Visual Studio Online work?



Instead of having everyone configure the development environment on a local machine, Visual Studio Online provides the experience of a workgroup on the same system. To understand why this is so powerful, consider the steps needed to work in a development team.

Everyone should have the same tools and libraries available. Different development machines may run different operating systems or software versions. Package management and version control may help, but each team member will control their environment on their own.

Even hardware can be a problem. If your device is incompatible with the elements of a project, until recently, you had no choice but to buy a new computer. Now, even if nothing is locally installed, you can still work with any development setup.

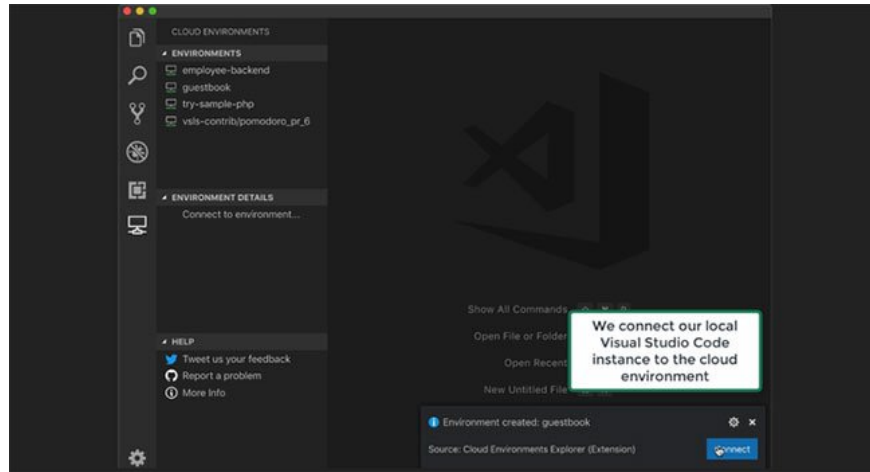
Does this idea already exist?

The online IDE is nothing new and Amazon AWS Cloud9 IDE is a powerful, feature-rich environment. Similarly, there are many online subscription services designed to grow the group on a smaller scale.

There are even online IDEs that use the open source VS Code, and anyone familiar with the software will feel no stranger.

Having a remote environment accessible through both the browser and locally is technically possible with any of these services. In contrast, what Visual Studio Online will likely do is make itself a more affordable and accessible experience.

What makes Visual Studio Online so special?



Putting the entire project in one machine so it effectively means everyone is always working on the same setup. Whether you're an experienced programmer or just starting out on your first day, everything is set in advance.

If the needs of a project change, for example, for a new system or framework, only one development environment needs to change and those changes will automatically transfer to each member of the team.

In theory, there's no difference between working from home on your regular development machine, on a borrowed computer or even on a smartphone, if you can write code with your thumb!

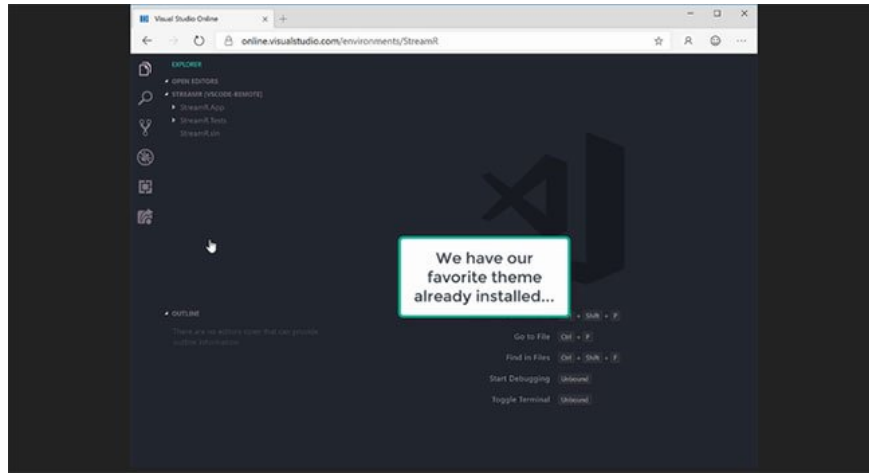
What can Visual Studio Online do?

At the time of writing, though not yet official, the process of working together on Visual Studio Online seems to be in place. It will have all the same features as VS Code, such as code completion, error checking in source code (linting), and browser collaboration.

Moreover, all project details, along with user preferences and themes, will be synchronized between all local browser versions and code editors.

Microsoft has also announced IntelliCode integration, leveraging machine learning to make better suggestions and code completion based on habits. Although not yet confirmed, it is highly likely that IntelliCode will be able to extend to entire groups, enabling dynamic tools based on the architecture of a project.

So what about custom settings for individual programming?



An obvious drawback to an approach that consists of only a single developer machine lies in personal customization. If you're familiar with a specific custom workflow, layout, or shortcut, things can be hard to adjust.

Fortunately, this is not the way Visual Studio Online will work. Theme for each user will allow individual settings. While there will certainly be some differences between using an offline editor, the user experience will be similar to your home environment.

One thing to note is that Visual Studio Online is not a replacement for VS Code or Visual Studio. It is a companion application that allows users to code directly in the browser. The assumed workflow involves linking local setup with the new online service.

Why is a remote code editor needed?

If you've used a home computer to develop, you might be wondering why bother with Visual Studio Online.

It may not be for everyone. Individual developers or anyone working with microcontrollers or other hardware may not benefit from a cloud-based development environment. Moreover, if you are familiar with another code editor and are comfortable using virtual environments for programming, the conversion may seem pointless.

The real benefits from Visual Studio Online will be for beginner developers. No need to have a headache with a field that is as difficult as managing packages.

What's even more important is Visual Studio Online is open to anyone. It doesn't matter that you use an old Chromebook, smartphone or PC, because you have access to the same tools.

Where can Visual Studio Online be found?

At the time of writing, VS Online is not available to everyone. There is a private preview and you can sign up with Microsoft ([here](#)) to access it. Chances are you'll have to wait until it's in public beta to try it out.

If you want to experience something that is almost identical, an online version of VS Code is available. Since it's open source software, there's nothing stopping you from building a version of your own server. If this seems overwhelming to you, websites like Coder.com and StackBlitz.com are both browser versions of VS Code.

Visual Studio Online takes online development to the next level. To be able to enjoy the benefits of collaborative programming, you should be familiar with Visual Studio Live Share.

While you're waiting for the Visual Studio Online version, why not try one of these already browser-based IDEs?

Wish you find a suitable choice!

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