



VBUG Annual Winter Conference
22nd to 24th November 2005

Microsoft Campus, Reading, UK

VS 2005 Ride the Wave

Note from the Chairman . . .

This is my first year as VBUG chairman and I would firstly like to express my gratitude and thanks to Caroline and Graham Parker for all the work they have done over the years running VBUG. If it wasn't for them, I think VBUG would not be the leading developer group it is today. I remember very well the first VBUG conference I attended. It was upstairs at Olympia in 1997 and there were possibly fifty delegates and just one track. I have since seen the conference grow into the wonderful conferences we now have, thanks to the careful planning and organisation of the Parkers and the VBUG team.

With the impending launch of VS 2005 comes a VBUG conference that will focus on the *use* of VS 2005 and VB 2005 rather than just being "yet another launch show", of which there will be many. We've arranged a selection of practical and focused presentations that will highlight and demonstrate some of the new features of VS 2005 which we feel are the most relevant to modern VB developers. We have endeavoured to ensure we cover major areas of interest including security, refactoring, multi-threading, design patterns and asynchronous clients.

In addition to VBUG's own favourite UK speakers, we have several international speakers including Carl Franklin, Mark Miller and Jackie Goldstein. We will also run a code-off event during the conference, where four developers will put VS2005 through its paces and explore its new productivity features, with regular progress reports through out the day.

As well as this packed schedule we will also hold a 'Crystal Ball' night where, in a relaxed and interactive environment, you'll get an insight into where VB development is headed.

As you can see, with so much crammed into two days, this has got to be the best value VBUG conference ever, and, as always, it's a great chance to mix with VBUG members and share your reactions to the increasingly fast moving world of VB development.

Finally a world of thanks in advance to Rob Macdonald and Rebecca Bursnall for the work they have already put in pulling this agenda together, liaising with the regional coordinators and with me to ensure we have a conference that gives us the developer community what we want.

I look forward to meeting you at the conference.

Mark Anderson
VBUG Chairman



WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

- Professional VB.NET developers, consultants, team leaders and managers
- (VB6/ASP developers can prepare for the main conference at the 'VB Express' pre-conference day).

Whether your interest is in VB 2005 or VB.NET, by attending this independent, development focused event you can avoid feature driven overviews and get access to real technical insight in a genuine community atmosphere. Make the most of your time at the only premier .NET conference with a VB focus.

Previous Conference attendees said...

"Intensive, informative, extremely enlightening and a great way to network! ... Just wish I could attend BOTH technical streams!"

- Raja of Rayan Consultants Limited

"VBUG Conferences are like mini-TechEds where delegates have the chance to meet some of the most talented speakers on Microsoft technologies, such as Dan Appleman, Bill Vaughn, Dave Sussman, Rob MacDonald, Steve Harris and Don Kiely - and all for a fraction of the cost!"

- Glenn Wilson, Contractor

"For such a short time out of the office, the payback is enormous. Ideas gained during the VBUG conference can easily lead to several weeks of timesaving. Instead of investigating, discarding and selecting an approach to a problem on your own, you have the ability to discuss them with extremely qualified speakers and your peers in a relaxed environment."

- John Price, 1st Software

THE VENUE . . .

Chicago Suite
Building 3
Microsoft Campus
Thames Valley Park
Reading
RG6 1WG

For a map please refer to
www.vbug.net

Sessions in the main conference are arranged into the following themes:

Visual Studio 2005: The emphasis here is to avoid feature-driven 'showcase' sessions and instead drill down into specific, selected parts of VS 2005 (including SQL 2005). All of these sessions will use RTM VS 2005 (not beta product).

- ASP (covering ASP.NET 2.0)
- WCL (covering Windows Clients using .NET 2.0)
- TLS (covering tools: VSTS and VS itself)

Doing .NET: These sessions are aimed at showing how to do specific development tasks, covering topics that will be relevant to both VS 2003 and VS 2005 developers. These sessions will use a mixture of RTM VS 2005 and RTM VS 2003

- PRG (covering programming topics)
- DSG (covering design topics)
- MIG (covering migration topics)

Conference at a glance

Wednesday 23rd November

Day 1	Chicago 1	Chicago 2
8.45	Registration	
9.15	Introduction – Mark Anderson	
9.30	KEYNOTE – Carl Franklin	
10.15	Break	
10.30	SQL1: Understanding SQL & .NET Integration <i>Mike Taulty</i>	MIG1: Migrating Applications From VB6 to VB.NET: Strategies, Architectures, & Guidelines Jackie Goldstein
11.40	Break	
11.55	MIG2: Will My 1.1 Application Run on 2.0? Richard Costall & Andy Brown	TLS1: Refactoring in Visual Basic 2005 Mark Miller
13.05	Lunch	
13:35	TLS2: Take the Pain Out of Unit Testing <i>Annie Matthewman</i>	SQL2: SQL Querying Tips & Techniques in SQL Server 2000 & 2005 <i>Richard Campbell</i>
14:45	Break	
15.00	DSG1: Crafting a Great User Experience <i>Mark Miller</i>	WCL1: Data Access Techniques in ADO.NET 2.0 & Visual Studio 2005 <i>Jackie Goldstein</i>
16.10	Break	
16.25	Code-Off Presentations / Dot Net Rocks! Live! After Code-off presentations, Carl Franklin & Richard Campbell will interview the code-off team. This session will be recorded and published on www.dotnetrocks.com the following week	
17:40	Close	
19:30	'Crystal Ball Night' Sessions looking into the future with drinks – details below	

Call VBUG on 01753 649684 to book your place

Conference at a glance

Thursday 24th November

Day 2	Chicago 1	Chicago 2
9:00	WCL2: How I Stay Solvent Thanks to Office & .NET <i>Rob Macdonald</i>	SQL3: Explicit X – SQL XML Revealed! <i>Dave McMahon</i>
10:10	Break	
10:25	ASP1: Forms Authentication in ASP.NET 2.0 <i>Steve Harris</i>	WCL3: Realising the Potential of the Windows Mobile 5.0 Managed APIs <i>Tony Whitter</i>
11:35	Break	
11:50	DSG2: Data Access Strategies and Design Choices <i>Jackie Goldstein</i>	ASP2: Enhance Your Site with Web Parts <i>Carl Franklin</i>
13:00	Lunch	
13:30	PRG1: Enterprise Software Processes - A Developer's Perspective <i>Graham Parker</i>	PRG2: Multi-threading in .NET <i>Annie Matthewman</i>
14:40	Break	
14:55	WCL4: Creating Asynchronous Clients <i>Steve Harris</i>	DSG3: Enterprise Architectural Design Patterns <i>Matt Deacon</i>
16:10	Break	
16:20	PRG3: RSS and You <i>Carl Franklin</i>	ASP3: Customising the ASP.NET Provider Framework <i>Dave Sussman</i>
17:30	Close	

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Main Conference Sessions

ASP1: Forms Authentication in ASP.NET 2.0

Steve Harris



ASP.NET's Forms Authentication model has become one of the most popular mechanisms for providing web application security. However, there always seemed to be something lacking, leaving developers to "re-inventing the wheel" in project after project. Microsoft has addressed these concerns with ASP.NET 2.0, which brings a host of new features including user interface elements, membership and role provider architectures, automated database management and much more. In this detailed session Steve will show you how to take full advantage of the new features, highlighting best practice for employing these technologies to deliver secure, robust and manageable web applications, while illustrating every technique with comprehensive demonstrations.

ASP2: Enhance Your Site with Web Parts

Carl Franklin



Web Parts is a great new modular page component system for ASP.NET 2.0 that makes web-based component reusability a snap. In this session you'll get a good idea of the Web Parts architecture, and you'll have a few good demos to get you started building pages with Web Parts.

ASP3: Customising the ASP.NET Provider Framework

Dave Sussman



One of the key features of ASP.NET 2.0 is its extensibility, which it makes possible using a Provider Framework. Features such as Membership, Role Management and Navigation to name a few, use the provider model, allowing you to replace the existing functionality with your own. In this session we'll look at how the provider model works, how you can plug in your own providers, and how to create providers to allow your own data stores to be used with standard controls.

SQL1: Understanding SQL and .NET Integration

Mike Taulty



SQL Server 2005 is a host for the .NET Common Language Runtime (CLR) allowing you to write database artefacts (stored procedures, functions etc) using .NET code. In this session, we'll talk about what the capabilities of SQL/CLR are, when those capabilities are best used and we'll also look at how to manage and version those artefacts that are built with .NET code once they're inside the database.

SQL2: SQL Querying Tips & Techniques in SQL Server 2000 & 2005

Richard Campbell



This session is full of tips, tricks and techniques for getting the most from your SQL Server. You'll see a series of real world examples and how creative SQL queries can generate solutions in record time. Some techniques you'll learn include how to do cross tab queries that take seconds to execute instead of hours, exploiting sub-queries and taking advantage of self-joining. Along the way, you'll get some insight into how Microsoft SQL Server works and see how querying has evolved from SQL Server 2000 to 2005.

SQL3: Explicit X – SQL XML Revealed!

Dave McMahon



Ever since SQL 2000 was released, we have had the ability to get XML straight from the database, in any form we want. Using the FOR XML syntax available in SQL, this session will show you how to format your XML to your heart's desire using FOR XML EXPLICIT, and how to get XML into the database using the OPENXML keyword. But life will be even simpler with SQL 2005 and you will learn about the FOR XML PATH option and how to interrogate and transform the new XML data type using XQuery.

WCL1: Data Access Techniques in ADO.NET 2.0 and Visual Studio 2005

Jackie Goldstein



.NET 2.0 and Visual Studio 2005 each supply new technologies and tools for accessing, displaying, and updating databases and other data sources. This session will not only expose these new capabilities, but will also discuss how to best take advantage of them in your applications. Lessons and tips learned from developing applications for Microsoft and other customers will also be shared.

WCL2: How I Stay Solvent Thanks to Office and .NET

Rob Macdonald



For many years, Rob has managed his business finances using Excel and Word, and over time, a simple, repeatable process has evolved. Recently, Rob decided to extend his spreadsheets and documents with custom .NET code, making use of the new Visual Studio Tools for Office features in VS 2005. Join Rob as he explains how he went about streamlining the process using VB 2005, and re-evaluates the role of Office in professional VB applications.

WCL3: Realising the Potential of the Windows Mobile 5.0 Managed APIs

Tony Whitter



This session will show you how the new Managed APIs in Windows Mobile 5.0 can be used with Visual Basic 2005 to easily develop highly functional PDA and Smartphone applications that really exploit the potential of the latest generation devices. The session will demonstrate how Visual Basic developers can now easily overcome a number of traditional problem areas, such as richly interacting with Outlook Mobile PIM data, using the camera to capture pictures and video, intercepting, processing and sending SMS messages, placing phone calls, dealing with system events, programmatically sending email and more!

WCL4: Creating Asynchronous Clients

Steve Harris

As applications grow ever more sophisticated, and users become ever more demanding, it is becoming increasingly necessary for developers to move away from synchronous processing models and adopt asynchronous techniques. Asynchronous applications offer users a more responsive interface and are capable of making non-blocking calls, but the features to do this in ASP.NET 1.0 were somewhat limited. .NET 2.0 provides a raft of new features to make asynchronous coding easier than ever before, with a significant focus on the most common requirements in distributed applications – database access calls and web service calls. However, Microsoft have also chosen to include a powerful but generic technique too – the BackgroundWorker component.

TLS1: Refactoring in Visual Basic 2005 *Mark Miller*

Learn how easy it is to simplify your Visual Basic .NET code with the power of refactoring. We'll talk about code complexity and discover why it's important to simplify code. Then we'll dive into mid-level refactorings like 'extract method', 'introduce local', and 'inline temp', and we'll also cover the more granular refactorings like 'replace conditional with guard clause', 'split assignment from declaration', and 'symbolic rename'.



TLS2: Take the Pain Out of Unit Testing *Annie Matthewman*



Historically, Visual Studio has focused on the developer, providing little natively for testing. Visual Studio 2005 Team Test Edition introduces a suite of new test tools, allowing you to find bugs early on, before code reaches formal testing when it's generally too late to fix anything but cosmetic issues. This session is aimed primarily at developers who either perform no Unit Testing, or do it in an adhoc, manual fashion. Using examples, it presents a top ten of things to do (and not to do) when Unit Testing your code. You'll leave with a readily useable Unit Testing methodology that you can begin to implement on return to your office.

DSG1: Crafting a Great User Experience *Mark Miller*

This session is all about the science behind great user interfaces. Leave the subjective behind as we explore the how and why of a great UI. We'll cover user models, entry points, orienteering, timing, and discoverability, and learn how to shape the presentation layer to reduce visual noise, lower barriers to entry, enhance clarity, and otherwise make your applications a pleasure to use.

DSG2: Data Access Strategies & Design Choices *Jackie Goldstein*

Come to understand the various alternatives and considerations for developing the data access portions of your applications, including numerous techniques for passing data through the tiers of your application. The pros and cons of such common approaches such as Datasets, XML, custom classes, and scalar values will be demoed and evaluated. The techniques described are based on our experiences and the best practices suggested by Microsoft. The principles discussed here apply to VS 2003 as well as VS 2005 (and even other platforms!)

DSG3: Enterprise Architectural Design Patterns *Matt Deacon*

Enterprise business solutions are often extremely complex and must perform well against highly volatile expectations. They must be highly available and scalable in the face of unpredictable usage, and must also be malleable and predictable in response to rapidly changing business requirements. This session will discuss the role of enterprise patterns in decomposing these complex problems into smaller more manageable concepts that can then be recombined to deliver the larger system. Guidance tools will be discussed which liberate patterns from the confines of static text into the world of active in-context guidance for the developer, supporting the longer term vision of software factories.



MIG1 Migrating Applications From VB6 to VB.NET: Strategies, Architectures & Guidelines *Jackie Goldstein*

This session discusses the issues and helps prepare you to migrate existing projects and code to .NET. It addresses questions of if, why, and how to migrate existing applications - covering strategies, architecture, technologies, tools and guidelines gleaned from personal experience and Microsoft recommended best practices. Considerations and demos for desktop, distributed, and browser (ASP) applications are also presented.

MIG2: Will My 1.1 Application Run On 2.0? *Richard Costall & Andy Brown*



In this session Richard Costall and Andy Brown will demonstrate how Microsoft approaches compatibility testing between versions of the .NET framework. They explain the differences between Binary, Behavioral, Source, Forwards and Backwards compatibility and highlight some of the pitfalls developers could experience. The session will show demos focusing on Windows Forms applications.



PRG1: Enterprise Software Processes – A Developer's Perspective *Graham Parker*

Should the software process in a large enterprise be any different to that of a small to medium-sized business? And if so - why? In this session we'll examine the software lifecycle in different scenarios and show why some work and some don't. We'll go on to see how Visual Studio continues to support different processes and outline things you can do now to help you move forward.



PRG2: Multi-threading in .NET *Annie Matthewman*

Multi-threaded applications offer many benefits, such as a more responsive user interface and interruptible long operations. Multi-threaded programming has been made very accessible within the .NET Framework, as it offers a threading architecture that abstracts the underlying Windows threading infrastructure. This session examines scenarios where you might want to use multi-threading, and the common traps developers fall into when first trying to use it. It will look at how the .NET Framework exposes threads, with worked examples in VB.NET, and some of the extra features that the Framework layers on top of the Operating System, such as the thread pool.

PRG3: RSS and You *Carl Franklin*

After a brief primer on Real Simple Syndication you'll quickly discover how to consume RSS data in your .NET applications. Next, you'll discover a world of wonder where syndication is king and the world is your oyster. Carl Franklin shows off some great examples of RSS in the real world, and you'll walk away with a smattering of his custom tools which he uses at Pwop Productions to help produce .NET Rocks! and Mondays.

Pre-Conference Seminar

Tuesday 22nd November 2005

The Holiday Inn, Reading South,
500 Basingstoke Road, Reading, RG2 0SL

Take the express route into Visual Basic 2005. If you are a VB6 or ASP developer there has never been a better time to embrace .NET and Visual Basic 2005. Nor has there been a better place to start your journey than at the Visual Basic Express. In five enjoyable, demo-packed sessions let some of the best known educators around, with 20 years' experience of delivering .NET training to VB6 and ASP developers, make sure that you start off on the fast track.

9:00	Registration	
9:30	Why .NET? Jackie Goldstein	This session provides a general overview of the design goals, features, and benefits of .NET for VB developers and answers the question "Why bother – what's in it for me?"
11:00	Break	
11:15	OO Programming with VB 2005 Rob Macdonald	In VB 2005, everything is an object. This session will introduce the major language changes between VB6 and VB 2005, and leave you confident that you can operate in its object oriented framework
12:45	Lunch	
13:40	Windows development using Visual Basic 2005 Express Edition Graham Parker	Learn how Windows Forms boosts your productivity for developing professional looking Windows applications, and streamlines your deployment using ClickOnce technology.
14:50	Break	
15:00	Database Application Quick Start with SQL Server Express and Microsoft Visual Basic .NET 2005 Jackie Goldstein	The purpose of this session is expose developers to the free SQL Server 2005 Express and to see how to build both data-intensive applications with VB and VS 2005. It focuses on defining and using strongly-typed DataSets and the new TableAdapter to access SQL Server data, and on the new and improved WinForms data-binding features for rapidly developing productive quality data-centric user interfaces. This session will consist mainly of demos and sample code.
16:10	Break	
16:20	Using Visual Web Developer 2005 Express Edition Steve Harris	Understand how ASP.NET 2.0 revolutionises Web development, and experience a wide range of design time features from master pages and advanced code free data binding, to WYSIWYG page layout and IntelliSense support for code and HTML.
5:30	Close	

Code-Off Project

&

.NET Rocks!

On Day 1 of the main conference (Wednesday 23rd November), four developers will each be given the same 'back end' (database and Web Service) and will use VS 2005 to construct a user interface to provide a defined set of functionality.

Each developer will use a different front end technology: Browser, Windows, Office and Device and will present their progress, first during the lunch break, and then in a ten minute session at the end of the first day.

The 'Fab four' for the Code-Off Project will be Graham Parker, Rob Macdonald, Steve Harris & Tony Whitter.

.NET Rocks! Live!

Carl Franklin and Richard Campbell will then interview the Code-Off Guys in front of a live audience i.e. YOU.

The show will be recorded and published on www.dotnetrocks.com the following week! Don't miss it!

Crystal Ball Night

Sponsored by Sybase – makers of PowerBuilder & DataWindow .Net

www.sybase.com/powerbuilder

www.sybase.com/datawindow.net

Date: Wednesday 23rd November **Times:** 7.30pm onwards
Venue: The Holiday Inn, Reading South, 500 Basingstoke Road, Reading, RG2 0SL

Crystal Ball Night is free to all delegates attending the main conference

This is a time to relax, enjoy a free drink and light nibbles at the bar, meet and chat with the speakers and other VBUG members again – but also take time out to attend some of the 'what's coming?' sessions we've organised.

Here are three sessions, each only 30 minutes long, and subject to our 'PowerPoint curfew' that will give you an insight into topics that will be big news at next year's conference.

An Introduction to the Windows Communication Foundation (Mike Taulty)

In this session, we'll take a look at building distributed applications with the Windows Communication Foundation (formerly "Indigo"). We'll look at how communication between software is modelled by contract and how clients and services can communicate over configurable transports using either the high level service layer or the low level messaging layer. We'll also spend time on how WCF helps with building secure, reliable and transactional communications between distributed software services.

Software Factories and Domain Specific Languages (Annie Matthewman)

The aim of a software factory is to automate easy or repetitive development tasks, and to provide contextual help on the more complex tasks. The session demonstrates through examples two new Microsoft software factory technologies: the Guidance Automation Toolkit (GAT) and Domain Specific Language (DSL) Tools. GAT can be used to configure Visual Studio to provide the contextual help on development tasks; the DSL toolkit can be used to create new Visual Studio Designers for your own domain-specific items.

Bella Vista: Windows Presentation Foundation and your UI skills (Rob Macdonald)

Formerly known as 'Avalon', Windows Presentation Foundation will become Microsoft's strategic UI technology for Vista, and will also ship for Windows 2003 and XP. Designed to exploit modern graphics hardware, and allow presentation and code separation, Windows Presentation Foundation represents a quantum change in Windows UIs, integrating graphics, speech, video and documents into a single platform. This session will demonstrate the key technologies, and show how they will affect you.