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# FoxPro on the Internet

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**Let's face it: FoxPro and Visual FoxPro are difficult to use when you have no help. However, many resources are available to you that cost essentially nothing -- and they're all on the Internet. This article discusses many of the resources that you can access from your office.**

Well, your boss (or accountant) just told you that there's no money left to send you to FoxPro DevCon or the latest training class that would let you accomplish your job twice as fast as you could before. Well, take heart, bunky: the Information Superhighway is here for you.

FoxPro has long been represented on CompuServe through the FOXFORUM, FOXUSER, and VFOX forums. (The first two recently merged into one forum: FOXUSER.) These are very active places to find excellent information and assistance about FoxPro and Visual FoxPro. Of a more recent vintage is FoxPro on the Internet, and there's a *lot* of FoxPro on the Internet. If you're tired of spending time on the Captain Kirk Sing-along page (**http://www.loskene.com/singalong/kirk.html),** I can show you how to get some work out of the Web.

### Fox on the Web

The World Wide Web is the hottest technology available right now, and many FoxPro and VFP-based pages are being updated and improved to take full advantage of it. Following is a listing of popular FoxPro sites and descriptions of what each has to offer the FoxPro or VFP developer.

**Microsoft's Visual FoxPro page** (**http://www.microsoft.com/vfoxpro**) contains the latest in official information on FoxPro, case studies, and downloadable software. Last November, Microsoft redesigned the Web pages and introduced ActiveX controls. This is definitely one of the coolest FoxPro Web pages available for browsing.

**The Visual FoxPro Yellow Pages**, compiled by Michel Fournier (**http://www.transformation.com/foxpro/index.html**), is one of the best and most ambitious FoxPro-oriented pages on the Web. The Visual FoxPro Yellow Pages are home to the first virtual user group accredited by Microsoft. Access to the Universal Thread is free, but limited. An additional level called the Premier Universal Thread allows unlimited access to the thread as well as search capabilities. One interesting feature of the Universal Thread is the ability to attach photos to mail messages. The Universal Thread is a Visual FoxPro-based system. Unlike most Usenet newsgroups, it handles threading very nicely. Accessing the Premier Universal thread requires payment of $35 U.S. or $50 Canadian.

**Colin's FoxPage**, by Colin Keeler (**http://www.state.sd.us/people/colink/fox_page.htm**) has the ultimate list of Visual FoxPro links and resources. If Visual FoxPro is referenced somewhere on a Web page, Gopher database, Usenet newsgroup or mail list, chances are it's mentioned here.

At **Ken Levy's Home Page** (**http://www.classx.com/**) you can get the latest editions of his excellent tools, including BuilderB, Superclass, and more. This site is fairly new, but it has a number of great utilities.

**Steven Black Consulting** (**http://www.StevenBlack.com/**). Steve Black is FoxPro's internationalization guru, and offers a FAQ relating to internationalization issues. Black goes over nearly every command in Visual FoxPro 3.0 and 5.0 and explains how each command can be used in a multiculturally friendly manner. He also has a links page and a downloads section for various tools and session notes from conferences he has attended. Make certain you read his notes on patterns in Visual FoxPro programming.

**Neil's FoxPro Resource Page** (**http://adams.patriot.net/~johnson/neil/fox.html**) focuses primarily on giving access to a number of other FoxPro resources. In fact, his page was invaluable to me as I wrote this article. Through Johnson's site you can get instructions on how to subscribe to a mail list, find a list of FoxPro third-party vendors, access an excellent list of FoxPro-related links, and much, much more. This is an excellent jumping-off page in your search for Visual FoxPro information.

**The FoxGang** (**http://www.foxgang.net**). This page is run by Mike and Toni Feltman of Neon Software. It isn't a corporate page, but it's billed as a gathering point for anyone interested in FoxPro. They offer a variety of services, such as Web site hosting, domain hosting, and e-mail, among others. These services are available for a fee, but you can tailor your plan according to your needs. One benefit of FoxGang that you may not receive from other Web hosts is the ability to run Microsoft's FOXISAPI on their server. Several packages are available at discounted prices. A number of free resources are available, including downloadable software, articles, FoxPro links, and information on events and books. One of the site's more unusual features is that each of the resources is presented to you in the form of a filterable, sortable list. Even if you don't join FoxGang, this site is well worth bookmarking.

**The FoxPro I/O Address** (**http://www.hop.man.ac.uk/staff/mpitcher/foxpro.html**) was one of the first FoxPro-specific Web pages. It's a very interesting site that offers a lot of good information (including Whil Hentzen's "17 Dreaded Questions for Job Seekers"). Its creator, Malcolm Pitcher, has collected a lot of information, including a searchable list of Internet mail lists, which should be functional by the time you read this.

**Willy De la Court's Visual FoxPro Add-Ons** (**http://www.ping.be/~ping0150/vfp.html**) is an English language FoxPro Web page from Belgium, which contains exactly what it advertises: add-ons. Willy has divided his add-ons into Development Tools, 32-bit ActiveX controls, VFP Loadable Libraries, and Visual Class Libraries. I even found a couple of programs at this site that *I* contributed to the public domain!

**Jason Landry's Home Page For Garage Logicians** (**http://206.10.225.118/genscrnx/**). Landry has created a home page for lovers of Ken Levy's GENSCRNX. He's written a number of GENSCRNX drivers and has made them available at no cost to the general public. He also has several drivers written by others, including Steve Black's TABS driver. Articles on using GENSCRNX and creating your own drivers are also available.

**Creative Programming Unlimited** (**http://www.business1.com/cpu18/cpumod.htm**) specializes in SBT programming. Their Web site is part commercial to advertise their services, and part tips-and-tricks for programming with SBT. They also provide links to other SBT resources.

**SBT** (**http://www.sbt.com/sbtcs/index.html**). This is SBT's presence on the Web. It includes tips for modifying SBT's programs for your own purposes.

**The Perth FoxPro Page** (**http://iinet.net.au/foxpro/**) contains Gordon Angus' Visual FoxPro FAQ page. The FAQ is primarily based on the *comp.databases.xbase.fox* newsgroup. The site also has a number of files available for download.

**Visual FoxPro FAQ** , by Bill O'Connor (**http://members.aol.com/bocon**). This is my personal Visual FoxPro page. It has very little in the way of pretty graphics, wondrous formatting, and so forth, but does contain a lot of Visual FoxPro information, tips, tricks, and opinions. It's usually updated monthly from messages that I find on CompuServe and other information that I receive via the Internet.

**Developer's Studio Apartment** (**http://www.hentzenwerke.com**) is the company page for *FoxTalk*'s editor, Whil Hentzen. Hentzen's page features a searchable article index for most of the popular programming magazines. The index won't give you the text of the article (that would be a copyright violation), but will give you the article's title, author, magazine name, publication date, and the article description. You can search by author, key words, date of publication, programming language, and magazine title.

**xCase Company Page** (**http://www.xcase.co.il**) is the corporate page for xCase. It contains xCase demos, white papers, and other information.

**Aditi FoxPro Page** (**http://www.aditi.com/docs/fox/foxpage.htm**) features Visual FoxPro news and tips. It offers shareware VFP FLLs, including an offer of free technical support (24-hour turnaround via e-mail) along with FoxPro 2.x and VFP FAQs for beginner, intermediate, and expert programmers.

**Visual FoxPro por Pablo Almunia** (**http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/palmun/vfp.htm**). This is an all Spanish language FoxPro page with VFP articles, files, links, and conferences. Of particular interest are several articles on using the Windows API to write to the Windows Registry.

**Donovan Louck's FoxPro Page** (**http://www.primenet.com/~dloucks/foxpage.html**) doesn't have much in the way of FoxPro information, but it does have links to a number of FoxPro resources. More interestingly, it features a number of links to user-interface resource pages and database design resources.

**FoxPro WWW Discussion Board** (**http://dataperipherals.com/html/wwwboard/wwwboard.html**) is a Visual FoxPro discussion group. It looks very much like a newsgroup, with a topic and responses, but is entirely HTML based. You don't need a newsgroup reader to access it. This is a fairly active group and the messages don't disappear after you read them or after a set period of time as they might on a newsgroup or on CompuServe. The only downside is that the discussion group is kept in one very large page and it can be a fairly slow process to find the topic you want. It might be better served by adding subject categories that would allow a visitor to more easily find a topic of interest.

### Fox in the news
**comp.databases.xbase.fox** is the original FoxPro peer support newsgroup on the Web. It's a fairly active newsgroup containing generally good information. The signal-to-noise ratio is good, but it suffers from the occasional spam, though seemingly less often than many other newsgroups. It receives around 600 messages per week.

Microsoft has its own news servers that aren't part of the general Usenet system. To access them, you have to set your newsgroup server to **msnews.microsoft.com** . These are the "official" sources for Microsoft technical support, though support is provided by other users. These news services are monitored by Microsoft, whereas the other resources are not. You still probably won't get a response from Microsoft, but there's a chance they'll see your message and respond.

### Fox by mail
If you have an Internet e-mail account, your best option for support might be an Internet mail list. These are run entirely through Internet e-mail. Colin's FoxPage has a number of FoxPro mail lists to which you can subscribe via his Web page. E-mail lists have several advantages and disadvantages. The biggest advantage is that mail lists are handled automatically. You don't need to do anything more than download your e-mail to get the messages. Because mail lists are usually moderated, they're remarkably free of Internet spam (advertising that gets spread to a number of Usenet groups). Unfortunately, the incidence of thread drift is the same as within most other forums.

Mail lists are normally available in two forms: interactive mode (you'll receive every individual message as it passes through the list server) and digest mode (messages are collected and once per day you'll receive a message that contains all the collected messages from the list serve). The biggest disadvantage to a mail list is that thread handling is no better than what your mail reader can provide. It can be very hard to keep track of a topic as it gets spread across several e-mail messages. Also, you may receive several responses with the same content from different people. A mail list is usually also available in a digest form, which gives you the daily messages to the list in a compiled form. If the digest isn't properly formatted, it can be very difficult to follow a topic.

### Subscribing to a mail list
You can subscribe to a mail list by sending a message to the moderator or to an automated subscription service. Here are a couple good ones to try.

**University of Kansas FoxPro Mail List** . To subscribe, send a message to ***listserv%ukanvm.bitnet@vm42.cso.uiuc.edu*** with "subscribe" and your first name and last name in the message body.

**Hourglass FoxPro Mail List** . Send a message to ***majordomo@magmacom.com*** and put the following in the message body: *subscribe hourglass [your email address]*. Don't type brackets around your e-mail address. Then, using your favorite Internet browser, go to **http://www.magmacom.com/~whyted/listserve/Index.htm** and fill out the form. Once you have subscribed, you can post messages that will be seen by all other subscribers by sending a message to **hourglass@magmacom.com**.

### Gopher broke
Gopher is perhaps the most unusual of the Internet resources. It's similar in some ways to the World Wide Web because it's document based and searchable, but the resemblance ends there. You can access Gopher through one of several search tools: Veronica, Archie, or Jughead. Several FoxPro resources are available on the Internet, including the following:

- Microsoft's Searchable Knowledge Base -- gopher://198.105.232.4:70/77%5ckb%5cdevelopr%5cfox%5cfox.src
- Rocky Mountain Mail List Gopher Search -- gopher://halfdan.med.umn.edu:70/11/Computer%20Information/Foxpro%20List

### Conclusion
The only guarantee in our business is that what you're doing now will change by the time you turn the page. The folks in our business who bury their heads in their cubicles and attempt to learn by paging through the manual and occasionally pressing F1 are destined to be yesterday's news. Dozens of rich resources are available, and with the Internet as the delivery vehicle they're just a mouse-click away. Avail yourself of these resources or end up in the crowds who'll be wondering why no one told them that the world was going to change.