

# The Developers Group Meeting

at Building 3, Microsoft Campus, Thames Valley Park, Reading RG6 1WG  
[click here for map and directions](#)

Monday July 18th  
with group leader Brian Long



## Agenda

- 11:30 Registration (with tea/coffee plus a bacon or egg roll, if you arrive early enough.)
- 12:00 **Welcome, News and Problem Clinic: Brian Long**  
Bring your development problems for discussion. We'll try to help solve them - even that ill-fated first question which always seems to elude us.
- 1:00 **A Multi-Database Upgrader Utility: Peter Goddard**  
This utility was developed to be able to update and upgrade several hundred InterBase databases within the very short time span of five working days. The major problem was that each of the databases can be at a different version level and often requires SQL scripts to be run either before and /or after the upgrade process. A further complication is that, due to the way constraints, foreign keys and primary keys are created by InterBase, these constraints may have different names (numbering) which will then void the 'plans' used in the SQL stored procedures. Therefore the utility had to force uniformity on the databases being upgraded, provide the capability to be able to work with orphaned data (lost integrity), provide traceability of the upgrade process, and require no manual intervention.
- The utility achieves its objectives by initially stripping out all SQL stored procedures, all automatically numbered primary and secondary keys as well as foreign keys, before rebuilding all these indices with the desired numbering i.e that of the reference database. Furthermore, the utility can run SQL scripts before, during and at the end of the process. The utility is totally written within Delphi but incorporates a lot of string handling as well as running of the 'isql.exe' command line utility from within the application.
- 2:10 Tea/coffee and cake
- 2:30 **Migration from Legacy Data-Files to Relational Databases: Roland Potter**  
Migrating data from legacy systems using proprietary, or pre-defined data files, normally requires development of specific programs to migrate the data to a meaningful set of tables in a relational database. Having already produced a software package dedicated to migrating between database platforms, we decided to try and produce a general purpose add-on facility to convert legacy data files. We worked on the principle that the first step should be to extract all the data, and that further conversion work could more easily be carried out on the resultant database tables. All that's needed then is to completely rewrite all the applications that deal with the data! This session covers the steps taken to achieve the data conversion, in the course of which we worked with parsing data definition files (COBOL source), translation of non-Delphi data types, producing a text/binary viewer to allow field definition on raw data files and producing a flat-file dataset component to read the files.
- 3:35 Brief fidget break
- 3:40 **Making Trees with SQL: Adam Brett**  
This intermediate level session looks at SQL scripts and Tree View components in Delphi. Trees are great, highly user intuitive GUI elements but, used badly, they encourage very poor database design. This session examines these problems and ways round them whereby multi-table normalized datasets can be pulled together to form suitable data for Tree Views. We also cover creation of custom components from ancestor Tree Views that can easily handle these types of data with minimum of repeated coding. The components are Win32, but the session focus will be equal parts SQL, general points on Tree Views and Data structures, making things pretty platform-independent.
- 4:45 Brief fidget break
- 4:50 **Developing ASP.NET Websites using DotNetNuke: John Braga**  
John introduces DotNetNuke, an open-source system which builds on ASP.NET to create flexible "Portal websites". He includes examples of developing custom modules, programming in C# or VB (not in Delphi on this occasion), and discusses some of the tools (including free ones!) that now exist to help the development process.
- 6:00 End (and adjournment to the David Lloyd sports centre for anyone who wants to come for a drink).

Please book your place as soon as possible by [contacting us](#), and no later than Monday July 11th. Attendance is free to members of the DG and other participating user groups, £25 + VAT to guests.

We regret that meeting venues cannot accept phone messages on our behalf, and that mobile phones, pagers, etc, must be turned off during all DG events.