

The Developers Group Masterclass

Database Development Essentials

with Bob Swart

at The Village Hall (Parish Reading Room), Upavon,
Wiltshire SN9 6EB

on Monday November 26th 10.00 - 6.00

Agenda

Today rather than concentrating on the different databases available, we are looking at the different ways to access the data from these databases from VCL applications. During the masterclass, we use a number of different databases, including SQL Server, InterBase, MyBase and mySQL.

The main focus however are the *data access* technologies available to Delphi (and C++Builder) developers. We mainly cover data access components found in Delphi itself (i.e. “in the box”) but also some third-party drivers, including those from CoreLab.

Compare data access technologies

For each of the techniques, we discuss the pros and cons, plus the list of available database drivers for these particular data access techniques and components. The list includes the following technologies:

- Borland Database Engine (BDE) and SQL Links
- ADO Express / dbGo for ADO
- TClientDataSet
- MIDAS / DataSnap
- dbExpress (DBX4)

See the technologies in action

Criteria to compare between these techniques include the ease of use, as well as portability (Win32, .NET and even Linux) of the code and drivers, performance, scalability and availability of recent drivers for new versions of database.

We start with the BDE / SQL Links, but also spend some time on dbGo for ADO (aka ADOExpress), dbExpress, the stand-alone ClientDataSet possibilities, the multi-tier DataSnap technology, and especially the latest version of dbExpress called DBX4. For each technology, Bob explains the strong and weak points, and implements a simple but non-trivial database application to demonstrate and compare the techniques.

Learn what DBX4 has to offer

A significant amount of time will be spent covering the latest release of dbExpress, also called DBX4. Among the DBX4 sub-topics that are covered are disconnected data model, connecting to databases, DataSetProvider and ClientDataSet, reconciling updates, dbExpress drivers, delegate drivers (plus an example of writing our own delegate DBX4 driver), connection pooling, tracing, and finally deployment.

If Delphi 2007 for .NET 2.0/3.0 is also available in November, we will also be able to cover the Borland Data Provider for .NET 1.1 (which has been deprecated) and the use of the DBX4 solution in the .NET works.

See how to migrate from the BDE / SQL Links

Since the BDE has also been “frozen” and SQL Links even deprecated, with dbExpress (and especially DBX4) moved forward as the solution to migrate database applications to, we also spend some time in showing how to migrate BDE / SQL Links applications to ADO (using dbGo for ADO) or DBX4, using some of the existing demos that are included with Delphi.

Migrating VCL database application to ADO or DBX4 will be an important topic for those of us who have to maintain legacy Delphi applications, but also need to move up to the new Windows XP and Vista world (which is not very BDE-friendly).

Your day will look something like this:

10:00	Introduction, overall comparison, BDE / SQL Links
11:30	ADO Express / dbGo for ADO, Migration BDE -> ADO, Standalone TClientDataSet
12:45	lunch
2:00	DataSnap, dbExpress
3:30	DBX4 Enhancements, Migration BDE -> DBX4
5:00	Wrap-up & discussion
6:00	End

The book of the course

After the masterclass, you will be able to download the manual containing the contents of the day in PDF format (password protected file of about 100 pages).

Some non-technical information about the day

Timing and food

Registration with refreshments starts at 9:30 and the class begins at 10 o'clock sharp. There will be a break with more refreshments mid-morning and mid-afternoon. At lunchtime (around 1 o'clock, for an hour) we take you to the pub for lunch - your food is included in the cost of the class, your beer is not ;-)

Cost

The price for members is £175 + VAT per class, or £300 + VAT if you book for this class and the following day. All places must be booked and paid for in advance. If your membership package includes masterclasses, you still need to pre-book. You're welcome to book as soon as you read this; please make sure we have payment by cheque, credit card or bank transfer by Wednesday 21st November.

Getting here

- **From London, Hampshire, Surrey and South:** M3 to junction 8, A303 to Andover, A342 via Ludgershall towards Devizes.
- **From Berkshire and Buckinghamshire:** M4 to junction 14, A338 via Burbage to Collingbourne Ducis, local road to Everleigh, A342 towards Devizes.
- **From Bristol, Swindon and Gloucestershire:** M4 to junction 16, B4005 to Wroughton (or shortcut via local road), A4361 to Avebury, local road via West Kennet, Alton Priors, Woodborough and North Newnton, A342 towards Amesbury and Salisbury.
- **From Salisbury and South Coast:** A345 towards Pewsey and Marlborough.
- **From South West:** A303 to Amesbury, A345 towards Pewsey and Marlborough.

The hall is on the A342 between Andover (East) and Devizes (West), near the river bridge, just to the East of the junction of the A345 between Salisbury (South) and Swindon (North).

Regrettably getting here by public transport isn't easy and it's generally easier to drive. We'll let you know closer to the date where it's best to park. Please ask if you need train information and for us to book you taxis from and to local stations (Paddington to Pewsey infrequent trains + taxi 10 minutes/£10, or Waterloo to Andover about every half hour + taxi 40 minutes/£25).

Overnight accommodation

Accommodation very close to the hall is available at Upavon Manor (isabelbgreen@hotmail.com or 01980 635115) and the Antelope Inn (01980 630206). There are other b&bs a very brief drive or walk across the fields away.

We expect these classes to book up very quickly and places are (quite genuinely) limited. The classes are not designed to be hands-on and, if you decide to bring a laptop, there won't be anywhere for you to plug it in.

Mobile phones and emails

Please remember that phones must be switched off while the class is in session. Be warned that signal is very poor here and you may need to take your phone for a short walk before it will work - Vodafone tends to be best. You will not have access to the internet at the hall or at your accommodation.