Issue Date: FoxTalk 2.0 December 2005

From the Editor: Good News from Germany

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Let me introduce myself. My name is Rainer Becker, and I'm the new editor of *FoxTalk 2.0* beginning with the December 2005 issue. But before I get into details, I first must say a big thank-you to David Stevenson for doing such a great job as editor over the past 1.5 years, for the very nice editorial he published online with the November issue, and for the cooperation in handing over the reins.

A big thank-you also to the authors of *FoxTalk 2.0*, all of whom have written great articles. With such a good team of long-term authors it's much less of a challenge for me! Doug Hennig authors his 100th article in this issue, Andy Kramek just released his 90th article in November, and Marcia Akins will publish her 50th "Kit Box" column in January! With this team we'll continue *FoxTalk*'s long-standing tradition of providing the community with top-notch advanced technical articles.

So as to maintain this high standard, I'll do what I can do best–and won't write too many articles myself. My biggest problem is my modest English; that's the real challenge for me, especially as an editor. But luckily I'm the leader of the FoxPro User Group of German Language Inc., which will provide resources for translating and proofreading tasks.

Additionally, I'm a Microsoft Most Valuable Professional, the publisher of a quarterly German FoxPro periodical, and organizer of the German Visual FoxPro Conference. Therefore, I know all of the top VFP authors and speakers very well and I also have an extensive network of European authors who will supplement the current team of excellent authors that you're accustomed to reading in *FoxTalk 2.0.* We've also produced the German, French, and Czech localizations of VFP 8.0 and 9.0. Moreover, our huge FoxPro document portal demonstrates what a stock of knowledge my team and I have been, and are, accumulating and managing over the past decade. I mention all of this not to draw your attention to the vivid VFP scene in the German-speaking countries, but rather to give you a clearer picture of my background.

You might wonder what kind of editor you've got now, one who neither writes articles nor does proofreading. Let me explain my job definition as a set of Design Patterns: I'm a factory that selects the people who are best suited to do particular jobs, allocates those people and creates a bridge of communication to them, defining a chain of responsibilities within the team, observing the status of all tasks, and working as a mediator among all of the people involved. Let's call this structure a "FoxTalk Editor." I've successfully used this structure before as the leader and editor of the FoxPro User Group of German language magazine, which has roughly the same circulation as *FoxTalk 2.0*.

And I have some recent good news to report: The German User Group sold more licenses of Visual FoxPro 9.0 in just a few months than we sold of Visual FoxPro 8.0 in total. Ken Levy confirmed in his keynote at the recent German DevCon in November that Germany now, for the first time ever, ranks No. 2 in sales of Visual FoxPro. Moreover, Doug Hennig reports that sales of Stonefield Query were very brisk at the DevCon. I'm also happy to report that sales of our Visual Extend framework increased by 248 percent over last year, and 60 percent of our revenues are from new customers. Also, in spite of the fact that there was no new version of VFP this year, and that other conferences are suffering in general, this year's attendance at the German DevCon was about the same as last year. That's good news! Especially considering that the economy remains flat here in Germany.

As you see, I am personally enthusiastic about the technical features of VFP 9 but also about the success in the market, as well as the public support announcements from Microsoft itself. The VFP team did a really great job; thanks to them!

I'll continue to work for the FoxPro community, and I expect ongoing good sales for the current version and would love to see a repeat of the overwhelming success of Visual FoxPro 9.0 with the upcoming version, code-named Sedna. You'll be able to hear more about transition and additional good news in an installment of Andrew MacNeill's "The FoxShow" podcasts. Andrew's interview with me is available online at www.thefoxshow.com, and the transcript will be available as a *FoxTalk 2.0* online-only article some time soon.

In today's FoxPro world, there are interesting subjects galore. I'll do my very best to update the *FoxTalk 2.0* readers' expertise with every issue.