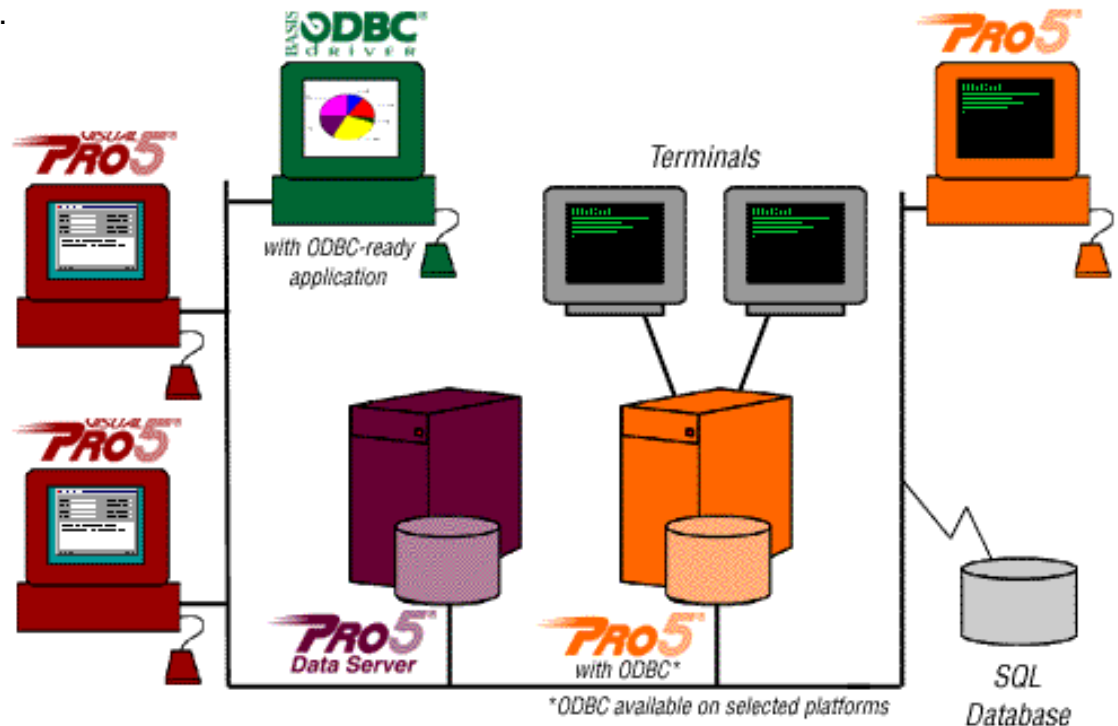


Enhanced Products Ring In A GUI New Year At BASIS

By Edie Downs

In early 1999, BASIS will release version 2.1 of its popular GUI development environment, Visual PRO/5®. This update will offer new and enhanced development and licensing tools that can be used with two other new 2.1 products--the BASIS ODBC Driver® and the PRO/5 Data Server® for Windows NT--that programmers can use to become even more productive in the new year.



Making Good Tools Even Better

Visual PRO/5 comes with several development tools designed to simplify the creation of graphical applications. Each of these utilities has been improved to make these products more robust and easier to use.

The popular graphical Data Dictionary tool, DDBuilder™, offers a new feature that simplifies `sql.ini` file setup. DDBuilder users were once limited to creating and maintaining `sql.ini` files in system-specified default locations. But with the 2.1 release, a new File Open dialog permits the configuration of an `sql.ini` file in any directory. Developers can also save their configuration to any user-specified `sql.ini` file.

Like DDBuilder, GUIBuilder™ has been enhanced to allow more freedom in setting up files, resource files, and compiled programs. When any work files, resource files, or compiled programs are opened or written outside the current directory, GUIBuilder "remembers" this action on subsequent file operations and provides the appropriate path name automatically on file-open dialogs. The Configurator tool has also been enlarged and now includes the TMARGIN and LMARGIN modes on the SYSPRINT device and provides Cut, Copy, and Paste capabilities as standard features.

Along with improved tools, Visual PRO/5 2.1 offers developers a chance to integrate the popular Citrix and Microsoft Windows NT 4.0 Terminal Servers into their systems. Now programmers can create a Visual PRO/5 thin client for a Windows NT system that is just as productive as a Windows NT system using Windows NT workstations.

Finally, Visual PRO/5 2.1 incorporates the new *FLEXIm* license system. This new system offers developers more licensing options and makes compliance with software licensing agreements easier.

Moving Applications Online With The Basic Web Utility

One of the most important additions to Visual PRO/5 2.1 is the Basic Web Utility. This new web tool helps programmers connect their PRO/5 applications to the Internet. This utility lets developers use BBx as a CGI-scripting language to publish important data on the World Wide Web from native PRO/5 data sources. Additional HTML tools also simplify the creation and automated generation of HTML forms and lists.

New ODBC Driver And PRO/5 Data Server Versions

But the 1999 release of Visual PRO/5 isn't the only exciting New Year's news from BASIS. The 2.1 versions of the BASIS ODBC Driver and the PRO/5 Data Server for Windows NT will also be released.

Users of the BASIS ODBC Driver will notice significant performance improvements, better diagnostic information, and higher product reliability. Minor problems with the SQLConnect function and other features have been fixed, and code has been added to help developers use the BASIS ODBC Driver with the popular ColdFusion web development system.

When used with the PRO/5 Data Server, the ODBC Driver can run up to four to five times faster. Execution speeds for ORDER BY clauses and UNION statements have also been improved. The amount of information logged by the BASIS ODBC Driver has been significantly increased in order to give developers access to important data, such as execution times for the SQLPrepare, SQLExecute, and SQLFetch API functions. This higher level of detail will help developers in the process of debugging and optimizing their SQL queries. This improved logging also gives end users more information to share with their BASIS reseller or the BASIS Technical Support department as they work to resolve ODBC Driver issues.

This new version of the PRO/5 Data Server for Windows NT introduces the familiar advisory locking feature to the Windows NT environment. In addition, with version 2.1, the PRO/5 Data Server has been transformed from a standalone Windows application into a full-fledged Windows NT service.

Improving Quality And Usability

All of the new 2.1 products have been subject to a rigorous review by BASIS' quality assurance team to ensure high-quality performance, proper adherence to the Windows interface standards, and up-to-date documentation.

With the Visual PRO/5 2.1 release, the *Visual PRO/5 GUI Guide*, *Visual PRO/5 Supplement*,

and *Visual PRO/5 User's Guide* have been combined into a single, easy-to-use HTML document. By providing the documentation in an electronic format, BASIS will be able to give users current versions of product information that can be easily accessed with an included search tool.

With the New Year comes new business and new development projects for our Business Basic community. The enhancements and new features of Visual PRO/5 2.1, the ODBC Driver, and the PRO/5 Data Server for Windows NT can make those development projects easier and faster. Developers can ring in the New Year with a new set of sophisticated tools and capabilities.

Edie Downs is an independent consultant to BASIS providing assistance to businesses in solving accounting problems with Business Basic applications. She can be reached by email at edowns@compuserve.com.