

March, 1997

Editor's View

Happy Birthday, FoxPro Advisor

Four years is a long time in the computer business, but we're still going strong.

By Tamar E. Granor, Editor

This issue marks the beginning of the fifth year of FoxPro Advisor. In our rapidly-changing industry, four years is a lifetime and then some. FoxPro Advisor was born with the release of the DOS and Windows versions of FoxPro 2.5. It was the offspring of the FoxPro User Journal, a monthly newsletter devoted to FoxPro, and DataBased Advisor, which had covered FoxBase and FoxPro for many years.

Four years later, both the DOS and Windows versions of FoxPro 2.x (as well as Mac and Unix versions) are still in use, but we've been through two full revision cycles, one renaming and one adjustment to version numbers - Visual FoxPro 5.0 is the most recent version. Like the FoxPros before it, VFP5 is a hybrid. It blends the Xbase and SQL traditions of its FoxBase/FoxPro heritage with object orientation, client-server, and component technology to provide a complex, comprehensive tool for data management.

To keep up with all these changes, we've all been in a state of constant learning. We hope FoxPro Advisor has been an important resource for you in that learning process. Our goal is to keep providing you with the knowledge you need to move forward and to be more productive.

Here are a few statistics to mark this anniversary. First let me single out Mac Rubel whose Functional FoxPro column has appeared in every single issue of FoxPro Advisor. Though Ask Advisor also started with the first issue, I didn't become one of its writers until the second issue (Steve Freides was my co-author for the first couple of years; Ted Roche jumped in after that). So Mac has the distinction of having appeared in more issues of FoxPro Advisor than any other writer. The award for the most articles, though, goes to Drew Speedie - including his Tips, Tricks and Traps columns, Drew's been responsible for more than 50 articles.

In addition to these regular and prolific writers (including Miriam Liskin, whose column has now appeared for three and a half years), we've also had articles from a tremendous number of different writers. In fact, in our first four years, more than 125 different people have authored FPA articles. The writers run the gamut from the leaders of the FoxPro world to corporate developers, independent consultants and academics. They come from around the world, including Australia, the Philippines, France, Switzerland, India, Israel, the UK and, of course, the United States and Canada. Our circulation spans the globe.

I often received email thanking me for FoxPro Advisor. As the data above show, I don't do alone. Beside our writers, a number of other people make this magazine happen. When the writers finish writing and I finish editing, the articles go to Advisor's staff of editors, graphic artists and others who take our words and turn them into the attractive

magazine you're holding in your hands. Managing Editor Patrice Hartmann, in particular, molds the material I send her into a cohesive whole.

Our group of Contributing Editors provides us with articles, guidance, and advice. I've mentioned several of them above - you'll find the complete list on the staff page.

Finally, without you folks, our readers, there'd be no need for this magazine. So please share our pleasure at starting our fifth year serving the FoxPro community.

Yet Another Reorganization

It must be something in the water in Redmond. I've never seen a company that reorganizes itself as often as Microsoft.

Sure enough, about five weeks after DevCon, the Visual FoxPro group was moved from the Internet Tools and Development Division into the Desktop and Business Systems Division, which also houses Windows NT, SQL Server, and Internet Information Server, among others. According to VFP Product Manager Robert Green, the goal is to consolidate development of various technologies. The move does not affect the marketing strategies discussed in last month's Editors View and in the interview with Green in this issue.

Perhaps the most striking thing about this reorganization is that Green was aware enough of the FoxPro community's sensitivity to such things to post messages in all three CompuServe FoxPro forums explaining what was happening. Previously we learned of such changes through word-of-mouth or inflammatory articles in other publications. Having the community informed about such changes and their implications goes a long way toward quieting the rumor mill and gives us answers for our bosses and clients who want to know what it's all about. This is the kind of proactive behavior the FoxPro community has been asking for.

You'll find more information about this reorganization and FoxPro's place at Microsoft more generally in the Green interview.

Welcome, Andy Neil

We're pleased to announce that Andy Neil has become a Contributing Editor to FoxPro Advisor. Andy is an independent consultant specializing in business applications and networking. Many of you may be familiar with him from his previous position as the Program Manager for MicroMega's FoxFire! Andy's knowledge and ability to clearly explain concepts make him a welcome addition to our group of advisors.