

THE Delphi

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The Delphi Magazine
iTec, 9a London Road, BROMLEY
Kent BR1 1BY, United Kingdom

ISSN: 1365-1013

Tel: +44 (0)181 249 0354 Fax: +44 (0)181 249 0376
Email: mail@itecuk.com Web: www.itecuk.com

All Change At Inprise...

On 31 March Inprise announced the resignation of CEO Del Yocam and Chief Financial Officer Kathleen Fisher. Some days later, The Inprise Board stated that it had requested the resignation of Yocam and Fisher because of strong differences of opinion on Inprise's growth strategy: Yocam wanted to continue on a conservative trend, the Board favour continued investment. Sources suggest that is a fairly polite way of describing the differences... We also understand that Rick LeFavre, Chief Technology Officer, resigned at the same time as Yocam and Fisher, but with no apparent publicity.

Recent months have seen growing dissatisfaction amongst shareholders and users with the company's confused and ever-changing strategy, the most recent example of this being the re-splitting of the company into separate Inprise and Borland.com divisions. Shareholders have seen poor financial performance and a falling stock price (at one point it was reputed that the premises in Scotts Valley were worth more than the company itself!). The usual buyout and takeover rumours restarted again: one has to comment that someone missed a real bargain when the stocks were at their lowest value.

The Board have now named Dale Fuller as interim President and CEO. Fuller, aged 40, most recently served as President and CEO of internet specialists WhoWhere? Inc; prior to that he worked as General Manager of Apple Computer's Powerbook Business Unit. He appears to have no specific experience of software development issues, which is disappointing (I heard some very cutting remarks about Yocam's lack of understanding of Inprise's business). A new Chief Financial Officer is being sought too.

In addition, the Board is looking at separating Inprise into two independent companies again, as part of a comprehensive strategic review, being conducted by consultants Hambrecht & Quist, due for completion in this quarter.

Inprise are likely to report a significant loss in their upcoming 1999 first quarter financial results. The company also expects to report a loss for the full year.

The stock price has shown some recovery in the days following the departure of Yocam and Fisher, with apparent stability after the announcement of Fuller's appointment.

My feeling is that a purchase by a strong, stable company with an effective management team could well be the best thing for Inprise, its products and (most important) users. Perhaps this would finally see excellent products such as Delphi and C++Builder get the sales they deserve, penetrating the corporate developer market, which is notably sensitive to the longer-term stability of tool vendors. The integration of the former Visigenic products into the Borland product line has not been very successful. It appears that there has been a lack of integration of the development teams, with the former Visigenic people continuing to plough their own furrow. The resignation of Rick LeFavre, former Chief Technology Officer, could well have been related to this. The name change to Inprise has been a singular waste of time and money, as the subsequent re-creation of Borland has shown. Incidentally, another rather quiet departure from the company in recent months was long-termer Zack Urlocker, formerly Vice President of Marketing.

I am disappointed that Inprise are wasting yet more money on external consultants when the way forward surely must be clear to long-term senior staffers at the company (there must be some left who are familiar with both Borland and the developer tools marketplace). Also, one wonders how a company with such strong products that sell well (especially Delphi) can consistently lose money. I'm happy to give Dale Fuller a fair chance to prove himself. I and many others want to see a strong, growing Inprise (or Borland) and these latest developments do at least show some positive moves forward. We all, I am sure, await further developments with much interest.

Chris Frizelle, Editor

News

Reviews Online!

New at the *Developers Review* website is a selection of reviews from past issues of the magazine, including reviews of a number of Delphi related products, as well as Delphi itself. Remember, *Developers Review* is the only magazine of its type: dedicated to reviews of software development products.

Skyline Dicom Suite

SkyLine Tools Imaging have released this new add-on to the ImageLib Corporate Suite for Delphi and includes a sample end-user Dicom application with source. The Suite includes read, write and display of Dicom 3 format files, used extensively in medical imaging. Visit www.imagelib.com for details and a trial version. The Dicom Suite costs \$899 for read-only access or \$1499 for read and write access. Gulp!

Marco Cantù

Essential Pascal Book

Marco has started a free book on his website (at www.marcocantu.com/epascal/) covering the basic elements of Pascal, aimed at beginning Delphi programmers but containing useful information also for those more experienced.

ViCious Pro 1.02.12

ViCious Pro from SureHand Software is a version control system for Delphi and C++ Builder, originally written by our very own 'Dr.Bob' Swart.

Whether you are writing software on your own or as part of a team, ViCious Pro will provide you with a quick and affordable way to manage your source code, say the developers. Visit www.surehand.com for more information.

Delphi Developer's Journal Is No More

The US-based newsletter style *Delphi Developer's Journal*, pub-

lished by Ziff Davis, has been closed down with effect from the May issue. We understand that existing subscriptions have been sold on to another Delphi publication (not us, in case you were wondering!).

Borland JEDI Initiative

This collaborative effort between Delphi R&D and the Delphi programming community is now supported by a Pascal Header Translation Specification document.

Bob Swart reports that he is working to implement these specifications into an upcoming version of HeadConv, his C DLL Header Converter utility. HeadConv v3.25 is capable of generating implicit and explicit Delphi import units. You can visit www.borland.com/techvoyage/jediinitiative.html for more information on JEDI, and Bob Swart's website at www.drbob42.com for HeadConv details.

Wrox ASP Resource

New from Wrox Press, ASP Today (at www.asptoday.com) presents daily technical articles on the development of websites using Microsoft's Active Server Pages technology (ASP).

The emphasis is on expert techniques, tips, tricks and practical advice, say Wrox Press, plus code to try them out in your own development projects. Areas covered include ASP components, ADO,

RDS, ADSI, CDO, security, site design, site server, scripting and more.

Enterprise CORBA '99

Enterprise CORBA '99 is claimed to be Europe's biggest CORBA conference this year. It will be held on 22nd and 23rd June at The Paragon Hotel in London. Speakers will include Dave Curtis, Ian Graham, Tom Mowbray, Annrai O'Toole, Andrew Watson and Tom Welsh.

Promised topics include: Future of Middleware, CORBA 3.0, CORBA Components, CORBA/Java/COM, Messaging & QoS, Minimum & Real Time CORBA, XMI, CORBA Security, CORBA in Multimedia, CORBA products review, EAI, Objects & Components, CORBA in Telecoms, Manufacturing, Healthcare, Life Sciences, Finance and Defence, OpenSource CORBA, UML, CORBA Interoperability and CORBA Testing.

The event is organised by Eric Leach Marketing and sponsored by The ORB Agency and The Modern Book Company. Visit www.ericleach.com/ecorba.htm for more details.

News Please!

We welcome news of products and services for software developers. Please send your information *by email only* to the Editor, Chris Frizelle, at chrisf@itecuk.com.

UK Inprise/Borland User Group Events

Thursday May 6th, Dublin: Creating classes, creating components, interfaces for the uninitiated, creating custom datasets.

Tuesday May 11th, Leamington Spa: Wav files, distributed objects, PERL.

Thursday May 13th, London: CORBA masterclass for Delphi and JBuilder with Bob Swart and Hubert Klein Ikkink.

Tuesday May 25th, London: The National Trust Website (Inprise UK App of the Year, developed using Delphi), Windows messaging, undocumented shell API functions.

Tuesday June 8th, Bristol: Case study, Microsoft Transaction Server, getting started with MS Site Server Commerce Edition, on-line analytical processing.

For more details please see www.richplum.co.uk or call the UK Inprise/Borland User Group on +44 (0)1980 630032.