

Southwest Fox 2009 Call for Speakers

You are invited to submit session proposals for Southwest Fox 2009. For the past two years, this conference has been organized by Visual FoxPro MVPs Rick Schummer, Doug Hennig and Tamar E. Granor, and has been a tremendous success.

As in years past, Southwest Fox is a Visual FoxPro conference. Although we welcome sessions on integrating VFP with other technologies, we are not interested in sessions designed to move developers away from VFP.

Southwest Fox 2009 will be held at the Arizona Golf Resort and Conference Center (<http://www.azgolfresort.com>) in Mesa, Arizona on October 15-18. Pre-conference sessions will be held during the day on Thursday, October 15. The main conference will begin with a keynote address that night. Breakout sessions will take place all day Friday and Saturday, and Sunday morning. The conference will close with a general session midday Sunday.

If you are interested in speaking at Southwest Fox 2009, please read this entire document before submitting proposals. Send any questions to speakers@swfox.net.

Tracks

We are particularly interested in topics that fit into one or more of the following tracks:

- Solidifying VFP development -- This track will appeal to all VFP developers. Sessions should cover either VFP fundamentals, aimed at those newer to VFP, whether moving up from FP2.x or coming to VFP from other languages; or VFP best practices, aimed at helping all VFP developers improve.
- Taking advantage of VFPX -- The sessions in this track should showcase the projects in VFPX, providing attendees with enough information to put those projects to work for them.
- Extending VFP (including COM, report listeners, etc.)—The sessions in this track will cover technologies that extend VFP's capabilities.
- Integrating VFP (with SQL Server, .NET, etc.)—This track will look at using VFP together with other products, including back-end servers, Automation servers, and .NET.
- Technology for the VFP developer—This track will look at tools and technologies to make life as a developer easier or more productive, including such things as virtual machines and source control.

Feel free to suggest other topics if they have a connection to VFP and you believe attendees will find them valuable.

We are also looking for half-day and full-day pre-conference sessions. These should be designed to bring attendees up to speed on a subject to prepare them to get the most out of the main conference.

Speaker's Responsibilities

Each speaker will present two or three different sessions; each session will be given twice. In other words, each speaker will be presenting four to six times. Sessions will be 75 minutes long.

Speakers must provide a brief bio and a digital photo for publicity purposes. The bio should be included with session proposals (see "Submitting Proposals" below). The photo can be submitted with session proposals, but must be submitted by April 22, 2009.

Speakers must provide session notes (a "white paper") for each session. They may also provide slides. Where appropriate, code examples should be provided as well. It is not acceptable to provide slides and no white paper for any session. All materials are due no later than Monday, September 14, 2009.

Speakers are expected to be available to attendees throughout the conference. While this doesn't mean every minute of each day, for attendees to get full value for the conference, they must have the opportunity to talk to speakers outside of sessions. Speakers are expected to attend conference lunches and be visible during at least some breaks.

Speakers are expected to rehearse their sessions prior to arriving in Mesa, so that both the first and second presentations run smoothly.

Speaker's Rights

Southwest Fox will provide round-trip economy airfare to Phoenix from your home city, a room at the conference hotel for three nights (four nights for those presenting pre-conference sessions) and admission to the main conference and any pre-cons you wish to attend.

Submitting Proposals

To be considered, download the Southwest Fox proposal application from <http://www.swfox.net/speakers.zip> and send your proposals to speakers@swfox.net no later than 8 AM EDT on Monday, March 16, 2009. Each session proposal must use the form provided and include:

- 1) The session title
- 2) An abstract (100-200 words) describing the session. (In evaluations from Southwest Fox 2008, some of the weakest scores were in having a session match its description, so put some extra thought into this area.)
- 3) A list of 4 or 5 bullet points finishing the sentence "Attendees will learn ..."
- 4) The track(s) into which the session fits.
- 5) The level(s) for the session: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced. This is the level for VFP developers, even if the session is about working with another

technology. Think of the level (or levels) as finishing the sentence "This session is appropriate for people who are ..."

- 6) Any prerequisites for the session.
- 7) Anything else you think we should know about this session.

You will receive an acknowledgement within 48 hours of submitting your proposals. If you don't, assume that a spam filter somewhere ate your submission and send a plain text email to speakers@swfox.net to check on it.

The Selection Process

There is no shortage of able speakers in the VFP community. That means that filling the speaker slots for this conference won't be hard, but choosing among all the qualified speakers will be. Among those who have spoken previously, preference will be given to those who have met their past obligations by submitting a full set of materials in a timely fashion.

We consider the cultivation of new talent an important goal. Therefore, we encourage those who have not spoken at VFP conferences before to submit proposals. If you are unsure whether your topics are appropriate, feel free to contact us before the deadline to discuss them. Be aware, of course, that such discussions do not constitute a commitment on our part to choose you, but are meant to help you submit stronger proposals.

Beyond that, the most important consideration will be the topics you propose and how they fit into the conference as a whole. We expect to receive more good proposals than available space, so if you are not chosen, please don't take it personally.

Speaker selection will be completed by Wednesday, April 8, 2009. Selected speakers will be notified by email and asked to confirm their willingness to speak by Wednesday, April 15, 2009. Once all speaker slots have been filled, those not selected will be notified.

Session Materials and Deadlines

While attendees learn a lot at conferences, the materials they take home with them (or download later) provide the lasting impact of a conference. As noted above, session notes are not optional for Southwest Fox as they offer the greatest value to attendees.

In addition, we are providing all submission deadlines now so that you can check them against your personal calendar before submitting proposals. If you cannot meet the deadlines, please do not submit proposals.

We are very serious about speaker obligations. Those who do not fulfill their obligations to Southwest Fox 2009 will not be invited to speak at Southwest Fox 2010.

Summary of Important Dates

March 16, 2009: Session proposals due.

April 8, 2009: Speaker selection completed and selected speakers notified.

April 15, 2009: Acceptance of speaker invitation due.

April 22, 2009: Speaker photos due. Any revisions to bios and abstracts due.

May 1, 2009: Speakers and sessions posted on Southwest Fox website. Registration opens.

September 14, 2009: All session materials due.

October 15-18, 2009: Southwest Fox 2009.