Southwest Fox 2011
Call for Speakers

You are invited to submit session proposals for Southwest Fox 2011. For the past four years, this conference has been organized by Visual FoxPro MVPs Rick Schummer, Doug Hennig and Tamar E. Granor, and has been a tremendous success.

Although Southwest Fox is primarily a Visual FoxPro conference, we welcome sessions on other technologies that can enhance VFP development and that improve development generally. We are not interested in sessions specifically designed to move developers away from VFP.

Southwest Fox 2011 will be held at the SanTan Elegante Conference & Reception Center in Gilbert, Arizona on October 26-29. Pre-conference sessions will be held during the day on Wednesday, October 26. The main conference will begin with a keynote address that night. Breakout sessions will take place all day Thursday and Friday, and Saturday morning. The conference will close with a general session midday Saturday. There will be a post-conference event Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning.

If you are interested in speaking at Southwest Fox 2011, 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; VFP best practices, aimed at helping all VFP developers improve; or in-depth looks at aspects of VFP that some developers may not have mastered yet.
- **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. These sessions should be deep dives into specific VFPX projects. We will consider offering a single "What's new in VFPX?" session.
- **Extending VFP**—The sessions in this track will look at ways to extend VFP's reach, by using it together with other products or by taking advantage of native extension capabilities. We hope to include some sessions on developing mobile applications.
- **Web Development**—This track will cover topics related to developing websites and web applications.
- **Technology and Business for the VFP developer**—This track will look at tools, technologies and techniques to make life as a developer easier and more productive.

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, or to offer an introductory, yet in-depth look at a topic VFP developers may find interesting.

Speaker's Responsibilities

Each speaker will present two or three different sessions; each session (except pre-conference sessions) will be given twice. In other words, each speaker will be presenting three 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 May 6, 2011.

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 26, 2011.

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 Gilbert, 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 28, 2011. Each session proposal must use the form provided and include:

1) The session title
2) An abstract (100-200 words) describing the session.
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 VFP …"
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. We plan to select only 12 speakers initially. If early registration warrants, we will select additional speakers.

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. You increase your chance of being selected by submitting at least three good topics. We expect to receive more good proposals than available space, so if you are not chosen, please don't take it personally.

Initial speaker selection will be completed by Friday, April 22, 2011. Selected speakers will be notified by email and asked to confirm their willingness to speak by Friday, April 29, 2011. Once all speaker slots have been filled, those not selected will be notified. If we decide to add speakers, the additional speakers will be invited by Friday, July 8, 2011 and will need to confirm by Friday, July 15, 2011.

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 2011 will not be invited to speak at Southwest Fox 2012.

Summary of Important Dates

March 28, 2011: Session proposals due.
April 22, 2011: Speaker selection completed and selected speakers notified.
April 29, 2011: Acceptance of speaker invitation due.
May 6, 2011: Speaker photos due. Any revisions to bios and abstracts due.
May 15, 2011: Speakers and sessions posted on Southwest Fox website.
June 1, 2011: Registration opens.
July 8, 2011: Any additional speakers will be notified.
July 15, 2011: Acceptance of additional speaker invitations due.
September 26, 2011: All session materials due.
October 26-29, 2011: Southwest Fox 2011.