

The Progress Electronic Magazine

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Did you sign up to receive this E-Zine? Send email to sauge@amduus.com to subscribe or fill out the forms at <http://www.amduus.com/online/dev/ezine/EZineHome.html> ! It’s free! (Though donations are certainly welcome – whatever you feel is fair!)

Though intended for users of the software tools provided by Progress Software Corporation, this document is NOT a product of Progress Software Corporation.

Publisher's Statement:

The heady days of working in an IT boom period seem to be over, and the experts are saying that the computer industry has expanded as much as it ever will. It has been over two decades of growth for our industry with lots of new ideas and companies. Other industries have gone through similar stretches and entered new phases of maturity until finally "retirement." Hopefully our industry will go for a long mid-life compared to other industries!

I fear though, that like other industries that have come about, ours has reached that maturing stage where less companies will come into existence due to barriers of entry like software patents and legislation, expense of creating a program (one cannot hack out a simple one language application and sell it anymore), entrenched software in companies (once it is there, it is pretty hard to get out of there), customer cynicism after being burned by hype and spiraling costs ... the list goes on. The companies that do exist are closing down or shrinking and may never reach the levels that they were at just a year ago. Consolidation is occurring just as it had in other industries such as the car industry and accounting industry.

With this in mind, how can we, as those working in what can definitely be termed a niche marketplace (Who is Progress?) increase our value and hopefully keep our skills relevant to the marketplace?

One way is to increase programmer productivity, and I will share how I accomplish that with abbreviations in vi. Vi is a heck of an editor to learn, but since typing in code is one of the main stays of writing applications, it is important to use a powerful editor. **With the tips given, I can show programmers how to spend 50% to 70% less time typing in code.**

Also with all the layoffs that are occurring, people are finding themselves out of work. If you are reading this and out of work, understand that you are not alone! Included are some tips on how to find programmers and how to find a job in the progress marketplace.

Also, once again I am looking for work – either as a contractor or as an employee. If you have anything – please let me know at sauge@amduus.com.

To your success,

Scott Auge

Founder, Amduus Information Works, Inc.

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Coding Article: Using vi features to increase programmer productivity

Written by Scott Auge

The vi editor is available on both UNIX and Windows platforms and has a multitude of features to make it a powerful tool for creating programs. One of the lesser known features of vi is the .exrc file and what you can place into it.

When vi starts up, it looks for the .exrc file found in the user's home directory and loads it. Within this file are settings that you can use to change the behavior of vi when it is being used. One of the most powerful of these behaviors are abbreviations. Abbreviations allow the typist to enter in a string of characters and upon the first entry of white space, that string will be compared to a list and replaced with an entry if found.

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Creation of modules and products for re-sale as well customized Internet/Intranet programming for E-Business in the marketing/manufacturing/service and law enforcement industries.

Below is an example .exrc that I use. As you can see, I type 50% to 70% less characters (thereby making my programming code entry 50% to 70% more productive than the next guy) to generate progress keywords.

```
abbr le LEAVE
abbr RCS DEF VAR RCSVersion AS CHARACTER INIT "$Header$" NO-UNDO.
abbr IFDEF &IF DEFINED(_I) = 0 &THEN
abbr getv GET-VALUE(
abbr del DELETE
abbr fie FIELD
abbr now NO-WAIT
abbr pa PAUSE
abbr mes MESSAGE
abbr rep REPEAT
abbr asd AS DECIMAL
abbr ne NEXT
abbr el ELSE
abbr fo FOR
abbr defb DEF BUFFER
abbr cre CREATE
abbr proc PROCEDURE
abbr inp INPUT
abbr outp OUTPUT
```

```
abbr io INPUT-OUTPUT
abbr ass ASSIGN
abbr cas CASE
abbr whi WHILE
abbr dop DEF OUTPUT PARAMETER
abbr dv DEF VAR
abbr dip DEF INPUT PARAMETER
abbr nou NO-UNDO
abbr asc AS CHARACTER
abbr asl AS LOGICAL
abbr asm AS MEMPTR
abbr th THEN
abbr av AVAILABLE
abbr fin FIND
abbr fe FOR EACH
abbr ret RETURN
abbr asi AS INTEGER
abbr en END
abbr nol NO-LOCK
abbr noe NO-ERROR
abbr exl EXCLUSIVE-LOCK
abbr whe WHERE
abbr fir FIRST
abbr last LAST
abbr thd THEN DO:
set showmode
set ignorecase
```

So to use an example, often one needs to type in:

DEF VAR

a lot of times into a program. By using the abbreviation dv, upon hitting the space bar dv will be expanded into DEF VAR when typing.

About the author: Scott Auge is the founder of Amduus Information Works, Inc. He has been programming in the Progress environment since 1994. His works have included E-Business initiatives and focuses on web applications on UNIX platforms.
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Management Article: Where to find a Progress Job (and Progress Programmer!)

Written by Scott Auge sauge@amduus.com

So you had a nice (ok, maybe not so nice) job at a company using Progress. Then they decided

**Reach over 700 programmers
and companies.**

Your ad could be here!

**Advertise in the E-Zine for
\$10.00 per issue!**

they did not need you anymore. What do you do now?

Or, you are one of the companies out there noticing that putting a wanted ad in the newspaper does not yield a lot of Progress programmers. How do you go about finding them?

Tip Number One: Subscribe to the jobs and contractors list at www.peg.com

I tell you what, the PEG is one of THE most useful resources for the Progress world – it is a real community and I wish that Progress would stick a note in every box of media they distribute telling their customers about it.

On “the PEG” are multiple types of mailing lists – one is jobs and one is contractors. If you are looking for a job – you should subscribe to the jobs list. If you are looking for a programmer, you should post a message to the jobs list. (Be aware, that posting a message on the jobs list will cost some money, it is one of the ways the peg pays for it’s self.)

The contractors list is where you can say your looking for work. This is generally taboo on the main lists and other lists – you want to post to the contractor’s list. There are some rules about this also, like you should be a paid member of the PEG to make the posting.

The peg is a great way to network with other people in the Progress marketplace. There are over 6000 people on the peg which translates into your job listing or job search message reaching thousands of Progress using companies.

(And I highly support your contributing monetarily to the group to keep that high bandwidth expensive server going! I myself have purchased memberships to it to help it going!)

Tip Number Two: Post and read the comp.databases.progress.newsgroup.

Another option is the comp.databases.progress.newsgroup. If you do not have access to a newsgroup server, then you may want to use google.com to read and post messages to the newsgroup. There is no cost for posting or reading messages on this (other than your ISP connection costs!)

Note that the newsgroup tends to be used by more people outside the US than inside the US.

Also using a newsgroup is going to put you on the line for more spam. You may want to post to the newsgroup using a yahoo or hotmail email address as there are programs used by spammers to “harvest” email addresses from posters and then selling them to various nefarious organizations. You will want to change your email address before posting to the newsgroup. Most people post with a faulty address like sauge@amduus.fhjdfknospam.com - people familiar with news groups realize the .fhjdfknospam. portion of the email address should be removed before replying. **YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!**

Tip Number Three: Join progress user groups!

Progress user groups are a great way to network with local people using Progress. It is an opportunity to get names of who should be called and what companies out there are using Progress.

Be aware, that some user groups do not want the job announcements and availability announcements as part of the meeting while it is fine with other groups. (Apparently while some do ask for fees to join, they have forgotten that we do this for money and not kicks.) Don't let this stop you as there will be time to chatter with other people and at that point a lot of card swapping will occur.

Amduus Information Works, Inc. is ASPing it's forum software. With a simple hyperlink or frame, your site, static or dynamic, can link into our message board software.

Contact sauge@amduus.com for more information!

Tip Number Four: Create a web page/site with Progress oriented information on it

A lot of people have questions about how to use Progress, how to place it in the scheme of things, etc. Create a web page to show off your expertise in these matters! And always – always include information on how to contact you.

If you have access to the web server's log files, then you will want to examine the IP address (or even better the domain names if the server is set up to look at them) of the people visiting your page. By doing lookups on the IP addresses to nab the domain (or the domain name from the web log) you can find out what companies are using Progress or at least have an interest in Progress!

Tip Number Five: Create a publication oriented to progress users – a great way to network!

This E-Zine is an example of that! I give the E-Zine away with valuable information to help developers and managers (at least I hope it is valuable) and in return I have access to, at current count, over 750 subscribers. I figure I am reaching nearly 200 or 300 companies within the United States who use Progress – so when I put out the word – people not only have a clue about who I am, but what I am capable of doing.

Be forewarned, that I at first attempted to manage the subscriptions on a regular email client. I soon found that at over 50 subscribers it became very unwieldy (I can only imagine what it would be like with doing that with over 700 subscribers so far!) So I created the E-Zine software to do this for me. It is open source and if you wish to download it, wander over to www.amduus.com and follow the links. (*Note that you will not get the subscriber list – just the program!*)

Tip Number Six: Contact a progress recruiter firm

You can find out the recruiters that work with Progress by saving the messages from the PEG jobs list. You can find more current messages on the PEG jobs list and there are recruiters looking for people on the comp.databases.progress newsgroup.

Also I would like to make you aware of Analysts Express, Inc. – they are a decent company to work for, you can reach James Arnold, one of the recruiters at 888-889-9091. I would tell you of the other companies, but they don't advertise in the E-Zine – readers should tell 'em to fess up some money!

<p>Analysts Express, Inc.</p> <p>Webspeed Training and progress programming.</p> <p>Call James Arnold at 888-889-9091 or jarnold@mylinuxisp.com</p>	<p>Amduus Information Works, Inc. is open to creating and updating software for companies, as well providing Webspeed training. If you wish to communicate with</p>
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me, the founder and president, send an email to sauge@amduus.com. Amduus does have multiple programmers available to it.

Tip Number Seven: Create a job for yourself

This one is a bit tougher and is better for companies in which you are already employed. Basically, you play the politics to find out which departments have budgets and needs. Those are the two important things: budgets mean they have some money to spend on you, and needs means they have some need for you.

Often departments will look at and purchase software for their needs. Promote your abilities to create software with your Progress skills and/or keep an eye on the Progress catalog for potential solutions. Progress software has a catalog of applications on their web site. At one time they

included a book (which was about two inches thick) and a CD-ROM to search for Progress applications on. (This CD-ROM is another thing that should be thrown in with every shipment of media in my opinion.)

In short, the more your company uses Progress, the better off you will be. Welcome to the world of corporate politics.

Another thing to try, and this is very risky to your time – is to join in with the local entrepreneurs groups, chamber of commerce, professional societies and make contacts with people who might have problems for you to solve. You cannot be too overtly searching because they will feel put upon, but keeping in touch and a cool head will garner something.

Tip Number Eight: Hit the jobs web sites.

This is pretty well known. I put this in here to be complete. Be aware though, that studies are finding this is a good way to find an employee/contractor, but not a good way to find a job. Basically your reply is grouped in with thousands of others and it gets lost – plain and simple.

Recruiters and other job listings web sites will find you though.

Tip Number Nine: Write an article for a local computer magazine or newspaper.

Again this is a “let them know your out there” strategy. Focus on a business problem that is present for most people. You will also want to present it to industries in your local area so as to be relevant for the publication.

Tip Number Ten: Put your resume on the internet.

This is similar to posting your resume on a job site, only you have it out there on it’s own. People have gained work from this approach. I see at least 50 or so hits on my resume each month (can you find it? The search engines certainly have.)

Tip Number Eleven: Put some open source code out there.

A lot of programmers have little routines or full blown applications they have written. Developing an application is tough. Developing a software firm is even tougher. Not only does one have to worry about coding the application, but documenting it, training people on it, selling it, marketing it, keeping track of the books and taxes, figuring out licenses - then updating it and doing it all over again. A lot of times a perfectly fine application stays on some hard drive in the corner of someone’s den.

A LOT OF GOOD IT IS DOING THERE ON THAT SINGLE DRIVE IN THE DEN!

A way around this is to release your application as open source. Documentation for open source applications is important – if they don't know what it does, or how to do it – then they won't even take a shot at it.

But what open source does, is put your code where your mouth is. In my work as a Progress consultant I have seen many people claim to be programmers. By releasing source code you are letting companies know that you CAN develop software and by documenting it you CAN show how software fits into the scheme of the company.

Finally, another little known topic in the software world is that one never makes money by selling the software, but by providing support, customizing it, selling additional documentation, training on it, etc. Amduus Information Works, Inc. has made thousands of dollars from our open source apps. Put it out there!

(Amduus Information Works, Inc. has a CD-ROM that we distribute software on – contribute software and you will get a free CD-ROM if in the United States. We distribute the CD-ROM to Progress User Groups at cost – just email me to find out more.)

Finally, remember MAP. Map stands for Money, Authority, and Pain. To a company, your skills are just like any other asset they have available to them. You want to find people in companies that have Money. These people have the Authority to make a hiring decision, and finally are in some kind of Pain. The Pain is the important part of the equation, people rarely do things for the future, but they will do things to alleviate Pain right now. Find the Pain, and take it away.

About the author: Scott Auge is the founder of Amduus Information Works, Inc. He has been programming in the Progress environment since 1994. His works have included E-Business initiatives and focuses on web applications on UNIX platforms.

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Publishing Information:

Scott Auge publishes this document. I can be reached at sauge@amduus.com.

Currently there are over 750 subscribers and companies that receive this mailing! This mailing is not sent unsolicited, so it is not SPAM.

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Article Submission Information:

Please submit your article in Microsoft Word format or as text. Please include a little bit about yourself for the About the Author paragraph.

Looking for technical articles, *marketing Progress* articles, articles about books relevant to programming/software industry, white papers, etc.

I am looking for work, if you have any knowledge of potential work, I would appreciate hearing from you!

<http://www.amduus.com/Resumes/ScottAuge.html>

Thanks!

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The CD-ROM includes (all source code included):

- Blue Diamond/IRIS – Webspeed alternatives
- Survey Express – easily create text templates of surveys and then have the program generate the web pages automatically
- Service Express – Web based Help Desk.
- The Progress E-Zines, books on learning to program in Webspeed (PDF/Word/HTML)
- THING – simple tool to manipulate database records with
- CMS – a web content management system
- DB Email – Use pop3 to download emails into a Progress database
- Neural Networks – experiments in spam recognition and text message classification
- More!