

WHY ASSET KEEPER PRO

Some of you may be pondering the question, “Why Asset Keeper Pro?”

The heritage of Asset Keeper dates back to 1985, and even though it has gone through a multitude of revisions – the most recent being Asset Keeper, Version 2012 – we’ve known for a few years that our current development platform would not allow us to make the kind of changes that we envision for the future.

Background

For the last 10 years, our development language of choice has been Microsoft’s Visual FoxPro (aka VFP). It has provided us with the framework that has allowed us to do things that has made Asset Keeper unique among fixed asset programs.

In 2007, Microsoft announced that they would no longer update VFP and would discontinue support in 2015. In other words, VFP was announced as an end-of-life product.

Shortly thereafter, most VFP developers started looking for alternative development platforms that could provide the same robust, flexible features that were inherent in VFP. It didn’t take long to find out that such products were few and far between.

We continued with VFP for the next few years since we did not want to make a move that we might regret. We even experimented with a few products to see how they fared in providing the type of software that we are committed to. Nothing even seemed close.

Realbasic (XOJO) to the Rescue

Around 2010, we heard about a product called Realbasic (currently renamed to Xojo) and began investigating its features and how well it might work as an alternative to VFP. For those who have never created commercial software, it takes years to become proficient with a development system to the point that you can create an application that users will rely on for critical data management.

We started creating smaller type applications just to “kick the wheels” and the harder we kicked the more we started to realize that Realbasic was in fact, real!

One of the big pluses in favor of Realbasic was the fact that it was cross-platform. It would be possible to create an Asset Keeper for the Mac, which currently does not exist as far as we know. And lest you think that no one wants it, we get calls all the time for a Mac version of Asset Keeper.

Reinventing Asset Keeper

In early 2011, we were pretty well convinced that Realbasic was the platform we were looking for as a replacement for VFP. However, we quickly realized that Asset

Keeper written in Realbasic would not look like Asset Keeper in VFP. We wanted it to, but it just would not be possible because of the very nature of Realbasic.

So the decision was made that if we couldn't duplicate Asset Keeper, we were going to start from scratch and make it better... in every way possible. We literally started with a blank sheet of paper. On a positive note, it didn't take long to find that, for the most part, what we've already done in Asset Keeper still works. So the heritage of whatever we came up with would definitely be familiar to an Asset Keeper user.

We spent the next few months re-architecting Asset Keeper until we felt like we had a reliable blueprint that would allow us to start the coding process. So in mid 2011, the coding process began. Slowly at first, and pretty soon, we had a half dozen people working on the new Asset Keeper program.

Asset Keeper Pro is Born

It can't be understated, that one of the HUGE advantages of re-engineering any software program is that you can eliminate coding workarounds that are created as a software program evolves over time. When you are finished, you end up with a more streamlined application with much less superfluous gunk that accumulates over the years. Because we wanted to retain the heritage of Asset Keeper in the new product, we settled on Asset Keeper Pro for the resulting product, which to us, means that this really is a Pro version of Asset Keeper.

We found hundreds of places in Asset Keeper where we could not only make it better we could make it more efficient, more reliable, and more robust. We were excited about the possibilities and committed to devoting the resources it would take to bring Asset Keeper Pro to the forefront of the fixed asset market.

During the next couple of years, we spent thousands of hours reproducing screens and features that were necessary to respect the heritage of being derived from Asset Keeper, and added features that were now possible thanks to the new development platform.

In mid 2013, we knew that not only was a better Asset Keeper possible, it was nearing its release date. The only thing left was to convince our current users of the benefits that Asset Keeper Pro provides to them. We are convinced that in a very short time, most users will wonder we didn't do this sooner.