

A Sneak Peek at BBJ's Browser User Interface

Even though many of us pre-date the Internet and Web browsers, it is almost impossible to imagine our personal, professional, and social lives without them. The Internet has dramatically modified the way that we interact with businesses and colleagues, not to mention friends and family. We make travel and hotel reservations online, check our investments and bank accounts, research and purchase products, and more on the Internet via our trusty Web browser. It only seems natural to also run and access our business applications over the Internet via our Web browser. The new Browser User Interface (BUI) in BBJ® 10.0 promises us exactly that!

Below are some BUI FAQs that inquiring minds may want to know.

Q. What is BUI?

A. The concept behind BUI (pronounced: *boo'-ee*) is pretty simple - Visual PRO/5® and BBJ developers can leverage BBJ's integration of the [Google Web Toolkit](#) (GWT) to run their new and existing GUI applications in a browser. The GWT cross-compiled Java-based code, such as BBJ, into optimized JavaScript that automatically works across all major browsers. That means that GUI Business BASIC applications now run in a variety of different browsers (Internet Explorer, Chrome, FireFox, Safari, etc.) on multiple platforms - even smart phones and other Web-capable mobile devices. Instead of the traditional Web Start/Thin Client prerequisite that end users must have a Java JVM installed, BUI bypasses the JVM requirement for many applications and merely requires a JavaScript-enabled Web browser. Certain technologies, like Java ClientObjects, will still require a JVM



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on the client but many applications can eschew this requirement.

Q. What does a BUI application look like?

A. Since GWT maps traditional GUI controls such as buttons, text boxes, dropdown lists, etc. to native browser controls, existing BBJ applications look remarkably similar to their SysGUI counterpart. However, because the application is running in a browser and different browsers sometimes render controls differently, your application's look and feel may be slightly different compared to the look and feel offered by the native operating system.

Additionally, some browser functionality such as File Open/Save dialogs, may not be as full-featured as those offered by an application running in SysGUI. On the other hand, running in a browser definitely improves the native support for HTML formatted content. BASIS plans to offer custom control styling in the future via Cascading Style Sheets (CSS). **Figures 1-3** show the same BBJ GUI application running in three different environments - the traditional SysGUI, the new BUI in Internet Explorer, and BUI in Safari on an iPhone. >>

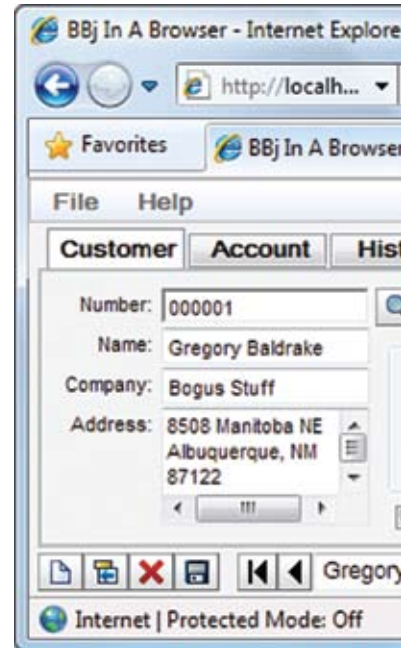


Figure 2. The Customer Maintenance program



Figure 3. The Customer Maintenance program running in BUI

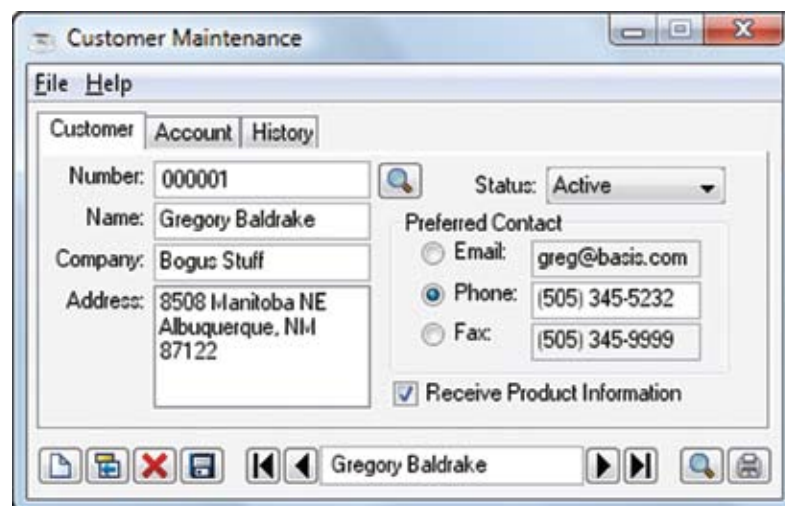
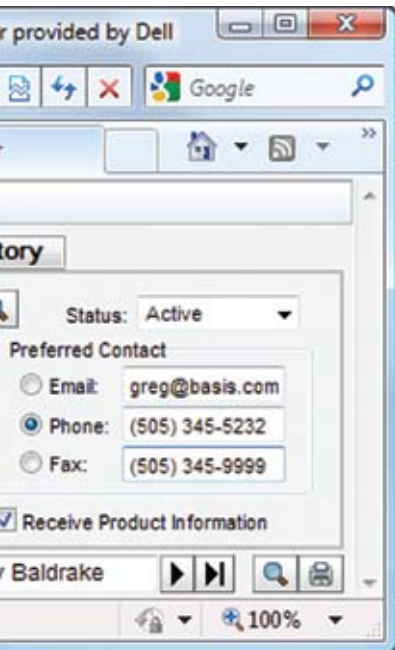


Figure 1. The Customer Maintenance program running in SysGUI



running in BUI in Internet Explorer



in Safari on an iPhone

Q. What changes does BUI require in my Visual PRO/5 or BBJ code?

A. Our goal for BBJ 10.0 is to ensure that your BBJ GUI application will require little or no code changes to run in BUI. We are striving to make the transition as seamless as possible, but there may be cases where a particular paradigm or function does not translate well into the browser environment. Additionally, you may want to reduce 'round trips' as much as possible for some architectural and performance considerations that apply to any Web-based application. For example, you may decide to replace field

level validation with form level validation. For Visual PRO/5 code, you will need to port it to BBJ, which is generally similar to previous efforts to port code from BBxPROGRESSION/4® to PRO/5®. For more on the process, refer to [Converting to BBJ from Earlier Versions of BASIS Products](#) in the online documentation.

Q. Will Barista-developed applications run in BUI?

A. Yes, Barista applications are GUI BBJ applications and we will be testing them extensively so that they will run as well in BUI as any other application.

Q. When can I start coding my application for BUI?

A. There is no time like the present so code your application today in BBJ via Barista, AppBuilder, or by hand coding in the IDE's syntax aware and code completion editor. The Barista Form

Designer even offers various screen layout frames, as shown in **Figure 4**, to ensure that the form will fit on smaller form factor browsers such as a mobile device like an iPhone.

And the \$64M Question....

Q. When can I begin playing with BUI?

A. (This was the number one question we received at TechCon2009 after demonstrating several BBJ applications running in BUI, a true indication of the excitement and promise that BUI offers!) Formal release is scheduled for the end of Q1 2010 but developers were pleased to learn that it would be available for preview in the [BBJ nightly downloads](#) at the beginning of 2010 and fully supported upon release of BBJ 10.0. So anchors aweigh....get ready to float your boat with BUI! ■

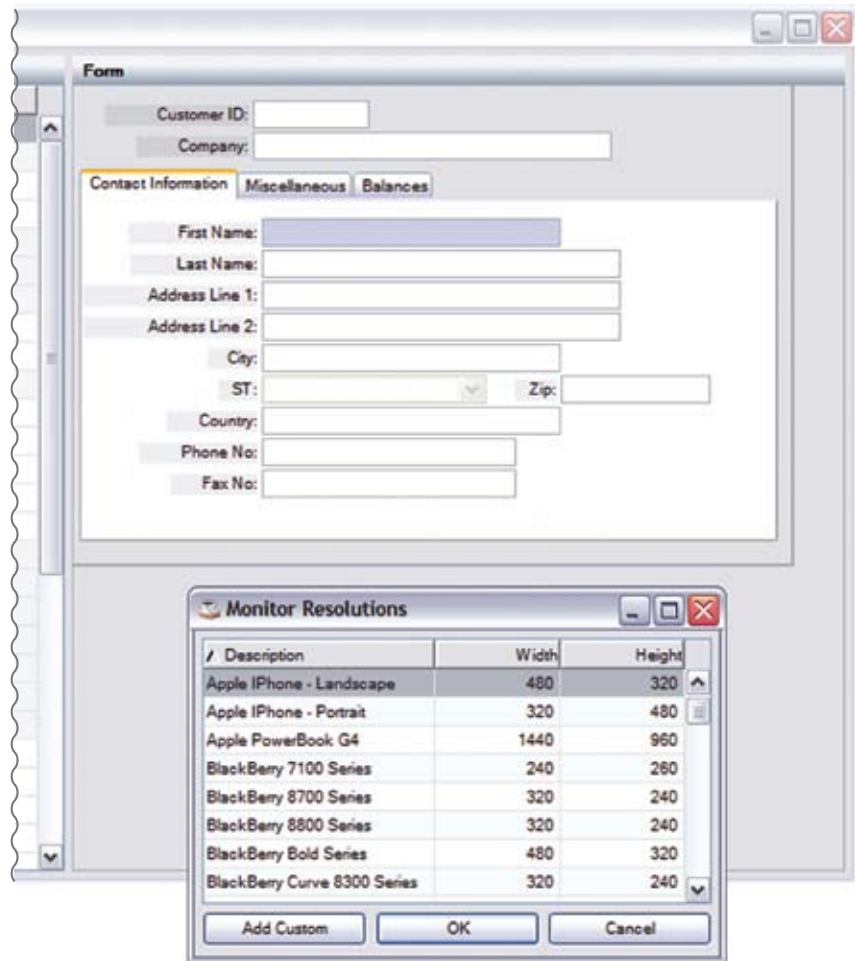


Figure 4. Barista's Form Designer dropdown of various pre-configured and custom-built frames