Built-In VBA Revitalizes Tired Business Processes for Host Users

In organizations dominated by host systems, keeping business processes fresh and relevant is like running a never-ending race. You're constantly scrambling to keep pace with new user expectations—like trying to make host applications as intuitive as the latest iPhone apps—but you never seem to pull ahead. What's needed is a way to quickly do three things: Customize sessions. Automate tasks. And integrate desktop apps, such as Micro Focus® host-access software, with web apps. This brief tells you how the VBA support built into Reflection® Desktop and InfoConnect® Desktop can help.

Time-Tested VBA
While many technologies for customizing, automating, and integrating have come and gone, Microsoft Visual Basic for Applications remains the standard scripting language of choice for handling these tasks. Because both Reflection Desktop and InfoConnect Desktop incorporate this rich development environment, you can continually update the way your users interact with host data—using programming know-how you already possess to increase user productivity.

Build Productivity-Boosting VBA Macros
Even non-developers can have a positive impact on user productivity by creating recorded VBA macros in Reflection and InfoConnect. The macro recorder generates code behind the scenes to automate routine tasks—no VBA-coding skills required. Just load a session, turn on the VBA macro recorder, perform necessary actions in your host application, and then stop recording.

When you're done recording, you can make it easy for users to run the recorded macros. For example, you can add a button to the Reflection or InfoConnect ribbon using drag-and-drop tools, remap a key or create a hotspot to run the macro, or use Events to automatically trigger recorded actions when a particular condition is encountered on the host screen.

Give Green Screens a Modern Makeover
Using built-in VBA, you can give the outdated green screens a fresh new look-and-feel. In fact, you can make them as easy to use as Windows applications. For example, you can:

- Hide the complexity of your host application by creating intuitive dialog boxes for sending and receiving host information.
- Launch simultaneous emulation sessions and exchange data between two different host applications.
- Optimize the runtime experience for users by showing/hiding user-interface options or loading custom settings.

Reflection at a Glance

- **Connectivity:** Connect desktop and mobile users to legacy host data banks.
- **Ease of Use:** Make host apps as easy to use as Office apps.
- **Manageability:** Manage host sessions with ease.
- **Security:** Use layers of security to shield data in motion and at rest.

Product Flyer
Reflection Desktop
InfoConnect Desktop

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If you're a programmer familiar with Microsoft Office VBA, you can immediately take full advantage of VBA’s powerful, integrated environment in Reflection and InfoConnect:

- Graphic forms and a forms toolbox that allow you to create custom dialog boxes using visual drag-and-drop techniques.
- A wide range of enhanced debugging tools for testing and developing code.
- Smart editing features, such as intellisense, that assist in code creation.

Both Reflection and InfoConnect also provide online help that includes samples of the object model, syntax, and how to use specific commands.

Add Host Data to Web and Windows Apps
Using built-in VBA, you can free up your valuable host data for new uses.

In the Windows-based emulation world, VBA provides a seamless link to the objects required to integrate mainframe data with other applications. For example, it lets you:

- Transmit text from a Word document to your host application.
- Automatically build an Excel spreadsheet from host data in table format.
- Log when a user displays unredacted credit card numbers for PCI DSS compliance purposes.

- Log which version of TLS is being used as sessions are opened.
- Automatically upgrade sessions to more secure encryption in real time.

You can also integrate internal and external web applications (e.g., apps that provide real-time weather data, location/map data, and more) with host applications to improve user productivity.

For example, imagine a process that requires validation of customer contact information on a green screen before a transaction on the host can be completed. Typically, the validation process is a manual task that was not built into the green-screen application. Web-based apps, however, are adept at providing and validating location-based data. With built-in VBA, you can build a workflow that integrates host and web apps to ensure the integrity of customer location data. You can even automate interactions with web applications via Reflection and InfoConnect web controls.

Build New Applications with .NET API
As modern Windows applications, Reflection and InfoConnect also support powerful .NET APIs that leverage all the benefits of the .NET platform—security, scalability, and faster application development. Developers familiar with .NET concepts and tools like Visual Studio .NET can quickly create applications, scripts, and macros that use advanced features available in Reflection and InfoConnect, including web controls, tabs for interacting with multiple host applications, inherent .NET security, integration into Visual Studio for Office (VSTO) desktop applications, and more.
Micro Focus Consulting Services
For professional assistance developing solutions to automate business processes involving your key applications, turn to Micro Focus Consulting. Our highly experienced team can save you time and money, as well as any associated risk, as you modernize your systems. Micro Focus consultants can review your environment and determine the best approach to automating, customizing, and integrating processes according to your specific requirements.

Making Life Easier for IT
The integration of VBA into the Reflection and InfoConnect product lines is consistent with our long-standing business philosophy of offering products that are easy for IT to deploy, customize, and support. Our support for VBA allows you to automate and customize Reflection and InfoConnect products using your existing VBA expertise.
“We’re very excited that Reflection is enabled with VBA. We believe this technology is a perfect fit for host-access products, offering customers the tools they need to reduce management burden and costs, while providing optimal access to and integration of host data.”

PAUL GROSS
Vice President, DeveloperTools Division
Microsoft