

# Peter Fox

On-line version of this CV at [vulpeculox.net/misc/me/cv.htm](http://vulpeculox.net/misc/me/cv.htm)

**Analyst, programmer, web developer, technical author for more than 30 years.**

## Quick suitability check

All-round problem solver rather than head-down programmer.

Place	Travelling to: Essex, City, South Suffolk • Working from home
Time	Working to suit demand • Longterm relationships
Yes	Applications, user interface, back-end • Whole project implementation
No	.NET, VB, MSoffice • Front-end focus and graphic design • Agile

## Summary

Experienced odd-job man who can discover the real business or technical problem then use appropriate technologies to deliver a robust solution. I've been using the WAMP/LAMP stack for many years. Autumn 2014 is when I'm getting to grips with the MEAN stack.

## Programming

Many examples of programming using these technologies are on-line at [vulpeculox.net/misc/index.htm](http://vulpeculox.net/misc/index.htm)

Web client (HTML, CSS, Javascript, DOM, jQuery, AJAX, IndexedDB, localStorage.)

Web server (PHP, MySQL, node.js)

Delphi/Pascal

AutoHotkey

## Industries

Financial services (various)

NHS primary care

Manufacturing

Inventory management

Quality systems

Clinical governance

## Activities

Business analysis and consulting

Design and programming

Web development

Technical authoring

Training and technical support

## Examples

PHP, testing : <http://vulpeculox.net/misc/php/index.htm>

Javascript, jQuery : <http://vulpeculox.net/misc/jsiq/headHolder/index.htm>

Javascript, TDD : <http://vulpeculox.net/day/index.htm>

MySQL, User documentation : <http://vulpeculox.net/misc/db/index.htm>

UI design : <http://vulpeculox.net/bbcradio/index.htm>

## Skills

### Web technologies

**2014-2015** : Hammering away at Javascript front-end and back-end. Currently developing a 5000+ line library for handling dates the way humans use them. This runs in browser or server (node.js) and involves TDD, build automation, and various layers of documentation. This is very much OO/functional rather than playing with DOM effects.

**PHP** and **MySQL** on **Apache**. More than **ten years** of **object oriented** design and programming during which:

- I've developed two **PHP frameworks** and extensive libraries and development tools.
- I've developed systems with up to 200 screens and 20 tables.
- I've tried, but been left disappointed, a number of MVC and widget frameworks.
- Used and hacked **Wordpress** to set up some small sites.
- **2004 2005** : **PHP** and **MySQL** Large system for distributed management for Primary ocular care. 200 screens, 25 tables
- **2006 2010** : **PHP** and **MySQL** 70 page manufacturing/stores/sales system
- **2008 2009** : **PHP** and **MySQL** Database sanitizing prototype. ~17K lines. 25 screens  
Screen shots. (See
- **2009** : **PHP** and **MySQL** Cognologs: A publicly accessible selfpaced tutorial. See for yourself
- **2010** : **PHP, MySQL, AJAX** 25 'page' personnel time recording system
- **2011** : **PHP, Javascript, jQuery, HTML5, CSS** Published tools and code on website. In-place HTML editing, jQuery plugin, PHP unit test and dump tools. CSS framework for documentation writing.
- **2012** : **Javascript, jQuery, HTML5** Javascript library for local and remote true object storage. From XML data to a better UI using HTML5-localStorage, javascript, jQuery for displaying and memorising BBC radio programmes. HTML5-indexedDB (ie local data) for simple record keeping.

I've been coding with the ever-moving target of frontend web technologies since **1996**.

- Raw **HTML** including working with the **DOM**, **XPATH** etc.
- Raw **CSS, Javascript, AJAX**, (Including inventing a preAjax technique)
- **jQuery** is now my frontend framework of choice.

### Traditional application programming

In the last dozen years **Delphi** and more recently **Free Pascal/Lazarus** has been my main programming language for traditional desktop applications.

- Applications with up to 40 screens, 25 tables and 20K lines.
- Analysis, design, build and longterm support of businesscritical applications.
- New applications are being built using Free Pascal for crossplatform support
- **2010 2011** : **Delphi** Consumer application ~25K lines
- **2010 2011** : **Free Pascal/Lazarus** Universal updater ~7K lines

### Miscellaneous programming

Over the years I've coded in assembler, BASICs, spreadsheet scripting, DOS batch files, Java and various proprietary systems.

- **2010 2011** : **Autohotkey** FOSS accenting program. Download to get source

Peter Fox - Analyst, programmer, web-developer, tech-author

- **2011** : **Autohotkey** Automating Sage accounts interfacing

## **Before, after and beyond code**

In all of the above

- I've taken the original ideas or rough specification and turned them into a design.
- Developed and proved the necessary techniques and tools
- Coded, tested, implemented and documented
- Combined technologies as appropriate

## **Data**

Born : 1957  
Citizenship : UK  
Email : **work14@vulpeculox.net**  
Phone : (01376) 517206  
Location : **Witham, Essex**  
Engineering degree : BSc Hons

Working freelance since 1983

Few clients over a long period with bursts, lulls, occasional support calls and policy chats. A long term relationship builds trust and the opportunity to do little bits of work efficiently and quickly.

## Experience

### Freelance 2000 present

*In contrast to the previous era (see below), Windows is now established and networking is opening up the possibility of clientserver applications. As businesses and professionals start to become 'connected' access to systems via a web browser makes widearea cooperation, management and clerical efficiencies possible.*

<b>Portfolio valuations</b>  <b>1998 2009</b>  <b>Delphi, Paradox database, SQL</b>	Analysis, design, implementation, ongoing development of a portfolio valuation system. This quadrupled efficiency as well as producing a much superior and more flexible product. Amongst other things this involved decoding and validating a number of pricefeeds and automating the billing and payments system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• This application embodied the complete scope of the client's operations and was therefore missioncritical.</li><li>• Note the long association with this project.</li></ul>
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<b>Manufacturing database</b>  <b>2007 2010</b>  <b>PHP, MySQL, AJAX</b>	Reengineering huge spreadsheets for marketing, sales, parts, stock, purchasing, WIP etc. as a clientserver, multisite, useroriented system. The design was constrained by the need to maintain a working system through an extended transition period.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Missioncritical system</li><li>• My original design was dismissed by the client who was adamant he knew how it should be done. Fortunately I left the necessary hooks in for when he began to realise the difference between a manager's spreadsheet and a production information system.</li><li>• Ongoing close contact with the client allowed me to get into details of their particular ways of working in order to optimise their systems.</li></ul>
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<p><b>Primary ocular care</b></p> <p><b>2003 2007</b></p> <p><b>PHP, MySQL, management systems consulting and implementation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consult, analysis, design, implement of a number of paperbased patient referral systems.</li> <li>• Complete rethink of the methods of quality assurance including monitoring and selfmonitoring of independent clinicians; ensuring dataflows work between partners; formal clinical and clerical protocols; and replacing unsuitable and ineffective clinical governance methods with simple, focussed ones.</li> <li>• User guides, specifications, formal protocols for modernised referral schemes.</li> <li>• Development of a 200page distributed management system for Primary Ocular Care in PHP/MySQL</li> <li>• Desktop wizard for making referrals in Delphi.</li> <li>• Desktop selfaudit system for Primary Care Trusts in Delphi 2005</li> <li>• Webbased selfaudit system for Primary Care Trusts in PHP</li> </ul>
<p>A simple "design us a form" job turned into a complete rethink of the management of primary ocular care. (High St. optometrists, GPs, hospitals, consultants and Primary Care Trusts). A classic case of the disorganised (and unsafe) being taken in hand by an experienced business analyst.</p>	

<b>Various</b>	
<b>2004 Delphi</b>	Physiotherapy clinic appointments and insurance claim system
<b>2004 Delphi</b>	Vets appointments, stock and record system
<b>2009 Code igniter</b>	Small contact management application

## Freelance 80s and 90s

*From the days when the twin floppy disc drives really needed two people to lift it, through the time when the internet was for the geeks and networking meant limited runs of coax, to ubiquitous Windows networks with dialup internet access.*

### Stockbroking / Financial services

- Tech support. Including missioncritical local networking.
- Office systems consultancy
- Design, build and implement important oneoff projects against the clock

Over 15 years of changing technology and business growth my job was to get more out of existing systems and judge the time to change. A very handson role based on the premise that I could quickly glue systems and feeds together to deliver improvements or specific projects.

### Earthmoving

- DOS multiuser databases

Over 12 years, (the original system lasted more than 14 years) I did all the analysis, design, build, daytoday support, and ongoing development for a bespoke tyres database and complete stores system.

### **Various**

- Scientific inventory management
- French language teaching system
- Odd smallbusiness databases

Before Windows everything happened in DOS with extremely limited memory, and of course much slower computers. A high degree of skill was required to optimise programs.

## **A bit unusual**

*I belong in the pigeonhole for people who can't be pigeonholed.*

### **Breadth and maturity**

It is rare for a problem to come fully understood and it is also rare for a 'fully specified' solution to be optimal. Further, it is quite likely that not much thought has gone into the connections, implications and motivations required to make the project a worthwhile success. I have had to abandon a job saying "call me when you have got somebody who can read and write in your warehouse." The positive side of this is showing the client where bonus results can be had by a little rethink.

Long experience develops

- a good understanding of character
- the ability to get on with people
- good communication skills
- being able to pick up the client's environment and specific problems
- having the ability to envision all the ramifications of a project

Of course if you've done 35 years of programming from assembler to XPATH, microprocessors to webservers, you know how to code frugally, reliably, efficiently and suitably documented. Also you tend to know what are the most suitable tools for any job often involving a bunch of methods.

### **Patience and flexibility**

Fools rush in where angels fear to tread is an apt motto for a system developer. First thoughts are quite likely to be optimistic, first design is quite likely to miss important facets. Obviously there are small projects with well understood parameters, but even with say a simple web page there can be difficulties with sourcing materials, finding people committed to maintaining it not to mention lack of understanding of what's important and what impression is conveyed to the reader.

'Get it right first time' is a coder's motto. This is fine in a tightly controlled environment with plenty of test data and limited scope but that is often a tall order. Sometimes systems need the last 20% to be developed with the benefit of everyone's experience. This may take a long time in fits and starts.

It may be necessary to adopt new technology or invent it. There is a fine judgement to be made between useful investment of time and effort and wasting time changing horses in midstream.

## Other projects

I've been lucky to have had the spare time to invent, research and write.

- AX: Incredibly simple system for universal accents written in AutoHotkey  
<http://vulpeculox.net/ax>
- Data bender: System for sanitising databases to allow safe exporting of data. <http://vulpeculox.net/ax>
- D/a/y: API for dealing with dates such as 'Notknown', 'Before we started counting' and 'May 2010' <http://vulpeculox.net/ax>
- Treems: Remote electronic working. "Social networking is like having the works canteen without the works" <http://vulpeculox.net/ax>
- 12 Rs: There are 12 Rs (and 12 maturities) not just 3. <http://vulpeculox.net/ax>
- Quality: BadGoodBest model of clinical governance applicable to much more. <http://vulpeculox.net/ob>
- Better File Manager: Soon to be released desktop application for the less technically minded. <http://vulpeculox.net/BFM>
- Disgust with badly designed web pages lead me to write Javascript/Greasemonkey reformatting scripts for BBC radio <http://vulpeculox.net/misc/radio> and National Rail Enquiries . <http://vulpeculox.net/misc/rail>

## Doing other things

- Visit my web site <http://vulpeculox.net> for lots on my dozen books, cycling, home-made songs and much other mischief.
- For many years in the 80s and 90s I was chairman of Tiptree Artistic Roller Skating Club.