

# Appeon Q&A: Appeon 6.5 For PowerBuilder

By Armeen Mazda



Armeen Mazda was a key member of the initial team that founded Appeon back in 1999 and is currently the CEO & President. Armeen has worked with Sybase and PowerBuilder technologies since 2000 and served various roles in Appeon, including Product Management, Business Development, and Operations. Armeen is a graduate of the Haas School of Business at U.C. Berkeley and holds 5 U.S. patents in the area of Rich Internet Application (RIA) technologies. Armeen can be reached at [armeen.mazda@appeon.com](mailto:armeen.mazda@appeon.com).

After ten good years of Appeon, the 6.5 release of the product has fully progressed through its early years and adolescence to become one of the most radical products available designed to enable developers to build web applications with 4GL-level productivity and 4GL-style rich UIs. One decade on and with closer proximity to Sybase than ever before, Appeon technologies are now broader and more interoperable than at any time in the past. ISUG Technical Journal speaks to Armeen Mazda to try and determine why he feels his company's automation-focused developer technologies are worth taking a closer look at.

**Q** Let's kick straight off with the product launch; tell us what's new in your 6.5 release and what new features customers will experience as their first touchpoint with the technology when they start using it?

**A** Well, our key focus has been staying relevant with the latest advancements in technology and Sybase direction. As such, Appeon 6.5 supports PB 12, we have expanded our dual .NET and Java deployment to also include JBoss server, and of course making sure Appeon is the highest-performance web-deployment solution for PB with our new 64-bit architecture.

**Q** Appeon 6.5 seems to have been built for convenience with new features such as *SaveAs PDF* command, which works without installing any client-side PDF Printer. Has the ease of use factor governed much of your recent augmentations to the product.

**A** Ease of use is definitely key, especially for the web users. The whole point of going to the web is to not be bothered with a heavy client footprint. This is why we designed our PDF printing, web services, and other features to not require additional installations at the client. In addition, we are now taking advantage of an IE 8 browser feature such that web users no longer require Administrator privileges on the client machine.

**Q** You are now supporting open source JBoss as your application server of choice. Why did you do this and what is your company's wider opinion on FOSS and Java Enterprise Edition?

**A** Well to be honest, for the last several years all you hear is .NET and .NET, which is why Appeon offers dual .NET and Java deployment from one single Appeon project code base. However, recently we have seen

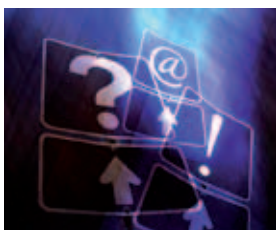
renewed interest in Java and especially open-source. I think what has been driving this is that Java and open-source stacks have become easier to use and offer an alternate low cost stack. This is especially important for software vendors that would effectively cut themselves out of the market if they limited to just one stack, for example .NET.

**Q** Appeon likes to talk about its approach to usability and user friendliness with regard to convenience and flexibility of developer’s configuration and deployment tasks. Tell us more about how you carry this methodology through your product development cycles.

**A** Usability and user friendliness can be quite subjective. But the governing principles at Appeon have been to automate as much as possible so the developer does less work. Anything that requires developer intervention... well guide the user through that process and validate each step of the way to avoid any errors. So if you look at the Appeon product you will see that there are “wizards” all over the place, an extensive error checking system, tools to automatically analyze the web project for any problems, and we have written a nice tutorial to guide newbies through this entire process.

**Q** Appeon for PowerBuilder (APB) is always specifically described as an “add-on” for PowerBuilder. How do you work in conjunction with Sybase to ensure that you follow a development path that is accurately and productively aligned to the tool itself?

**A** Appeon is a product that is marketed, sold, and supported by Sybase. When Sybase puts their name on it there are stringent requirements to meet. So what many people don’t realize is that Appeon goes through similar release process as other Sybase products, and the PB product manager also handles the product management of Appeon. The fact that PB and Appeon are effectively under the same roof helps us to stay aligned now and in the future.



**Q** Where does your company’s technical pedigree come from in terms of enterprise level Java and the .NET web platform?

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**A** Chairman Mao. He had some smart genes and made some smart offsprings. We hired them all!

**Q** You talk about developer skills and productivity in the context of Appeon 6.5’s ability to work with existing technologies and leverage them more effectively – tell us how your product does this so intelligently.

**A** The formula is quite simple, actually. You take one of the most productive 4GL C/S tools and enable it to compile a web application at the click of a button... and you’ve got yourself a RAD web platform on steroids! It sounds like a simple idea but actually very difficult and costly to execute. Appeon has spent over a decade replicating all the goodies of PB for the web architecture. We have done this more extensively than any other company in the world, so much so that we are probably the only solution that can automatically compile a PB application to the web without having to “refactor” your application. For those not familiar with this term, refactoring is basically like saying rewrite your app!

**About Appeon**

Appeon is the industry leader in providing PowerBuilder-based development products and IT outsourcing services to global customers.

**Appeon for PowerBuilder** – “the most productive platform” to deploy PowerBuilder applications to J2EE and .NET on the web with over 1,200 companies in 60 countries worldwide choosing Appeon for PowerBuilder for web conversion and development of their mission critical web applications. Appeon for PowerBuilder deploys existing PowerBuilder client/server applications to the web, while maintaining the look, feel and functionality of the original application. No major rearchitecting is required. Customers can interact with their applications in the way to which they’re accustomed and businesses leverage their existing software and developer resources.

**Appeon Professional Services** – takes a partnership approach with its clients, forging long-lasting relationships to not only develop but also maintain its software applications, thereby empowering its customers to better focus on improving and expanding their core business.

*For more information, please visit : [www.appeon.com](http://www.appeon.com)*

