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REAL Software Wednesday released REALbasic 5.5 Professional Edition, which enables developers to compile Visual Basic source code under Linux.

"Linux on the desktop has been a hot topic," said REAL President/CEO Geoff Perlman. "What's been missing are the applications. There haven't been many good tools for creating desktop software."

Perlman said this is the first commercial rapid application development product to offer a way to migrate existing Visual Basic applications to a Linux environment. "The biggest benefit to Linux users is that this product enables a great parity between Linux and Windows," he said.

The Professional Edition includes features to support both Linux desktop and server applications, for database server connectivity, and team development capabilities not found in the standard product. A remote debugging feature allows an application designed for Linux to be debugged through either the Windows or Macintosh OS X IDE.

"With remote debugging on, say, Windows, you can compile and save your application to a Linux desktop, run it, and debug back in Windows," Perlman said.

REALbasic 5.5 supports Linux for x86 platforms running either Red Hat Enterprise Linux or SUSE. Other Linux distros may work if the GTK +2.0 and CUPS libraries are installed.

Although there is currently no Linux IDE with the Pro product, there are plans to release one later this year, Perlman said. REAL Software also has plans to release the source to the plug-ins when it releases the Linux IDE. "We are not sure about what parts of the Linux version will be released to the open source community," Perlman said. "Parts of the product already are open source, like the Quesa 3D graphics and GDK libraries. And we contributed back to the open source community on those projects."

Features new to 5.5 include the VB Project Converter, which allows users to migrate tables, forms, and code to REALbasic, and SOAP support. XML standards are supported via XML parser and generator. Additional API support includes DOM level 2 support, Xpath, XSLT, namespace support, document creating, and event-based parsing.

Greater SQL-92 compliance with regard to SELECT statements has been added in addition to native access to Oracle 8i and 9i on Windows and Mac, but not yet for Linux. Current Linux DB support is for Postgres only; MySQL will soon be supported as well. There are plans to release additional database plug-ins over the next few months, the company said.

REALbasic Pro retails for \$400. A \$100 standard edition is also available, but it does not have full Linux portability. Both are available from the [REAL Software Web site](#). The company said the new version will be in the reseller channel within two weeks.

Current users of REALbasic 5.0 Pro can upgrade for \$170, and users of earlier versions for \$200. Other upgrade plans are available at [different price points](#). A free trial version of the software is available at [from REAL Software](#).

Links

1. "REAL Software Web site" - <http://www.realbasic.com/store/>
2. "different price points" - <http://www.realsoftware.com/realbasic/>
3. " from REAL Software." - <http://www.realsoftware.com/demo>

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