



Developing Agility

A Quarterly Newsletter for Unisys EAE and Agile Business Suite Customers

December 2013

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AB Suite 4.0 Is Here!

By Brian Herkalo, Acting Vice President, ClearPath and Agile Business Suite, Unisys TCIS



Agile Business Suite (AB Suite) 4.0 has been released! In the May 2013 issue of Developing Agility, we previewed all of the great things you could expect in AB Suite 4.0, and now the new release is available and ready to take your development efforts to new heights.

AB Suite 4.0 is packed with a wide array of new and enhanced functionality – all designed to help you greatly improve the efficiency and effectiveness of your developers. Increasing developer productivity has always been a focal point of every new version of AB Suite, and 4.0 is no exception. For example, this release makes it easier than ever to define the information you wish to view in a pane, so you have everything you need to make a change readily at hand.

And because it's based on Microsoft® Visual Studio®, AB Suite is quick to learn and easy to use for Enterprise Application Environment (EAE) experts and new members of your development team alike.

For a closer look at some of the key features in AB Suite 4.0, be sure to check out this issue's Engineering Corner article.

The Cornerstone of Your Apps – and Ours

When we say that AB Suite 4.0 is designed to deliver better productivity and enhanced tools, it means our own development teams will benefit just as much as yours. We believe in what AB Suite has to offer so much that we have made it the cornerstone of many of our own vertical solutions, such as the Unisys Financial Services System (UFSS), Urbis core banking solution, and Unisys Voice Messaging Solution (UVMS). >>



We're pleased to see that our customers are just as committed to AB Suite, and that they greatly appreciate the powerful, mission-critical applications it can help them build. Plus, they're finding it easy to update from one AB Suite release to the next, which gives them faster access to the newest features and benefits. In fact, organizations now have the ability to jump right to 4.0 from any previous AB Suite release, making it that much simpler to benefit from what each release of the software has to offer.

And as the momentum behind AB Suite builds from release 4.0 and beyond, we expect that many more EAE users will plan and execute their migration projects in 2014. We offer a balanced services approach to aid in these efforts and are more than happy to guide you and your team through the necessary testing, learning, and related migration activities.

User Input Equals a Better Release

AB Suite 4.0 is coming to you about a year after 3.0. The timing between 3.0 and 4.0 represents our ideal release-to-release window of 12 to 15 months. Our goal is to continue delivering a new AB Suite release within this timeframe going forward.

Not only does this approach provide us with ample time to properly plan, build, and test the new software – it also allows us to engage the AB Suite user community about what they'd like to see in future releases.

In fact, many of the enhancements in AB Suite 4.0 are the direct result of a user-submitted New Feature Suggestion (NFS). Between the NFSs and participation of many users in the [AB Suite 4.0 field test](#), we received invaluable input that greatly helped us shape the new release.

A sincere thank you to anyone who entered an NFS or participated in the 4.0 field test – AB Suite 4.0 is better and richer because of your time and input.

I wish everyone the utmost success with AB Suite 4.0. And please, do not hesitate to share your experiences with the software by emailing us at ABSuite@unisys.com.



EAE/AB Suite Symposium 2013 Summary

By Diane McGonigle, AB Suite Migration Manager, Unisys TCIS



Mark your calendars for October 13-15, 2014, and budget for travel to Dallas, Texas. Why? Because Universe 2.0 and the **second** annual Symposium for Agile Business Suite and EAE customers are already on the calendar. We hope to see all of you there!

All App Dev – All the Time

The inaugural Symposium (held in September 2013) was 100% dedicated to topics of particular interest to the AB Suite and EAE communities. Held in parallel with the [2013 Universe Conference](#), our goal for the meeting was to inform attendees about what's currently available in the products, what's in store for upcoming releases, and our vision for the future of AB Suite.

By all accounts, the first annual Symposium was a success. Customers from around the globe had the opportunity to network with peers, share experiences using the development tools, and learn from members of Unisys engineering, support, marketing, and technical support teams. In total, there were 14 AB Suite/EAE-specific presentations, including many live demos, over two full days. Topics ranged from the new EAE Version Control and external interfaces to developer best practices and a preview of future releases.

Here's what some of the attendees had to say about the Symposium:

“Great conference and updates on the AB Suite product line and Unisys commitment to making it better.” – Mark Ahmann, TIES

“I came away with techniques that we can begin to use immediately, as well as a good feeling for where the product is headed. All in all, a great expenditure of time.” – Glen Bridge, TDLR

“This was the best conference I have attended. I'm looking forward to attending next year.”

– Melissa Donaldson, City of Thomasville

A special highlight of the conference was the presentation given by Scott Minkel, Vice President of Information Services, Brian Terry, Senior Programmer

Analyst, and Jim Sharman, Manager, Core Applications, West Coast, from United Fire Group (UFG). Scott shared background information on UFG, their 35+ year history with Unisys, and how they use EAE and AB Suite to develop their core applications. Then Brian and Jim talked about the company's experience using ClearPath ePortal with AB Suite applications. Learn more about UFG at its [web site](#) and [read](#) about how it uses AB Suite in a new case study.

Your Presence is Priceless

The registration fee was waived for the first Symposium. Our requested “payment” was simple – active participation by all attendees. In fact, we started the meeting by urging everyone to get involved: ask questions, tell us what you're thinking, attend every session (or as many as possible), and have fun! We were happy that so many of you took us up on the offer – and we hope even more of you will be able to attend the next Symposium, which is scheduled for October 13-15, 2014, in Dallas, Texas.

We're already planning to make next year's Symposium even better based on attendee feedback, including trying to schedule more presentations from the user community. Who's ready to raise their hand to be a presenter next year? [Send me a note](#) if you're thinking about it and let's collaborate!

Many thanks to our presenters, including Scott, Brian, and Jim from UFG, Unisys architects Grant McCauley and Andrew Lee, consulting engineer Jim Nichols, and Maarten Schneider, EAE and AB Suite Worldwide Marketing Manager.

And most of all, thanks to all those who attended. Your ongoing support and invaluable input are always very much appreciated.



AB Suite and Team Foundation Server: A Great Combination

By Maarten Schneider, Worldwide Marketing Manager, Enterprise Application Environment and Agile Business Suite, Unisys TCIS



A transparent development process is a critical requirement for a highly productive development team.

And that's just one of the many reasons why developers are turning to Microsoft Team Foundation Server (TFS). The collaboration platform at the core of Microsoft's Application Lifecycle Management (ALM) solution, TFS can be used with C# development projects, or any other language within the Visual Studio environment, to manage all aspects of the software development process – from understanding customer needs through priorities setting, code design, and implementation to deployment.

TFS was first integrated with Agile Business Suite in release 3.0, back in November 2012. And, we're happy to announce that AB Suite Release 4.0 has been fully qualified with TFS 2012.

Together, AB Suite 4.0 and TFS 2012 put a new set of standard project management tools and processes into the hands of AB Suite developers and project managers. It can provide real-time insight into the progress of a project, the resources that have already been allocated, what resources are still available, and the critical path for a specific release.

Because all of this information is readily available to everyone involved in the project, TFS supports easy collaboration between stakeholders, project leads, and developers. And for CIOs and business managers, TFS includes the ability to create dashboards for overall, high-level project insight.

Moreover, TFS allows business users to send bug reports or new requirement/feature requests to the software development team, which can then translate these into specific work items with an appropriate priority. Plus, anyone who has asked for a new feature or reported a bug can keep tabs on the development process and quickly communicate additional information about their request.

TFS can also help your team organize its project and development work differently. For example, you can use TFS to start with the implementation of an agile approach with or without daily standups.

In addition, the integration between AB Suite and TFS gives you the opportunity to use Team Explorer, the client interface to TFS. This will allow your team to access the "My Work" directory, which lists out all in-progress work and pending tasks. Aside from serving as the main interface to work items, Team Explorer is also the starting point for collaboration between team members, project leaders, and other stakeholders. And, it provides a link to Pending Changes and the Source Control Explorer functions.

TFS is covered by the MSDN subscription for Visual Studio, which we advise all AB Suite shops to purchase. This is similar to the Select Software Update (SSU) Subscription we suggest AB Suite users have.

Making the Move to TFS

Many EAE development teams have created their own project management tools or used other available solutions, such as EAE Version Control. TFS integration is another great incentive for you to make the move to AB Suite. Taking advantage of TFS version control capabilities as a part of your migration can be a smart first step toward a phased implementation of full ALM capabilities.

And if you're already using TFS for your .NET development efforts, you'll be able to standardize your AB Suite projects and use the same TFS approaches, reports, etc. It's just one more way you can benefit by moving to AB Suite.

As always, it is not only the tool, but also the way the tool is used that creates the best results. And for that, you can turn to the team of knowledgeable Unisys consultants. They have the expertise required to help you effectively use TFS in your AB Suite environment and reap the enormous productivity benefits it can deliver.

If you have any questions about how to put TFS to work in your organization, please send an email to ABSuite@unisys.com



Changes to the AB Suite Support Release Process

By Sandeep Mahajan, AB Suite Process Architect, Unisys TCIS/GTC



Along with the new Agile Business Suite 4.0 release, we've put an updated support release structure in place with the goal of getting higher-quality Fault resolutions delivered more quickly to all customers – and streamlining engineering processes at the same time.

There will still be Interim Correction (IC) Releases for AB Suite 4.0, but what goes into an IC Release is changing. Details about the new support release process can be found in the “Unisys Agile Business Suite Release and Support Plan” document on the [Unisys support web site](#). If you do not have access to the site, you may request a copy from ABSuite@unisys.com.

Release Basics

Let me take a moment to review some terminology about releases.

- A Major Release generally contains new features and capabilities, as well as Fault resolutions. AB Suite 3.0 and 4.0 are examples of Major Releases.
- An IC Release is the patch mechanism for AB Suite. IC Releases may be issued to address Faults that prevent a customer's operational use of the software to a degree that renders it unusable – and does not have an existing workaround. The frequency will be determined by Unisys. Customers may request that a Fault resolution be included in a future IC Release, but Unisys determines specific IC Release content. IC 4.0.1001 and 4.0.1002 indicate how upcoming IC releases will be identified.

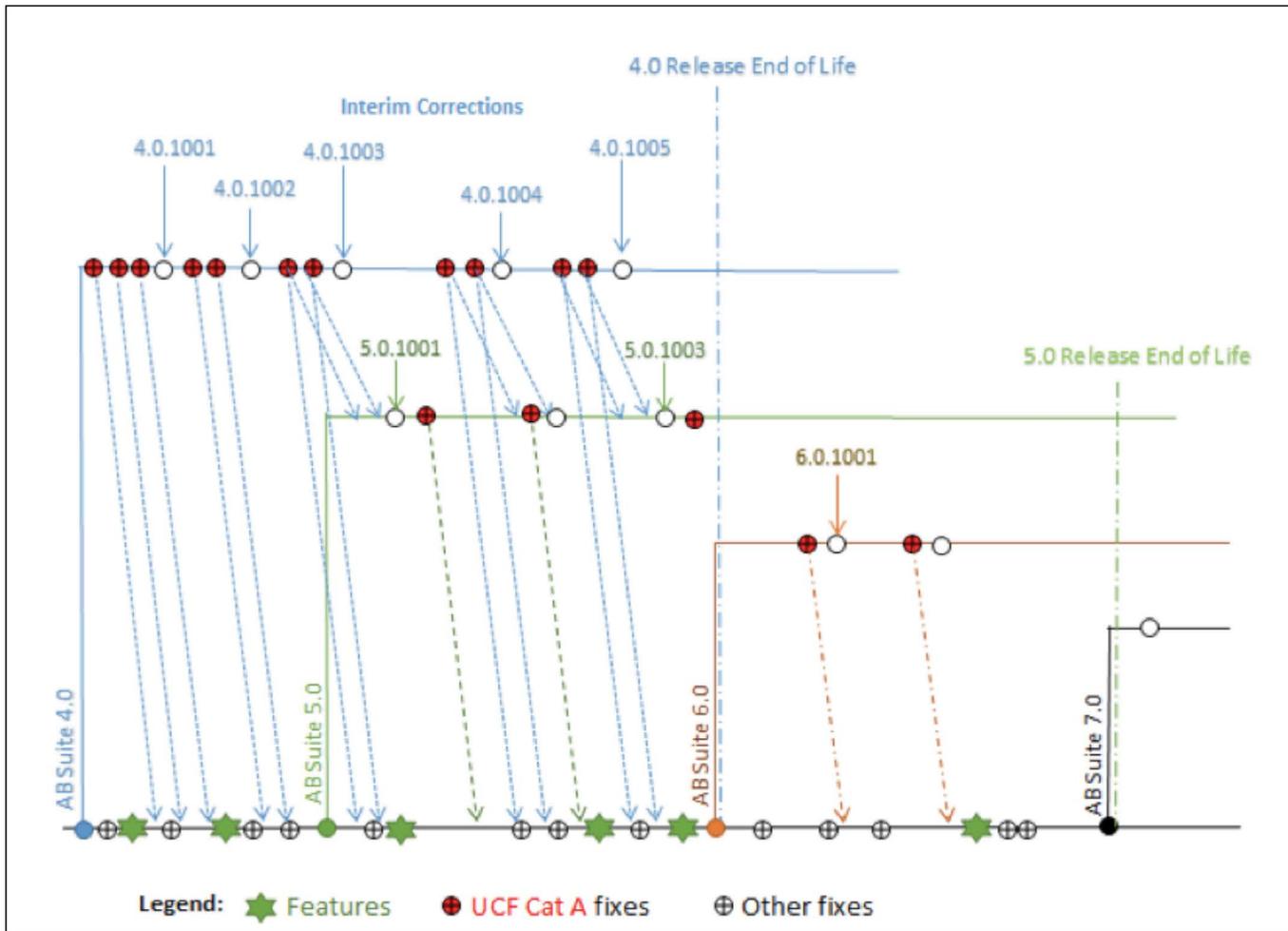
Why Change?

Our goal is to achieve a 12-15 month Major Release cycle for AB Suite. AB Suite 3.0 was released in November 2012, and now 4.0 will come to you in December 2013. This means that fixes should be available to you through a Major Release every 12-15 months – along with the new features and documentation.

IC Releases are cumulative in nature – so when your organization installs the latest IC Release, it will benefit by getting the fixes delivered in all previous IC Releases for a given Major Release. With the new process, Fault resolutions will be available sooner for all organizations on a supported release. We will no longer publish an IC schedule because IC Releases will be issued as frequently as needed – as determined by Unisys. Figure 1 on the following page shows an example of how the process will work as of the 4.0 Release.

We believe this change can make it easier for organizations to upgrade to the most current IC when they are ready. In addition, the change greatly simplifies the overall patch and release management process and will enable the AB Suite engineering team to focus more resources on development efforts that add new features to the product. The result is a real win-win situation for everyone. >>

Figure 1: Visual representation of how fixes and features will be provided starting with the AB Suite 4.0 Release.



These changes to our support process start with AB Suite Release 4.0. For AB Suite 2.0 and 3.0, we will continue to provide fixes in hot patches until the End of Life for those two releases.

When a Major Release reaches its End of Life date, Unisys may elect to continue to provide some level of support services for the N-2 release for a limited period of time. For example, we have elected to support AB Suite 2.0 for an additional six months, in order to enable users to update from Release 2.0 directly to AB Suite 4.0.

Your Questions Are Welcome

This change wasn't taken lightly – and is the result of much discussion within Unisys and with numerous AB Suite customers. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your local support organization or drop us a note at ABSuite@unisys.com



CSC Analyst Spotlight: Malcolm Priestley

This article is part of a series showcasing the Unisys Customer Support Center (CSC) Analysts who support EAE and Agile Business Suite. Interested in seeing a support analyst featured? Send us your nomination: ABSuite@unisys.com.



Malcolm Priestley began his tenure with Unisys in 1969, at the tender age of 18, preparing Burroughs mechanical accounting machines for sale.

Following this initial role, Malcolm spent nearly two decades providing field service for accounting machines, then moved into a sales support role, where he helped engineers address complex hardware problems. He then transitioned into the LINC group around the time LINC 9 was introduced, and the rest is history.

Developing *Agility* recently talked with Malcolm about his role as a CSC analyst, his day-to-day responsibilities, how he tackles support requests, and what he likes best about his job.

Developing Agility: What are your current job responsibilities in the CSC?

Malcolm Priestley: Currently, I support EAE Runtime on MCP, EAE Developer, AB Suite Runtime on MCP and Microsoft Windows®, and AB Suite Developer, as well as EAE Version Control and AB Suite source control. Additionally, I help both EAE and AB Suite users with any Client Tools questions or issues they have and do a bit of DMSII support from time to time.

DA: Walk us through a month in the life of Malcolm Priestley. What types of challenges and requests do you typically handle?

MP: My normal routine is really dictated by the problems customers raise on a given day. These can be anything from a question with a two-second answer to something that requires a few weeks of effort to fully diagnose and resolve.

While I am responsible for many different combinations of hardware and software levels, I only have a single laptop. So, I use Microsoft

Windows Virtual PC, because it allows me to run multiple versions of Windows and the specific EAE or AB Suite software I need. I have around 20 different virtual PC images currently, each of which I set up myself. All of these back up to an external hard drive with more than 4.3 TB of storage.

Some of my virtual PCs are dedicated to particular customers, which allows me to quickly replicate their environments on my laptop and start working on a new issue within the hour. The other images I maintain are variations of operating system and EAE or AB Suite versions, so I can be ready for just about any configuration a customer is using.

DA: Who do you collaborate with when you need help addressing a problem?

MP: If I can't resolve a problem myself, I'll typically turn to engineering for assistance. But very often issues are specific to a customer environment, so local knowledge really comes into play in understanding what they are trying to do and why.

DA: What do you like best about being a CSC Analyst? What gives you the most satisfaction?

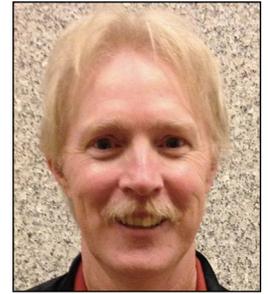
MP: The best thing is the feeling I get when I solve a problem. The sense of achievement is great. I also like the direct contact with customers and getting to know them on a personal level.

DA: Tell us something personal you'd like to share with our readers.

MP: I have two daughters, three sons, and five grandchildren, so most of my spare time is spent babysitting. I like to relax by gardening or working on "do it yourself" projects. In fact, I built a small structure in our garden that can hold between 15 and 20 people. It's a great place for a party or to sit and have a quiet drink.



AB Suite 4.0: Developer Productivity Enhancements, Increased Limits, New Runtime Administrative Interfaces



By Jim Nichols, Consulting Engineer, Unisys Global Technical Consulting (GTC)

Our goal with each new release of Agile Business Suite is to enhance the development and runtime environments with capabilities that boost developer productivity and make it easier for you to integrate and manage your AB Suite solutions. The 4.0 release has much to offer in all of these areas.

Release 4.0 has many developer productivity enhancements. It also takes advantage of newer capabilities in the underlying environmental software. Finally, it offers new ways to interface with and administer your applications by giving you the ability to set up custom interfaces that better meet your needs.

Let's take a look at some of the new things AB Suite 4.0 has to offer.

Developer Productivity Enhancements

With each new release of the AB Suite development software, the engineering team strives to add features that will enable developers to be more productive. This may mean providing ways for developers to more quickly navigate within the environment, or enhance the environment so that useful information is more readily displayed. To do this, the team looks for opportunities to make use of features in the supported Visual Studio IDE or will add functionality to System Modeler itself. With AB Suite 4.0, they have once again met this goal – let's highlight some of these enhancements.

Enhancements Based on Visual Studio 2012

Developers can use the Quick Launch facility (Ctrl+Q), which was introduced in Visual Studio 2012, to perform a search across the IDE. Simply specify a word or phrase to initiate the search, and then choose an entry from the list to quickly navigate to and open the dialog box, toolbar, or window that's associated with the item or command.

In addition to the existing search capabilities within the Class View, developers can now filter the view of other tool windows, such as the Toolbox, Solution Explorer, Error List, and Team Explorer, by simply entering a keyword in the search box at the top of these windows.

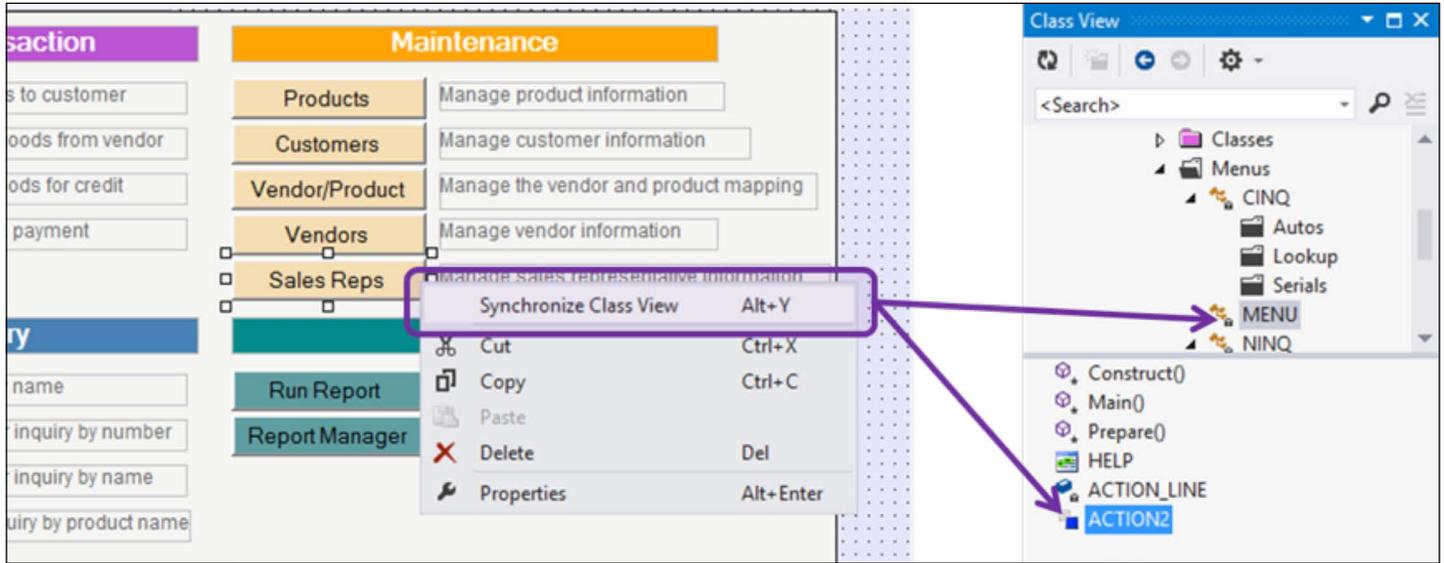
Another useful enhancement gives developers more control over document windows as they are opened. Each document window can be pinned, so that they remain positioned at the left side of the tab (rather than scrolling across as more and more windows are opened). This allows developers to more quickly and readily access particular document windows, regardless of how many are open in the IDE.

As developers use Debugger to step through the logic of an application, a separate document window is opened for each method the developer encounters. With 4.0, developers have more control over these windows. Now, when a new document window is opened, the developer is given the opportunity to choose whether that particular window remains open or is closed once the logic step-through is complete. The net effect is better control over what windows are readily available for access.

System Modeler Enhancements

When working on logic or painting a screen, it is extremely useful to have what is displayed in the Class View remain "in sync" with what you are working on. For example, if you are working on MENU, you'll want to be able to readily see MENU and its elements displayed in the Class View. Prior to 4.0, if you were in the Painter and wanted to get the Class View "in sync" with what you were working on, you had to leave the Painter (by either going to the Members tab or Quick Navigator view) and do the "Synchronize Class View" (via a right-click). Now, you don't have to leave the Painter. >>

Figure 1: Fast access to Synchronize Class View.



As shown in Figure 1, you can now right-click in the Painter, and “synchronize Class View” is available for you. This allows you to more quickly “see what you need to see” and be more productive.

Another great feature of 4.0 that is designed to help improve developer productivity is an enhancement to the Painter. It used to be that when you selected a control in the Painter, the Properties Window would only show the presentation properties associated with that particular control – no design properties of the attribute associated with that control, such as Length, Primitive, Direction, etc. would be visible.

To see design properties, you had to find and select the associated attribute on the Members tab or in the Class View. Only then would the Properties Window be updated to show the design properties of that attribute (and the presentation properties disappeared). As Figure 2 shows, if you select a control in the Painter using AB Suite 4.0, you can not only see the presentation properties of the control, but some of the most important design properties of the attribute associated with that control. >>

Figure 2: Presentation and design properties now visible.

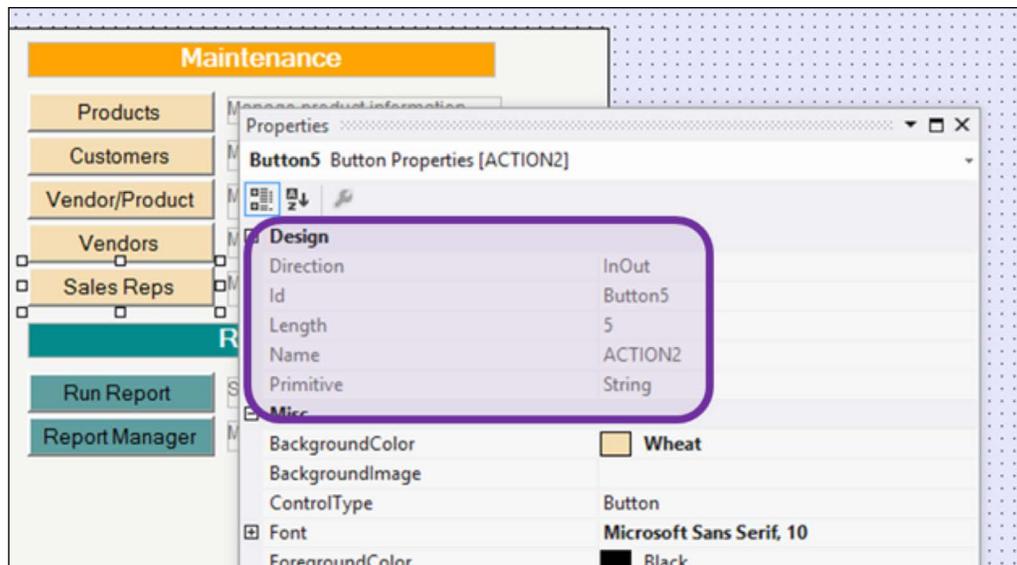
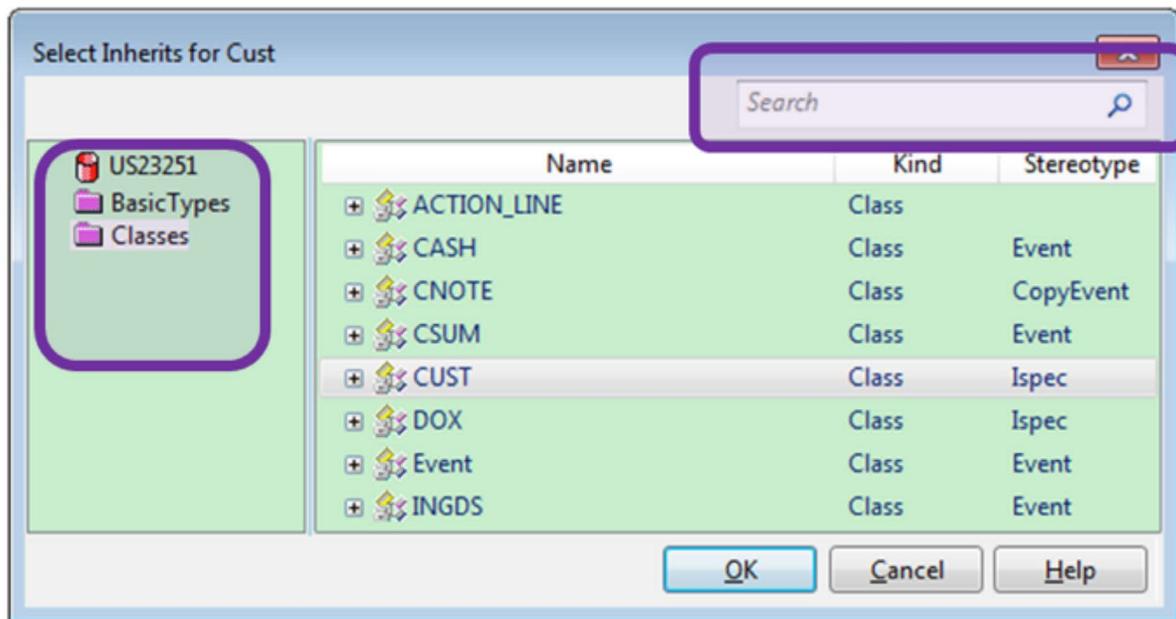


Figure 3: Locate an item for inheritance faster.



The Inherits property element picker has also been enhanced and improved. Developers often create items that get their definition from another item using the Inherits property. Prior to 4.0, the element picker dialog of the Inherits property really made you “navigate” through the model to find the item with the properties you wanted to use. With 4.0, the element picker dialog has been improved to make it easier for developers to find the source of a new item’s properties (see Figure 3). In many cases, the item from which properties are inherited is a dictionary item, so all of the dictionaries are now listed, which makes it faster to locate the right item.

Increased Limits for ClearPath MCP Environments

AB Suite 4.0 takes advantage of the increased database and Cobol limits that have been made available in recent versions of the ClearPath MCP operating environment, including:

- Support for DMSII increased limits in MCP Release 14.0/SSR 55.1:
 - **Alpha (String):** Size of 65,535 bytes (up from 4,095 bytes)

- **Dataset (Table):** Size of 393,210 bytes (up from 24,570 bytes)
- **Allowedcore/Residentlimit:** Support for a maximum value of 549,755,813,887 words (up from 999,999,999 words)
- **Overlaygoal:** Support for a value to the third decimal, or 0.001 (up from two decimals)
- Support for Cobol85 Sort limits:
 - **Sort Memory and Disk Size:** Support for 11-digit values (up from 6 and 9 digits, respectively)

These new limits provide an avenue for existing EAE and AB Suite on MCP customers to further expand their applications, overcoming any roadblocks that may currently exist.

Additionally, AB Suite 4.0 provides interim support for DMSII Physical Section sets. By creating a registry setting of *UsePhysicalSectionsOnly*, the next system deployment will convert all current Logical Section sets to Physical Section sets. Naturally, this will result in a database reorganization. Subsequent releases of AB Suite will provide a more granular implementation. >>

New Windows Runtime Administrative Interfaces

There are many tools and interfaces for the Windows Runtime administrator to use, including:

- Administration Tool (GUI)
- Admin.exe (command line)
- Standalone utilities (DPM)
- Segment and Runtime component interfaces (COM)
- Registry settings
- XML configuration files
- Operating system configuration

The goals of the engineering team for the Windows Runtime environment include the following:

- Unify all AB Suite Runtime for Windows administrative tasks under one interface
- Provide a rich and well-documented API for programmatic integration
- Provide a command line interface for scripting administrative tasks
- Reduce the need to understand the underlying technology

AB Suite 4.0 takes an initial step toward accomplishing these goals, with focus on the command line and Runtime API interfaces.

Command Line Interface

The initial scope of this interface covers the core areas listed below:

- Configuration:
 - Log Files (ConfigureLog.exe)
 - Protocol Adapter settings (ConfigureAdapter.exe)
- Deployment:
 - Runtime Transfer (DeployPackage.exe)
 - Deployment Package Manager (ManagePackage.exe)
- System Administration Commands:
 - Such as stop, enable, disable running reports, etc. (AdminSystem.exe)

This fully documented interface is intended to be used for scripts, batch programs, and ad-hoc manual administration. Examples include:

- AdminSystem.exe /S <SystemName> /STO <[disable]> ConfigureLog.exe /C [<SYSTEM|DBREORG|DEPLOYMENT|RUNTIMEAPI>] [/E <true|false>] [/LL <Debug|Info|Warning|Error>] [/L <location>] [/S <size>] [/N <number>] [/?]
- DeployPackage.exe /L <DeployPackagePath> /U <UserName> /P <Password> [/DN <DeploymentName>] [/PC <true|false>] [/RDB <true|false>] [/BDB <true|false>] [/TSN <TargetServerName>] [/TDBR <TargetDatabaseRegistration>] [/TDBN <TargetDatabaseName>] [/TP <TargetPath>] [/TS <TargetSystemName>] [/TW <TargetWinformPath>] [/?]

Runtime API interface

Similar to the command line interface, this fully documented interface is initially limited to a few core areas, with plans to complete coverage in future releases. These core areas are:

- Configuration (IConfigureRuntime):
 - Log Files
 - Protocol Adapter settings
- Deployment (IDeployPackage):
 - Runtime Transfer
 - Deployment Package Manager (Cloning)
- System Administration Commands (IAdministerSystem):
 - Such as stop, enable, disable, running reports, etc.

The primary purpose for this interface is for integrating .NET programs with the AB Suite Runtime for Windows environment. In this way, AB Suite shops can use this interface when they develop their own tools – or use third-party tools – to control the runtime environment.



Info Center and Calendar

New additions to our libraries of How To documents, white papers, and other useful information include:

- **White Paper:** Migrating EAE Keywords to AB Suite (**NEW**)
- **White Paper:** RDMS Partitioned Tables (**NEW**)

To view these and other resources, simply go to public.support.unisys.com, choose “Documentation” in the “Public Information” box located on the left-hand side of the screen. No special login is needed.

Mark your calendar for these upcoming events:

WHAT	WHERE	WHEN
Universe Conference	Dallas, Texas	October 13-15, 2014
EAE/AB Suite Symposium	Dallas, Texas	October 13-15, 2014

Specifications are subject to change without notice.

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