

Vulcan Software LLC

# Apex 18.2

## Introducing Apex 18.2

### Coming in 2019

1. Apex 18.2 will be the last Apex version to only support SQL Server versions through 2008 R2. SQL Server 2008 R2 SP3 was re-released in September 2014. It reaches end-of-life in 2019. Please assure your IT group that Apex will be upgraded accordingly.
2. Apex will be getting a more modern appearance. No more battleship gray!

Apex 18.2 is one of the smaller Apex releases in recent history, but it has one exciting new feature and some important updates. I didn't want to wait until next year to ship these enhancements.

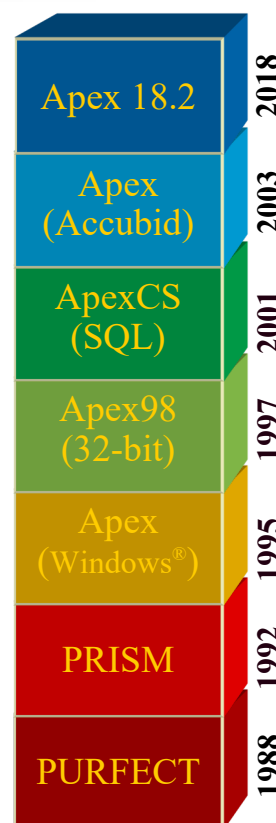
I also wanted to give everyone a heads-up on what is coming next year. For legacy reasons, Apex still supports Microsoft SQL Server 2000. To maintain that level of compatibility, Apex could only support versions of SQL Server up through SQL 2008 R2.

Microsoft SQL Server 2008 R2 SP3 was released in September 2014, and reaches end-of-life in 2019. Your IT staff may be concerned about this. You can assure them that in 2019 Apex will be

updated to use all newer SQL Server versions. In the meantime, please be sure that you are using at least SQL Server 2008 R2. If you are not then I can help you upgrade.

Also coming up is an updated appearance for Apex. Those of you that use the Apex Web application will have noticed that changing appearances helps the program adapt to different devices. It also presents a more enjoyable experience for the user. Time to do the same thing with Apex!

We hope you enjoy the new Apex 18.2 features. As always, we welcome your feedback.

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## PDF Problems

So far, three companies have reported occasional problems with storing PDF documents into Apex. Unfortunately, this appears to be a growing issue. For one company it started to get pretty severe.

In some cases the problem boils down to invalid PDF files that are created by 3rd-party programming. These files are not structurally correct. In other instances it is less clear why there is a problem.

I outsourced the PDF parsing programming and integrated it into Apex in 2008. It has been serving us faithfully for 10 years. Now, all of a sudden we are seeing bad data that causes it to crash, and not only that but it is bringing down Apex with it. If you get a serious error when storing a PDF file into Apex, you really need to close and re-open the program. Otherwise the problem will tend to get worse and worse, like a snowball rolling

down a hill.

I am addressing this in 4 phases:

1. Update Apex to contain the problem and not let it get worse.
2. Create a separate Apex PDF viewer program.
3. Attempt to automatically "fix" bad PDF documents.
4. Rewrite the Apex PDF parser.

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## P/O Line Fill

You will notice a new button in Purchase Order Maintenance down in the line section titled "Fill". You can use this button to fill in information on all of your P/O lines at once.

For example, you may want to set all of the cost codes to a specific value. Or, you may want to set all of the quantities to zero.

Checkboxes with gray checks don't change anything. You can check or uncheck them yourself to set the Tax, Sub, or Override columns.

You can choose to leave any fields that already contain information alone, or overwrite them with the new values.

Obviously, with great power comes great responsibility ☺. You will want to do this carefully so that you don't accidentally overwrite information that you want to keep. That's why by default the *Change existing entries* checkbox is unchecked. You will have to set that yourself to overwrite any existing information.

## Errata

### *Other changes to Apex include:*

- P/O totals are now maintained without having to explicitly print your purchase order. Previously, printing a P/O was your "control point", stating that the P/O was now finished. At that point the official P/O totals were accumulated for this point in time. This design was from the 90s, and it seems unnecessary now. Please let me know if you want me to provide you with a SQL Query that will update all of your existing P/O totals.
- When the Online Center accepts an acknowledgment, it will now set appropriate values for the job phase, company, and division fields (based upon the job).
- Pressing the *Queue for Export* button will set the purchase order to "Issued", and the screen is refreshed so that it is more clear what changes have been made.
- In P/O Search and various Analysis reports, you can now properly do a "contains" search in the P/O, Job, Vendor, and Work Order fields. For example, if you have a job "ABC123XYZ", you can now search for jobs that contain "123" and it will work.
- The *Show Template P/Os* button has been retitled *Show Templates*. Templates are not really P/Os, so that was kind of a silly title.
- The *Assign P/O#* button is now disabled in the P/O View screen. It was kind of confusing to be able to press this button and watch it do nothing.

## PDF Problems (continued)

Apex 18.2 is phase 1. It will try to store the documents properly even if they appear invalid. This will keep the problem from getting worse.

Next is a separate program that you can use to view Apex stored PDF documents. It is already in

use by the customer that was hit the hardest by this problem. Please let me know if you would like a copy of this program. It is free to use by anyone in your company and does not require an Apex license.

Next I will be working on phases 3 and 4.

# APEX



*For more information please visit  
<http://www.apexpurchasing.com> or  
consult the Apex Help system.*

*Apex support is available via email at:  
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