



# Alexander Forbes Group Holding Cuts Down Enterprise App Development Time with Progress

SUCCESS STORY



## Challenge

Like virtually all large enterprises, Alexander Forbes Group Holdings, a leading South African financial services company, has a vast computer systems infrastructure running everything from aging legacy apps to the latest in mobile. Its IT department, juggling many projects and priorities at any given time, must deploy its limited resources effectively. That means choosing technology solutions that streamline development while providing the best business benefit and highest levels of functionality to users.

Established with the consolidation of several insurance agencies in 1935, today Alexander Forbes conducts business in 11 countries across Europe and Africa, and has billions of dollars in assets under management.

The IT department was recently tasked with modernizing two very different apps. The first is an aging enterprise backend legacy reporting app to meet compliance and reporting requirements of regulatory body South Africa Reserve Bank. The second is a customer facing desktop investment portfolio tool, DCipher Portfolio Viewer, that with new mobile and graphical UI enhancements, will enable Alexander Forbes representatives to make sleek customer presentations at any time, from any place and on any device.

## Solution

With most of its apps built on the .NET technology stack and with extensive jQuery experience, Alexander Forbes previously used Progress® Kendo UI® to build a number of apps. For these two very different challenges, the flexible and complete Kendo UI toolset again fit the bill.

“We evaluate technologies on a project-by-project basis,” said Svetlin Iliev, Applications Development Manager for Alexander Forbes.



**“For these applications we again found that Telerik gives us more out-of-the box capabilities that speed development that other solutions, and the consistent look and feel we require for our end users.”**

**Svetlin Iliev**  
Applications Development Manager,  
Alexander Forbes Group Holdings

The South Africa Reserve Bank, like many government regulatory agencies, has strict and complex reporting requirements. The legacy reporting app required users to pull data from three disparate systems then manually compile the data into the report. The process was tedious and slow.

“The Kendo grid controls speeded the development process, enabling us to readily capture the data in the disparate legacy databases and move it to a single platform,” Iliev said. “There is now one front-end where all the data is nicely organized and displayed, expediting the production of reports for the Reserve Bank.”

With customer portfolio data housed in core legacy systems and accessed and displayed through an aging desktop app, meeting with clients to review portfolios at times proved challenging for Alexander Forbes representatives. IT was tasked with developing a mobile app with flexible data access capabilities and a powerful UI that can work on any device, at any time and any place the customer chooses, online or offline.



**“Everything that previously had to be coded by hand was done by the controls. Using Telerik Kendo UI, we developed these apps in significantly less time compared to other solutions”**

#### **Svetlin Iliev**

Applications Development Manager,  
Alexander Forbes Group Holdings

Once again, Kendo UI with powerful data management and data visualization capabilities, proved to be the ideal solution. “We now have an app that can virtually run on any device,” he said. “The navigation is smooth and clean to facilitate portfolio discussions, and the charts, graphs and the other visual features we built with Kendo UI allow our representatives to make powerful, easy-to-understand presentations.”

## Results

Not only does Alexander Forbes have two new modernized and powerful apps in their arsenal, they were developed ahead of schedule and under budget.

“I received excellent feedback about Telerik from our developers,” Iliev said. “Everything that previously had to be coded by hand was automated by the controls. Using Telerik Kendo UI, we developed these apps in significantly less time compared to other solutions.”

The modernized apps exceeded expectations in many ways, including:

- Out-of-the-box functionality sharply improved developer productivity
- Development schedule compressed from 18 months to less than one year
- The need to be mobile has been satisfied, with the company’s DCipher Portfolio Viewer able to run on virtually any device—desktop, laptop, tablets or smartphones
- End users enjoy smooth navigation and a consistent look and feel from screen to screen

Progress partner Accedia, a development partner of Alexander Forbes, also credits Progress support for the success of the development process. “When we submit tickets, Progress support reacts really fast with accurate, useful answers,” said Nikolay Todorov, Managing Partner, Accedia. “Support issues did not slow us down at all.”



**“Our job is to deliver usable information to end users. In an off-the-shelf solution that clearly speed the development process, Kendo UI gives us the capabilities we need to build consistent, high quality apps that exceed expectations”**

#### **Svetlin Iliev**

Applications Development Manager,  
Alexander Forbes Group Holdings



## About Accedia

Accedia is a Professional IT Services company specializing in consulting, software development outsourcing and complex end-to-end solutions for both SMEs and large enterprises. Some of the markets Accedia operates in include the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France and South Africa.

<http://accedia.com/>



## About Alexander Forbes

Alexander Forbes is one of the leading financial services providers in South Africa. The company operates in 11+ countries and specializes in retirement fund management, corporate health consulting, corporate risk management and insurance brokerage, investment solutions and asset management.

<https://www.alexanderforbes.co.za/>



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### About Progress

Progress (NASDAQ: PRGS) offers the leading platform for developing and deploying strategic business applications. We enable customers and partners to deliver modern, high-impact digital experiences with a fraction of the effort, time and cost. Progress offers powerful tools for easily building adaptive user experiences across any type of device or touchpoint, the flexibility of a cloud-native app dev platform to deliver modern apps, leading data connectivity technology, web content management, business rules, secure file transfer, network monitoring, plus award-winning machine learning that enables cognitive capabilities to be a part of any application. Over 1,700 independent software vendors, 100,000 enterprise customers, and two million developers rely on Progress to power their applications. Learn about Progress at [www.progress.com](http://www.progress.com) or +1-800-477-6473.

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