



# HOW VIRTIC MAKES PROGRESS

Client

**VIRTIC**

## Challenge

Improve the efficiency of the construction industry by eliminating manual, paper-based time and cost tracking processes

## Solution

A mobile, SaaS-based application for time and cost tracking developed on Progress

## Benefit

Streamlined procedures, cost reduction and fast, accurate billing of wages, travel expenses and orders

## A Desire to Improve the Efficiency of the German Construction Industry

Project tracking practices in the German construction industry were ready for disruption. Processes such as time tracking, job costing and payroll tended to be manual and paper-based, especially among entrepreneurs in the building trades. Keeping track of project costs and worker time was inefficient and error prone. virtic GmbH & Co. KG, a software company based Dortmund, Germany, believed that mobile technology could solve these problems. From this inspiration, Bernd Wolff and Michael Stausberg, virtic's founder and managing director, respectively, developed the idea of a mobile time tracking solution for the building trade.

## Envisioning a Mobile SaaS Timekeeping Application

virtic's vision was to create software that would provide clients in construction, sales, customer service and logistics with timely and accurate information on employee presence and activities in the field. The business objective was to eliminate the need for time consuming manual record keeping, data collection and analysis of work time.

Demonstrating a pioneering spirit from the outset, virtic decided to make its software available on a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) basis, rather than requiring the customer to install the application in the field for each individual user. This decision established virtic as one of the first vendors of complex software in the cloud. “We always kept the entrepreneur in our minds,” said Wolff. “Our solution needed to be easy to use, not requiring an upfront investment in infrastructure and licenses.”

The application was designed to use cellular networks to transmit data captured on iOS, Android, or Windows Phone smartphones to the virtic database, which is hosted in a cloud provider’s secure datacenter. The data is processed there to suit payroll accounting, project controls and other requirements. Detailed reports on topics such as hours worked per employee or per building site are available online. All information relevant to payroll accounting, such as per diems, expenses, additional meal allowances and so forth are recorded individually for each employee. An integrated geodata function was devised to help businesses optimize the deployment of their employees, creating opportunities for more efficient scheduling of field staff. The goal was to let companies implement better day-to-day workforce controls as the basis for effective project management.

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Paul Bömer,  
Software Developer, virtic

## Deciding to Develop on Progress OpenEdge

virtic weighed different development and database platform options for the realization of the mobile SaaS time tracking solution. The company’s programmers were quick to agree on the path they would take in developing the solution, however. “Based on many years of experience in numerous projects, we decided to use the Progress® OpenEdge® development environment and application platform. That gave us a speed advantage of up to 50 percent over other development options,” noted Paul Bömer, Software Developer for virtic. The virtic team was able to launch an initial version of the software within months, a rapid cycle for a project of this complexity and novelty.

The Progress OpenEdge platform provides the foundation for the ongoing development of virtic’s software. “Multi-tenant support is essential for cloud-based solutions designed to handle numerous users simultaneously,” Bömer explained. “Progress OpenEdge provides multi-tenant tables at the database level, thus permitting the physically separate storage of data. Multi-tenancy therefore does not need to be supported by the application itself. Having the database deliver this functionality simplifies the program code.” Multi-tenant support also delivers major advantages for clients, letting them easily create custom evaluations and reports based on their own data and analyze them further in Excel or other applications.

virtic also took advantage of Progress OpenEdge data security features. The software uses OpenEdge Transparent Data Encryption (TDE) to ensure privacy. The advantage of TDE is that it does not require any changes to the application itself. TDE has authentication, authorization and audit capabilities, making it a key component of a seamless approach for data in transit and in storage.

In the datacenter, OpenEdge's integrated relational database management system ensures 24/7 availability. The virtic solution takes advantage of this, as well as automatic database replication for failover or disaster recovery in real time. They can guarantee security and reliable access to time tracking data by making it available on at least two servers at all times. In scenarios where an organization needs to track when and where data was entered or edited - and by whom - virtic's developers take advantage of auditing functions to ensure that applications conform to statutory auditing or other compliance requirements.

virtic selected Progress partly based on the consistent strength of the partnership. "Progress has always been very responsive to our needs over the years. Our direct contact fosters a close relationship that gives rise to innovative approaches. They also support us very well in terms of technology expertise," said Bömer. Progress has continuously expanded its OpenEdge development environment and application platform in recent years, addressing the current requirements of its partners and their clients. Wolff added, "We are in close contact with our key technology vendors and find that they are very responsive to our needs. Their outstanding technical support helps us grow continuously and strengthen our competitive position. And ultimately, it is our clients who benefit."

## Success in the Field

The product is a business success for virtic. To use the software, companies pay a monthly fee that varies according to either modules in use or user counts. The initial product that replaced manual timekeeping with live mobile phone booking has since evolved into a complete solution that covers the entire process of recording working time from order acceptance to payroll accounting and job costing.

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virtic customers find the solution to be a boon to profitability and efficiency. The automatic tracking streamlines procedures, cuts costs, and permits fast and accurate billing of orders. Users of the solution report that it has helped them save on administrative overhead and shorten their cash flow cycles by speeding up billing. Datarich reporting features enable virtic users to resolve billing questions with clients more easily and quickly than was possible with paper based systems. Users can also use the tool to examine construction projects for slowdowns and worker productivity issues that can be difficult to detect without data analysis techniques.

The web-based time tracking and accounting solution is suitable for virtually any industry. Modules include resource planning, deployment of employees, mobile time tracking, approval processes, attendance management, timesheets and time accounts preparation, wages and travel expenses. The data gets submitted as booking records to the payroll and ERP software. Add-ons are available for device management, GPS tracking for vehicles, machines and digital pen solutions.

"What makes this solution special is that it was developed from the perspective of entrepreneurs in the building trade, and the software experts contributed their share toward its realization," Wolff explained.

Ongoing updates are included in the monthly fee. The reasons for updates can include ensuring the software's compliance with new regulations such as the minimum wage law that has been in force in Germany since January 2015 – a law that represents a major bureaucratic burden for companies due to its extensive record keeping and document retention requirements. For companies using the virtic solution, compliance with such recordkeeping requirements is virtually automatic, as it involves nothing more than an extension of the existing time tracking functions.

## About virtic

virtic GmbH & Co. KG, a software company based in Dortmund, Germany, provides mobile time management systems for the construction industry and other sectors. The company's products also offer functionality for resource planning, the deployment of employees and device management. virtic software can exchange information through web services to any communication-enabled application. virtic GmbH & Co. KG was founded in 2004 as Virtic GmbH.

[www.virtic.com](http://www.virtic.com)

## About Progress

Progress (NASDAQ: PRGS) is a global leader in application development, empowering the digital transformation organizations need to create and sustain engaging user experiences in today's evolving marketplace. With offerings spanning web, mobile and data for on-premise and cloud environments, Progress powers startups and industry titans worldwide, promoting success one customer at a time. Learn about Progress at [www.progress.com](http://www.progress.com) or 1-781-280-4000.

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