

| EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Progressing in real-time

JOHN BATES

Position: Chief technology officer, senior vice president for corporate development at Progress Software.

Education: BSC, computer science, Lancaster University, 1990; Phd in computer science, Cambridge University, 1994

Age: 40

Quote: "This has been a great fit for me. I love running a business, but I also like doing the technology vision, evangelizing, exploration of new opportunities."



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Bates realizing vision for software that helps businesses respond in real time

BY KYLE ALSPACH
JOURNAL STAFF

In a decade, John Bates went from being a computer science professor in Britain to a C-level executive at a half-billion-dollar U.S. company.

Now Bates is a key figure leading the company, Bedford-based Progress Software Corp., in what executives believe is a groundbreaking new approach to real-time management of businesses.

Bates, 40, is chief technology officer and senior vice president for corporate development at Progress. His path to the position was unusual, but Progress CEO

Rick Reidy said it's no surprise Bates has been able to accomplish all he's done.

"John has the very rare ability to combine technology knowledge and vision with real-life cases," Reidy said. "You can find people who are very technical and might have product vision, and you can find people who understand business and industry. But it's a rare person that can bridge the two."

In 1996, Bates secured a tenured position teaching computer science at Cambridge University. But four years later he would leave, inspired to start a business based on research he'd done while studying and teaching there.

The research looked at an area now known as complex event processing, which seeks to find ways to take real-time action in response to data from ongoing events. Bates' company, Apama, found early success in the capital markets industry using the technology to detect patterns in trading.

"As a small team, circa 25 people, we were winning accounts like JP Morgan, Deutsche Bank, those kinds of organizations," Bates said. "They saw that we had something unique, and that we were meeting a burning business problem."

Progress Software (Nasdaq: PRGS) eventually saw the same thing. After a year-

BATES: Former professor takes unique path to Progress Software

long courtship that began in early 2004, Progress acquired Apama for \$30 million in April 2005. And Progress brought on Bates as vice president of products for the division that absorbed Apama — the real-time division, which would later be renamed the Apama division.

Bates would ultimately become general manager of the Apama division, until his promotion to CTO and corporate development head last December.

“This has been a great fit for me. I mean, I love running a business, but I also like doing the technology vision, evangelizing, exploration of new opportunities,” he said.

Bates is now helping to pilot the next major phase for Progress in making businesses more responsive to real-time events. It’s called responsive process management, and it seeks to help businesses to dynamically adjust to events by detecting opportunities and threats as they happen.

Progress likes to refer to it as a “business navigation system,” helping to guide a business the way a GPS can direct a driver.

“Lots of firms do business intelligence — they record stuff that’s happened, and they analyze it offline for planning,” Bates said. “The key word there is offline. This is about online ... (Businesses) need to see

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John Bates

things that are happening and respond to them immediately.”

Key industries Progress is targeting with the technology include financial services, telecommunications and transportation, such as the airline industry.

Airlines, for instance, might use responsive process management to ensure that airlines avoid having passengers sitting on a runway in the event of something unexpected, Bates said. In the financial world, the technology is being used to detect market abuse and insider trading as it’s happening, he said.

Giles Nelson, who co-founded Apama with Bates and is now deputy CTO at Progress, said Bates has a long record of “visionary” ideas. But just as importantly, Bates is courageous when it has come to

implementing the ideas, Nelson said.

“He’s often done things which have really pushed him in directions in which he was naturally uncomfortable,” Nelson said. “But he kept going and was tenacious. As part of his DNA, he wants to succeed in whatever he’s doing.”

Bates has had to acquire business and financial savvy over time, however. His family has no history in business — “they still to this day don’t know what I do,” Bates said — and he has no MBA. “Although that would’ve been extremely helpful,” he said with a laugh.

Reidy said you’d never know that Bates was self-taught when it comes to the financial world. Reidy recalled a dinner he attended with Bates and two financial industry experts, in which it was clear that Bates was as “deeply immersed in their industry as they are.”

Bates also possesses a broad knowledge of world affairs, politics and many other subjects, Reidy said. “Perhaps his British accent just makes him sound more learned than most, but it works,” Reidy said.

Despite living away from his home country, Bates said he’s relished life in New England. A favorite activity for himself, his wife, Jill, and 3-year-old daughter, Eleanor, is visiting a home Bates bought on Kezar Lake in Maine.