

ARCHIVING THE CORRECT WAY

OVERVIEW

While archiving data in MFG/PRO™ is a straightforward process, there are a number of things that you can do which can make retrieving or reusing that archived information much more difficult and challenging. The purpose of this document is to identify and address the proper way to archive data in order to minimize the problems and maximize the efficiency with which you archive data.

The proper steps to archive data successfully are:

1. **Select the Archive Routine**
2. **Determine the Retention Period**
3. **Calculate Appropriate Dates**
4. **Run the Archive Routine**
5. **Monitor for Temporary File Growth**
6. **Rename and/or Move the Resulting History File**
7. **Repeat Until Done**

STEP 1: Select the Archive Routine

In order to archive, you must have an idea of what data you wish to archive. Often this is determined by an analysis of the database (using the Progress® proutil -C dbanalys command), sorting the results to determine which tables are largest and offer the most possible return for the effort involved in archiving. Once you identify the tables, then you need to identify the correct archive routines. You can determine this by running the MFG/PRO Source Code Cross Reference reports to see which programs delete each table, or you can refer to the Appendixes in *Safe Haven: Archiving in MFG/PRO* by Scott Dulecki.¹

STEP 2: Determine the Retention Period

Once you have identified the archive routine to execute, the next step is to determine how much history you wish to keep. Measure this in G/L Periods or years, and allow business reasons to drive it. There is no magical answer as to how much history is enough; it's different for every company, and reflects business, industry, legal, and company cycles.

It is essential that business units decide how much data to retain, and not the Information Technology department. Unless business units make the decision, they are unlikely to support archiving data for any reasons.

STEP 3: Calculate Appropriate Dates

Although you can do it, you should never archive across G/L Period boundary dates. There are certain reports (such as financial aging reports) that can present invalid results if a transaction

crosses multiple G/L Periods. By archiving no more than a G/L period at a time, you keep the database in top working order. In addition, the way you archive data is the way you get to bring it back. If you archive by year, you get to restore it by year, even if you only need one period's worth of data. In addition, the database will grow to accommodate the entire year you restore. After you finish with the data and remove it, the database will still occupy the same space on disk as if the data were still there. This remains until you recreate the database through a dump and load or procopy.

For best results, print out a copy of your G/L Calendar and use it to track the dates for each archive request.

STEP 4: Run the Archive Routine

Once you have identified the dates and other selection criteria, it is time to run the archive routines. Enter in your selection criteria, and run the archive. You should always archive; deleting data without archiving is asking for trouble. If you do not think you will need the archived data, send it to a history file anyway, and then delete the history file. If you fail to archive the data and only delete it, the only way to get it back is to restore a copy of the database and re-archive correctly.

STEP 5: Monitor the Process

While the archive routine is running, there is a chance that the database before-image (BI) file can grow to become too large. On versions of Progress below 9.1, if the BI file exceeds two gigabytes in size, the database will crash and become corrupt. Once the database crashes because of hitting the 2GB limit, you must restore it from backup; there is no way to safely return the current database to a workable state.

You need to monitor After-Image files as well. While they are not so critical as the BI file, they still have size limits. Once a given extent reaches 2GB, Progress will switch to the next extent. Once the switch takes place, you should copy the old extent to another area and then mark it available for re-use. If the next AI extent is not marked available for re-use, the database will crash in the middle of the current archive routine, and it will be challenging to get the database back to a good state.

With Progress 8.3B and higher, you can set a database server parameter to crash the database if the BI file gets too large. Use of this parameter, `-bithold`, is highly recommended. Once you reach Progress 9.1C, you have the ability to enable large files, and the overall Progress limit on the BI file size goes away.

STEP 6: Move and Rename the History File

When the archive runs, it will create a history file in the `-T` directory for the client session. If you do not specify `-T`, Progress will place the files in the present working directory of the

session. MFG/PRO history files have a common naming format: a two-character code, followed by today's date and an extension of .hst, such as ic021104.hst. If this file already exists, then MFG/PRO will append new data to the existing file. Unfortunately, there is no easy way to determine what period the file refers to; all you can determine without analyzing the data is the date you archived the file. For this reason, you will want to rename the file

After the archive completes, rename the file to something significant. We suggest that you should include the G/L Year and Period as part of the file name, along with a significant indicator of the file, such as *Inventory_History_1998_02*. Keep a record of all the archive routines you run along with their dates, selection criteria, and associated filenames. If you do not rename the file, then data from another run of this archive routine (and potentially others) will be added to the existing file, making reloading it more difficult and time-consuming. You may also want to move the history file to another location at this time.

You may also wish to move the file at this point to a standard repository, such as a specific archive directory, instead of leaving it in the –T directory for the client session.

STEP 7: Repeat Until Done

Once you have run the first archive routine and renamed and moved its resulting file, you are ready to repeat the process at step 3 for the next G/L period. Continue until you have archived all periods up to the retention point you set in step 2.

CONCLUSION

As long as you follow these steps, you will safely archive data from MFG/PRO and be able to bring it back safely as well.

Should these prove to be too challenging to undertake manually, BravePoint's Archive/Delete Utilityⁱⁱ can automate the entire process, from calculating archive run dates based on your retention criteria to safely archiving, renaming, and storing your valuable history files.

ⁱ *Safe Haven: Archiving in MFG/PRO* can be ordered at www.bravepoint.com/products/bpbooks.html

ⁱⁱ For more information on the Archive/Delete Utility, go to www.bravepoint.com/products/adu.html.

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