Abstract

TOO MANY SOFTWARE PROJECTS FAIL. A team may take too long
to deliver the product. They may deliver a product nobody wants. Or just
never deliver it at all. Too often, it seems that authors writing about software
development either rehash old ideas that haven't worked, or come up with
new ideas that won't work. We see it again and again: A new fad replaces
the failed old fad. The mantra goes out, and everyone repeats: "We're struc-
tured, no we're objectified, no we're unified and we're extremely agile."What
remains the same, unfortunately, is that the people who have to write the
code are unhappy and hate every minute of it. And what also remains the
same is that most development teams really don't know how to build soft-
ware. It's almost surreal. Imagine a bunch of carpenters who are trying to
build furniture, but are only allowed to use nails. (Oh, and they stamp them
into the wood with tap-dancing shoes because nobody told them about ham-
mers.) What we need is someone who can cut through the cobwebs and see
clearly.
Someone once said that the task of a writer is to "make the familiar new and
the new familiar."For years, Joel Spolsky has done exactly this at his websi-
te. He educated us, he entertained us, and, yes, sometimes he infuriated us,
but he has always made us think about what it is we are doing when we sit
down in front of that blank computer screen, which is how Joel on Software
became one of most popular development websites in the world. Now, for the
first time, you can own a collection of the most important essays from his
site in one book, with exclusive commentary and new insights from Joel.

Inhalt

Every Software Developer Absolutely, Positively Must Know About Unicode and Character Sets (No Excuses!) - Painless Functional Specifications - Why Bother? - Painless Functional Specifications - What's a Spec? - Painless Functional Specifications - But How? - Painless Functional Specifications - Tips - Painless Software Schedules - Daily Builds Are Your Friend - Hard-Assed Bug Fixin' - Five Worlds - Paper Prototyping - Don't Let Architecture Astronauts Scare You - Fire and Motion - Craftsmanship - Three Wrong Ideas from Computer Science - Biculturalism - Get Crash Reports From Users-Automatically!

Managing Developers: The Guerilla Guide to Interviewing - Incentive Pay Considered Harmful - Top Five (Wrong) Reasons You Don't Have Testers - Human Task Switches Considered Harmful - Things You Should Never Do, Part One - The Iceberg Secret, Revealed - The Law of Leaky Abstractions - Lord Palmerston on Programming - Measurement

Being Joel: Random Thoughts on Not-So-Random Topics: Rick Chapman Is In Search of Stupidity - What Is the Work of Dogs in This Country? - Getting Things Done When You're Only a Grunt thirty-two Two Stories - Big Macs vs. The Naked Chef - Nothing Is As Simple As It Seems - In Defense of Not-Invented-Here Syndrome - Strategy Letter: Ben & Jerry's vs. Amazon - Strategy Letter: Chicken-and-Egg Problems - Strategy Letter: Let Me Go Back! - Strategy Letter: Bloatware and the 80/20 Myth - Strategy Letter: The Economics of Open Source - A Week of Murphy's Law Gone Wild - How Microsoft Lost the API War

A Little Bit Too Much Commentary on .NET: Microsoft Goes Bonkers - Our .NET Strategy - Please Sir May I Have a Linker?

Author Info

Joel Spolsky, a software industry veteran, writes a weblog called Joel on Software that is one of the most popular independent websites for programmers. His site has been described as the änti-Dilbert manifesto.SSpolsky has designed and developed software used by millions of people and has worked on a variety of products, from Microsoft Excel to the Juno user interface. He is the founder of Fog Creek Software in New York City.