



# TERATECH NEWS

## Tools for Programmers

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This month we cover:

- ?? Friendly Computers
- ?? Gallaudet
- ?? Fusebox2 Conf
- ?? Ben Forta/Charlie Arehart at ANCFUG
- ?? Voice Of America Training
- ?? Interviewing – yuck!
- ?? On project management

### Friendly Computers

Friendly Computers operates a Web-Base Local Business Directory based for the eastern shore of Maryland. TeraTech will be updating their ColdFusion Website.

### Gallaudet Interpreting Services

Teratech is working with GIS to replace their VAX system with a modern relational database system. Currently Gallaudet Interpreting Service (GIS) has an existing VAX based application that performs many of the functions needed by GIS to run their business. Functions of this VAX based system include:

- ?? Scheduling
- ?? Billing
- ?? Time-based accounting
- ?? Telnet based access to personal scheduling info
- ?? Email notification

However, GIS has realized that VAX developers are hard to come by, and VAX as a system will soon no longer be supported. At the same time, GIS would like to implement many desired improvements and new features that the current system cannot handle.

Here are some of the new features that Teratech will be implementing for GIS:

- ?? Windows-type interface
- ?? WEB interface to replace Telnet accesses, and gives additional feedback to the interpreters.
- ?? Automated uploading and printing of interpreter's time sheets.
- ?? Better reporting and invoicing

### Fusebox2 Conference



So, you want to learn Fusebox 3? Come to this year's Fusebox Conference! This one-day event will help you understand the intricacies of Fusebox. Make your next Fusebox project a success! The early bird registration fee is \$150 if you sign up before August 31, 2001. For more information: <http://www.cfconf.org/fusebox2/>

### Ben Forta/Charlie Arehart at ANCFUG



Ben Forta of Macromedia and Charlie Arehart of SysManage will be speaking at the ANCFUG meeting on August 23, 2001. Seats are limited so please register at <http://www.ancfug.com/>

### Voice Of America



Teratech is providing personal hands-on ColdFusion training for Voice of America. Voice of America has a website in 40 languages, so special care has been taken on character set issues and double-byte character control. The training has been both in small groups and one-on-one for special projects.

**Interviewing—yuck!** Most people hate to interview (most managers don't like it any better than most candidates) Here are some of the more common **managerial** reasons:

1. Interviewing means rejection—and nobody likes rejection: Turning down the candidate; being turned down by the candidate; your boss/peers/subordinates/spouse/partner/family/friends/dog disagree with your choice
2. Many managers feel that they aren't good interviewers (they're usually right): Competent people don't like doing things they don't do well.
3. Insecurity: Avoids hiring the best people. (aka might-take-my-job syndrome.)
4. Afraid of making a mistake: Historically akin to "Buy IBM" (If you don't understand this, ask a 40+ manager.)
5. Favorite word is "maybe": No decision is better than the wrong decision.
6. The catch 22 of staffing: "Being short of people has us so busy that we don't have time to interview to hire the people we are short of."
7. Procrastination in all its creatively varied forms.

### **Interviewing: what's in it for you**

The most important reasons to put real effort into staffing, and to hire the best available people is simple—it's the surest way to bigger raises get faster promotions.

- ?? Raises depend on success. As a manager there is nothing you can do hands on that will offset a non-performing group.
- ?? Promotions come because the groups of people you are responsible for do a superb job. Hire the best people and they will make you look good.

By Miki Saxon, CEO RampUp Solutions, Inc.

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## *On Project Management*

**Key issue:** What program and project management practices and procedures will improve project success?

More than 80 percent of IS-related projects are late, over budget, lacking in functionality, or never delivered. Many of those at risk could be identified at the start.

By using a simple checklist and either tenaciously pursuing the completion of the outstanding items or putting in place risk mitigation steps to counter the

residual risk, many of those projects would be successful.

### *The checklist*

As part of the evaluation, the project manager should provide evidence that the following issues have been satisfactorily addressed in the project's terms of reference:

**Business sponsorship:** Every project should have a nominated business sponsor with a stake in the outcome. This role must be documented, along with the nature of the involvement.

**Business case:** This is a statement of what is being done and why. It includes: the objectives, the benefits, and how to measure success; the solution; the scope and limitations; a business justification and appraisal of return on investment, where appropriate; and an analysis of business risks.

**Project oversight:** This defines the process and people (steering committee) used to oversee the project, release funds, and make the "go and no-go" decisions throughout the life cycle.

**Organization:** Key participants from both business and IT should be named and their roles defined, along with an estimate of the amount of time and duration of their commitment. This includes the appointment of a suitably experienced project manager. There should be a defined project team and a contingency plan for key roles and skills in the event that they are sick.

**Project plan:** There must be a detailed project plan built around a formal methodology. The plan should cover at least the first phase, with outline plans for subsequent phases.

**Risk assessment:** Risk management should be an integral part of the project and project planning. Emphasis should be placed on risks associated with project size (time and resources), business requirements, capabilities (skills), and technologies.

Source: <http://www.techrepublic.com/>

[To be continued next month...]

### **TERATECH CUSTOM PROGRAMMING**

- ColdFusion
- VisualBasic
- SQL, Oracle, Access, FoxPro
- Numeric Analysis

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