



TERATECH NEWS

Tools for Programmers

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Patricia Lima, Editor

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This month we cover:

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- ?? Management Tips Corner
- ?? Macromedia DevCon 2001
- ?? Code Reviews
- ?? ColdFusion Locking Tip

Training In Our Office

It has long been a belief for the staff at TeraTech that you can never know enough about the field that you are in. That is why we have started to hold training classes in our office. It is a goal of ours to offer convenient and affordable training.

You will find a listing of the classes below and on our web site at <http://www.teratech.com/training/>
We offer ColdFusion as well as Fusebox classes.



If you are just starting out or need to brush up you may want one of our beginning half day classes. Or you may know your way around

ColdFusion

and would benefit from the intermediate class. Either way you are welcome to join us and expand your repertoire.

Class Schedule

CF 102 - Introduction to ColdFusion

Tues November 27th, 2001

Full Day course 10am-5pm - \$349

CF 201 - Intermediate ColdFusion

Tues December 12th, 2001

Full Day course 10am - 5pm - \$349

FB 101 - Introduction to Fusebox

Tues December 4th, 2001

Half Day course noon-4pm - \$199

FB 201 - Intermediate Fusebox

Wed December 5th, 2001

Full Day course 10am-5pm - \$349

CF 202 - 508 & ColdFusion

January 16th, 2002

Half Day course noon-4pm - \$199

Macromedia DevCon 2001

Michael Smith attended the Macromedia DevCon 2001 in Orlando FL last month. Here is a report on the ColdFusion and other news from there. The events started on Saturday with the **Fusebox II Conference** which covered the latest release of the Fusebox programming methodology (<http://www.fusebox.org/>). New features discussed included nested circuits, layout inheritance, exit fuse actions and the use of XML for Fusedocs to make writing code parses easier. Speakers included Jeremy Allaire, Hal Helms, Steve Nelson and Jeff Peters.

Next up was the Sunday **CF_Underground III** conference, held at a poolside bar at DevCon. The topics covered meta programming issues such as Xtreme Programming, using Mind Maps for design and Gotchas. There was also a game of CF-Jeopardy based on the TV show but with programming questions in it. And the **TeraTech CFBugHunt** (<http://www.cfbughunt.org/>)

award was given to the San Francisco CFUG



8am Monday morning was the start of the **Macromedia** show with keynote speakers covering the future of ColdFusion. We saw a demo of **Neo** (aka CF 6) with cool integration with a Flash front end and running as a compiled program on a java platform. The compiling interested me both as a way to use the many features of java such as messaging and Enterprise Java Beans (EJBs) but also to speed up websites and protect source code from hackers eyes! No need to learn java yourself as the compiler takes regular CF tags and outputs the java byte-code! Other neat things were objects (CF Components) with methods and properties giving us more power to write reusable code modules. There is also the ability to write web services –that is a way

of providing components over the web – for example UPS might provide a service for your program to query its tracking database.



I also met the head of ColdFusion Quality Assurance (QA), Damon Cooper, who explained the improvements in testing CF server at Macromedia to me and the million dollars in hardware at their test lab. CF 5 is the most bug-free and tuned release to date.

Code Reviews

We have started a program of programmer-to-programmer code reviews at TeraTech. The idea is to improve code quality before testing and to spread good code ideas among our team. Programmers sit down with some code that they have just finished unit testing and explain it to either a group or one colleague. Any parts that are hard to explain verbally are then examined for problem. When it comes to code we believe simpler is better, and leads to lower maintenance costs in the future. We also look out for company coding style and comments.

There are two ways of constructing a software design: One way is to make it so simple that there are obviously no deficiencies, and the other way is to make it so complicated that there are no obvious deficiencies. The first method is far more difficult.
- C.A.R. Hoare

Management Tips Corner: Raising Productivity

While it is far more important today to improve productivity than it was a year or two ago, it is also seems more difficult. Interestingly, the basics haven't changed, although they may just be a little more difficult to accomplish.

To have the most productive employees build a partnership with them, they must believe that you will treat them fairly and help them to grow and reach their true potential—and you must do exactly that.

People respond to this treatment by going the extra yard, working the extra hours, becoming, if they aren't already, real ten-percenters. As this attitude and action build, your team's productivity will skyrocket and it will make a difference to your company and to your next review.

However, if you try to fake this attitude and pay it lip-service only, your people will know, if not instantly then within months. The result will be low productivity, a high rate of attrition, and a rotten review for you!

Find out what your team needs in order to take off, really listen to the answers, and then get it for them! Most people know where they're weak and what they need to ramp up, and they want to make it happen. People know they are happiest when they are super-productive, able to make a real contribution, learn, and get ahead.

Be the manager to provide that environment, your current employer will recognize your value, your reputation will spread, and people will stand in line to work for you!

Additional ColdFusion Tip.

Everyone knows that access to shared scopes (like APPLICATION) must be locked, both read access (locked with READONLY) and write access (locked with EXCLUSIVE). But many don't realize that an IsDefined() test is a read and must be locked too. So, if you have code that looks like `<CFIF NOT IsDefined("APPLICATION.foo")>` make sure to lock it.



Happy Thanksgiving

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