



TeraTech News

Tools for Programmers

We make you a computer hero every day

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CF Discussion Topic

This topic was brought up after a ColdFusion MX Overview and Michael Smith, our President, commented.

Jon: "CFML is perceived by many developers as easy to learn. Commonly used functions can be defined using custom tags, and related functions can be packaged as "components." However, CFML is not object oriented, and the use of a tagged scripting language for large applications is likely to become cumbersome. In addition to CFML and HTML, CF pages can be – and for sophisticated applications likely will need to be – freely intermixed with other scripting languages such as VBScript, JavaScript, etc."

Michael: "I disagree. ColdFusion is a complete programming language and has been used to write large and maintainable sites. Further CFMX introduces more object-oriented features into CFML such methods, properties and inheritance. Even in CF 5 people have written large applications using CFMODULE and CFINCLUDE to split up common code for reuse. Autobytel.com is an example of a site written in CF and is both a large site and a high volume site too."

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New Team Member, Mike Salehi

Michael Salehi comes to us with over eight years of project management and software sales experience. He will be working in the areas of sales, marketing and project management.

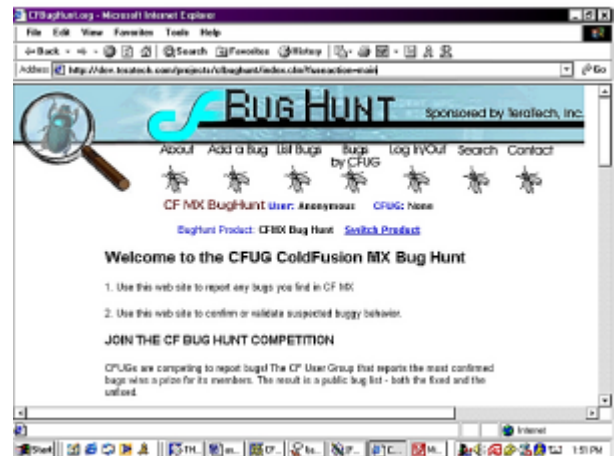


CFBugHunt Site for CFMX

Thanks for posting bugs to CFBugHunt last year. Over one hundred CF 5 bugs were reported by ColdFusion User Groups across the country. We added CFMX bugs to the site a few weeks ago (you can still get the CF 5 bug reports too). There is a new feature to edit bugs and an option to be emailed on all new bugs. If you have entered bugs before you can get your password emailed to you from the login screen. The URL is:

<http://www.cfbughunt.org/>

The winning CFUG will be announced at CF_Underground IV in October. Happy bug hunting!



Complex Document Security

By Michael Smith, President - TeraTech, Inc.

TeraTech has added a complex document security model to an extranet for a local trade association. The system was completed in budget and 2 weeks ahead of schedule using ColdFusion and SQL Server stored procedures. The client wanted to protect sensitive lobbying documents on an extranet that is shared by both employees and members of the association. Documents in different areas needed different protections and some departments such as Press had less access than others. The security applied both to the menu of documents and to the free text search of all documents.

Due to the complexity of the system TeraTech first wrote a prototype set of screens – we find that an interactive model is worth more than 1000 words of a requirements document! The client identified several important features during the prototype review. We also worked closely with the client's DBA to load the correct data into the final application.

Management Tip- Buck (Non) Movement

By Miki Saxon, CEO RampUp Solutions, Inc.

Where does the buck stop? Who's responsible? These questions have taken on new significance and immediacy in the light of daily corporate accounting and management revelations. The questions apply not just to the corporate behemoths, but to all managers, at all levels, no matter the size of the organization.

Although you wouldn't think so to listen to the top executives at Enron, etc., historically, the "head" person has been acknowledged as being responsible for the actions of her staff—but does this refer *only* to the CEO/Chairman/owner/President/Queen/Bishop/etc.?

Not really. What it does mean is that anybody in a management position, whether of people or function (departments may have a manager, but no staff, based on company size), is responsible for their domain. In other words, the accountability rests/buck stops with the top person of any given group, from team to entire corporation/government/entity.

You can rise to that responsibility by doing the following:

1. Know your own job in detail.
2. Know your own strengths and weaknesses, as well as those of your direct reports.
3. Know what your group/function is charged with accomplishing.
4. Understand your boss's strengths, weaknesses, and responsibilities.
5. Don't kid/prevaricate/lie to your boss—or to yourself.
6. Always remember that if you manage anybody or anything, *you* are the accountable/responsible party. Period.

In short, *take ownership of your area*. That means to take credit for what works and responsibility for what doesn't, and encourage others to do the same. Companies filled with "owners" quickly become winners.

ColdFusion and Section 508

By Michael Smith, President - TeraTech, Inc.

Will your website be government ok for disabled access?

There is a new Federal law known as "Section 508." That requires disabled accessibility on government websites. We will show you what you have to do to be compliant, show how ColdFusion can help (and hinder) and explain why 508 is not a bad thing after all. As many programmers for the Federal Government already know, there are new standards for Web page accessibility. Currently these standards are mandatory for all Federally sponsored sites, but who knows when the law might be extended to all sites, as ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) was. We suggest you check out disabled accessible and get the benefits of better web design now. Dealing with accessibility gets you thinking "out of the box." Can your page function without a mouse?

Imagine you cannot see and you have a friend read you the HTML source for a page over the phone so you can understand the site. That is what viewing a site with a screen reader is like. Imagine minutes of hearing header HTML code for navigation – with cryptic image file names and no English description. Imagine complex table layouts with no clue as to what each number means. Imagine applets that you don't know any thing about because there is no HTML source for them. Welcome to the world of the blind web user. Section 508 suggests how you can make their life easier when reading your web pages.

Tips:

- ///All information conveyed with color (e.g., red for a negative number) must be provided in an alternative form. (Color blindness).
- ///Documents must be readable without an associated style sheet.
- ///ALL images except shims need an ALT tag describing the picture.
- ///Roll your own session-timeout code to allow longer timeout than the CF admin default for disabled users.

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