



TeraTech News

Tools for Programmers

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CFUN-02 ColdFusion Conference

TeraTech's Fourth Annual *ColdFusion* Conference is less than a month away! Come join the fun and meet many ColdFusion experts and hear from great speakers like Ben Forta, Charlie Arehart, Raymond Camden, Sandra Clark, Michael Dinowitz, Shlomy Gantz, Hal Helms, Kevin Towes, Steve Drucker, Benjamin Elmore, Robi Sen, and Adam P. Churvis.

Don't delay in discovering more about this special event!

For more information or to register go to:
www.cfconf.org/cfun-02/

Locking required

Did you know you should lock your shared scoped ColdFusion variables? Shared scope is application, session and server variable that can be shared between multiple ColdFusion threads. According to Macromedia "If you are not locking your shared scoped variables, your application will fail under load". We have all used Application variables for what I call global constants, constants that are set once in Application.cfm and are then used throughout our program. Application.datasource or Application.dsn might come to mind. When we consider that we have to not only lock all the writes to this scope, but all reads as well, suddenly, having every <CFQUERY> use the Application.datasource variable doesn't look very good. So STOP, throw out all application variables. Well, don't throw them away, but change them to a Request.App structure. Using this method of coding, Request.App means a global constant, which is always available. You can also use other request structures for

mappings and variables for paths, Request.page for page constants. You get the picture. When you place every global constant into the Request App structure within your Application.cfm, you still have a very visual way of noting what your global constants are, but you have also totally eliminated the need for locking. (The request scope was introduced in ColdFusion 4.5. It is the same as the regular page variables scope but additionally can be seen inside custom tags called from that page.)

If you do need to lock any remaining application variables use the CFLOCK tag:

```
<cflock scope="application" type="ReadOnly"
timeout="30">
```

Use type ReadOnly for code that reads or references an application variable and type Exclusive for writing or creating application variables.

Website Price Hackers

A recent article on Wired magazine "Name Your Own Price on PayPal" by Brian McWilliams highlighted the security holes in many website. Soon after Superfreaker Studios put its software up for sale on the Web last year using the popular PayPal payment service, co-owner Shannon Sofield noticed the \$40 products were mysteriously disappearing off his site's virtual shelves.

"The culprit", he discovered, "was the cut-and-paste code provided to merchants by



California-based PayPal for sending transaction data to the payment service. Examine the PayPal payment links closely and you could easily see where the software was stored on the server. If you pointed your browser accordingly, the software was yours without paying."

"The system wasn't secure at all. People were downloading our software for free. There was a huge hole there," said Sofield, director of development for Superfreaker Studios of New York.

"Armed with nothing more than a text editor and a Web browser, a crafty fraud artist can, for example, change prices of items at hundreds of e-shops."

If you are worried about hackers attacking your site with fake form submits, edited URLs or other common tricks on your site then contact TeraTech's security expert Michael Smith, who can do a security audit on your site and have the holes fixed. Michael recently gave a talk on CF security at the CFNORTH conference in Toronto, Canada.

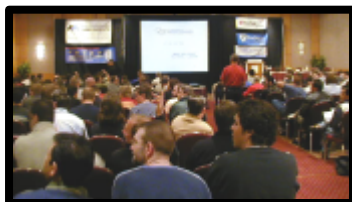
CFNORTH



Michael Smith spoke at the CFNORTH ColdFusion conference in Toronto Canada this month. Over 350 attendees came to learn about the new ColdFusion MX and other programming topics. Michael spoke on the CFDJ



author's panel together with Ben Forta, Charlie Arehart and Hal Helms and he gave a talk on ColdFusion Code security. One of the attendees wrote:
" I found your lecture to be the single most informative of the 7 lectures I attended during the conference.



Your lecture alone made the conference worth attending even if I had missed all the other presentations."

Eugene Colucci, University at Buffalo SUNY

Prototyping

(Continued from April)

Steve: So the architect is very important at this stage. When they do pick one a set of design templates—and they may like none of them initially—I have them sign off on the design templates.

Hal: Just like we do the prototype.

Steve: Yes. Tell them about the stamp you use.

Hal: Oh, this is from my days doing plans for building architects. I print out the design template (or the prototype) and then have a rubber stamp that says "[] Approved [] Rejected" and then a space for both me and the client to sign.

Steve: Presumably you're not rejecting your own design templates.

Hal: No, that's for the client. It may be that they like three of four, but the fourth one isn't quite what they're looking for. Now, back in my cabinetmaker days, I also had a third option, "[] Approved with changes" where someone could conditionally approve it, but specify a change that had to be made: "Bullnose all edges"—that sort of thing.

Steve: Sounds dangerous.

Hal: It's not bad in the building trades because everyone is speaking the same jargon.

Steve: Yeah—I don't even know what "bull nose" means.

Hal: Right—and clients aren't going to know enough to do that either. It just causes problems. Instead, I want to redo the design template until there are no changes—until we have it just right.

Steve: So no "approved with changes".

Hal: No. Just straight up or down. Yes or no.

Steve: Let's hope so. In the meantime, we've got a great process for uncovering what the client really wants—what's important to them. We can take the wireframes that we did and combine them with the design templates to produce a prototype that will be reusable in the real application.

Article courtesy of Hal Helms at <http://www.halhelms.com/>

Being a Manager

The day you decided to be a manager you chose to be judged by the accomplishments of your group instead of your own. Even if you work hands-on or 24-hours a day, your own work can't offset a poorly performing group. Build your group (whether a team or the whole company) and you'll be richly rewarded in many ways, but your greatest reward will be watching average players morph into stars under your guidance!

Build them by improving communications, enhancing motivation, strengthening staffing, and encouraging training. Remember never to criticize an employee in the presence of others, always praise in public and criticize in private. When criticism is necessary keep it on a positive plane. There is always something within the same area to compliment first. Then state the problem area and immediately brainstorm ways to improve it. Draw your employees' input to assure their buy-in to the action. Honor and respect them.

Lao Tzu said it best, "As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their existence. The next best, the people honor and praise. The next, the people fear; and the next, the people hate... When the best leader's work is done the people say, "We did it ourselves!" To lead the people, walk behind them. RampUp Solutions Inc.

hire -> retain -> flourish!

<http://www.RampUpSolutions.com>

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