



SmartBear Software

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White Paper – Is Code Review for You?

Get started quickly - use these tips to try out code review for one week, measure the results, and evaluate the benefits for your team.

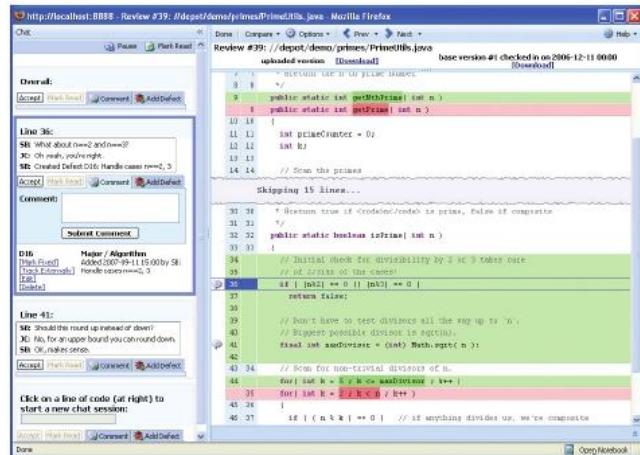
Is Code Review for You?

Know in one week!

Spend a week reviewing code with Code Collaborator, measure the results, then make an informed decision. The average team finds and fixes a bug every 10-15 minutes using this time-saving code review tool.

Three Simple Steps.

1. Download a free evaluation copy of Code Collaborator, the premier code review tool from SmartBear Software.
2. Have your team spend 25 minutes per day reviewing code for one week.
3. Assess your team's results using straight-forward metrics (number of bugs found vs. time spent).



Chat using file differences for context

Why Review Code?

- Improve overall code quality (design, structure, comments, maintainability, documentation, unit tests).
- Ship fewer defects while saving time in the long run.
- Improve team communication.
- Educate and mentor junior programmers.
- Propagate code expertise: Code review increases your whole team's knowledge about the whole code base. Having only one or two team members who are experts on all (or even parts) of your code is a huge risk.

Decide: Is Code Review for You?

After your team tries code review for a week, evaluate the results using the review data that Code Collaborator automatically tracks (including number of bugs found, man-hours spent in review, and number of lines of code inspected). To calculate how much time your team spends to find each bug, divide the total time spent on reviews by the total number of defects found. You may be surprised by the results: **most teams find and fix one bug for every 10-15 minutes spent doing reviews!**

Then share the results with your team, get their opinions, and decide if it's worth it. You might find they're immediately on board. For extra motivation, consider how much it would cost to fix each bug once the product ships.

Achieve Maximum Results in Minimal Time: Suggestions for a Fast Start.

- Review changes to the stable branch only.
- Review changes to the core module that all other code depends on.
- Review changes to the “top 10 scariest files” as voted by the developers.
- Review only unit tests – if they are complete and not over-specifies, any bugs or other problems can be fixed safely later.
- Review only changes, not entire files.
- Review code whenever developers think it’s necessary, such as when they have concerns about a section of code, when a domain expert can lend specific expertise, or when they’re working on code they didn’t write and may not fully understand.

Advice for Addressing Common Team Concerns.

1 – It’s too much hassle – Too often, developers associate code review with extensive meetings and mounds of paperwork. On the contrary, tool-assisted code review is efficient, fast, easy and painless.

2 – Code review will ruin our team culture – Done with the right attitude, code review fosters a positive culture change. Tool-assisted code review is an easy (and sometimes even fun!) opportunity to learn, mentor, and build a better product, and it usually improves team dynamics and communication.

3 – We don’t want to change our process – Tool-assisted code review does not necessarily mean changing your process – it can be used to enhance any existing process. And, trying code review for a week – and sharing results – is a non-threatening way to let change-resistant groups see the immediate benefits of enhancing their processes with code review.

“Code Collaborator greatly simplifies the review process by automating the planning, presentation, execution, and management of reviews.”

*-- Chris Holl
Director, Corp Software Engineering,
Intuit*

“The benefits of inspections are so profound that even the smallest outfits must take advantage of this technique.”

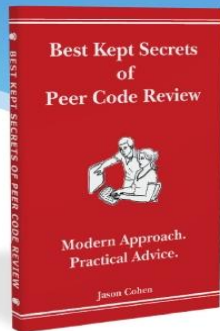
*-- Jack Ganssle
Consultant/Columnist
Ganssle Group*

4 – We’ll miss our deadline! – Think you don’t have time to review code now? How much time do you have to fix problems later, once bugs have propagated to your customer base?

And how much will it cost, in terms of time, money, and in damage to customer relationships? You can’t afford not to review your code. [If you want more information about all of this, get the free book, [Best Kept Secrets of Peer Code Review](#).]

Want more information on code review or Code Collaborator? Contact SmartBear Software and we’ll be happy to help!

FREE BOOK on Best Practices for Lightweight Code Review



Ten essays on implementing code review and overcoming social issues. Includes results from the largest case study ever conducted.

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