



Article By: Chris Holl,
Director of Software Best Practices

User Story – Pioneering CodeCollaborator

One of the very first CodeCollaborator users talks about his experience pioneering the tool and improving his team's code review process.

With no extra effort from our developers, CodeCollaborator™ automatically captures the code review metrics we need to support our continuous process improvement.

I first became acquainted with SmartBear when I was Director of Software Best Practices for a large and very well known personal finance company. While that company has a standard policy against being mentioned in anything that looks like an endorsement, I am happy to share my personal experiences working with SmartBear and their products. In my role I helped divisions around the country implement process improvements to increase quality and productivity, and promoted the use of measurement. CodeReports was our first SmartBear purchase, which we bought to gather source lines of code (SLOC) information from Perforce running on Windows. SmartBear really partnered with us to expand the initial capabilities of CodeReports and resolve issues, and we built a great working relationship.

We had started implementing formal inspections in late 2001 and had been filling out forms to capture inspection metrics. By mid-2002 we were using a home-grown application to store the metrics specified by the Fagan Defect-Free Process™. While adequate to record metric data, the application was a bit distracting to use during inspections, where it could slow down the process if the team had to wait while defects were entered.

Collecting data to show the return on inspections and help improve the inspection process became one of our hurdles in successfully promoting this valuable best practice. About a year later, SmartBear started exploring the opportunity of providing a better code inspection/review tool. They listened to the pros and cons of our tool, and asked about our needs and what we thought would be an ideal inspection tool. As they demonstrated with CodeReports, SmartBear did a superb job of listening to the problems and opportunities. When they showed us early prototypes of CodeCollaborator to get feedback and gather more requirements, it was clear they had really listened to their customers. We signed up to be an early adopter and continued to partner with SmartBear to help evolve the application.

Our initial needs were to simplify entering data during inspections so the participants wouldn't be slowed down and

Platform: Windows.

Source Control Management Software: Perforce®.

Development Environment: Eclipse, Microsoft Visual Studio Team System®.

Industry: Software Development.

The Challenge: Make it easy to promote the best practice of reviews and inspections while capturing valuable process data.

“CodeCollaborator is easy to install, easy to use, and provides great visibility and metrics for reviews.”

– Chris Holl

lose momentum. CodeCollaborator goes far beyond this, particularly in reading information directly from the configuration management system to show reviewers exactly what changed from version to version. It's helpful to a team sitting together to perform a review, or it can be used asynchronously by people across the world. Entering defects is very easy and doesn't hinder the inspection at all. Other metric data, such as time spent performing the inspection, are automatically captured. As our first users proclaimed the benefits of CodeCollaborator, our old tool was quickly abandoned. Adoption was viral, and with minimal internal promotion it became adopted by hundreds of developers to perform code reviews.

CodeCollaborator is easy to install, easy to use, and provides great visibility and metrics for reviews. I have given many presentations on the value of doing reviews, and CodeCollaborator data makes it easy to prove the ROI, which in turn increases adoption. And the best part is that data are collected without asking the users to do anything outside of conducting the review! Not only is CodeCollaborator a great product, but I'm certain SmartBear will evolve and improve it by continuing to listen to their customers.

“When SmartBear showed us early prototypes of CodeCollaborator to get feedback and gather more requirements, it was clear they had really listened to their customers.”

“Adoption was viral, and with minimal internal promotion it became adopted by hundreds of developers to perform code reviews.”

“Not only is CodeCollaborator a great product, but I'm certain SmartBear will evolve and improve it by continuing to listen to their customers.”

For more information on CodeCollaborator, [contact](#) SmartBear Software today!

www.SmartBear.com



100 Cummings Center, Suite 234N,
Beverly, MA 01915

www.SmartBear.com