

Re: Delphi Bugs

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Delphi/borland.public.delphi.non-technical/2004-08/2100.html>

From: Bob Dawson (*RBDawson_at_prodigy.net*)

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"Derek Davidson" wrote

>

- > *Why is that relevant? As you rightly state, all code is owned and*
- > *no self-respecting professional owner is going to allow untested*
- > *code into a tip revision. That would be dumb.*

Read: There's no such thing as an open source method for major projects; the bizarre is a myth.

- > *But there's nothing stopping ANYONE from changing their copy*
- > *of the code, making use of it themselves*

Nor is there any advantage to it. Without a full owner's perspective, personally branching someone else's code is simple folly, for multiple reasons stated previously. That's just not something a professional developer has time to do.

- > *and uploading it to the owner for them to review, test and (hopefully)*
- > *incorporate in the next code revision. You CANNOT do this with*
- > *closed source.*

Au contraire.

Anyone who finds a bug in Delphi, JBuilder, etc. can document it, submit it to Quality Central for Borland to (using your exact words) "review, test and (hopefully) incorporate in the next code revision." The only difference is whether the submission is in the form of provable bad behavior (i.e. a reproducible test case) or that PLUS a proposed code branch.

For the largest and most significant kinds of bugs—logical errors, missing logic, design errors, design inconsistencies, unrealized assumptions—submitting reports at the provable behavior level is orders of magnitude easier than determining the fix, since the fix may require code changes in multiple locations, may impact on other code, may impact on other planned changes, etc. It's simply silly for anyone not the code owner to try to specify changes at that level. I'll argue with Danny, John, Allen, or any other Borlander about behavior expectations, but I don't have the hubris

to pretend I'm going to write their code for them.

Or to go back to the 'topic case'—if Danny had rewritten the way Linux handles library loads, would Linus have accepted it? Doesn't sound too likely, as Linus apparently believes the behavior 'correct' for historical reasons. Same at any level—in my work, if a user passed me a code change, I'd ask him what behavior he was really trying to change. I would be extremely unlikely to have any interest in looking at his 'fix' until I understood that. Owners change code—that's what being the owner means.

The only case in which a code-level submission would really be meaningful is that of a simply and demonstrable code error, such as

```
for i := 0 to Something.Count //sic Count -1
```

But those aren't particularly hard bugs to find in the first place, and even they may raise regression test issues.

> *buy so we can be sure to have control. I suspect NONE of us buy
> without because we can "hack it and do it anyway".*

There's a considerable difference in complexity between a component and an OS or development environment. And even there I think your argument fails. Yes, I'm licensed for the QuantumGrid with source—but I'm not likely to try to fork it. If I have a problem with behavior I'm not going to try and rewrite it, I'm just going to report the behavior; fixing it is DevEx's job. If the problem is a show stopper, then I look for another vender—it's that simple. We vault the source code as a versioning issue, not because we have any expectation or interest in working on it.

> *have shown (and with which I agree) is that all code is owned.
> I'm as surprised by that as I was when I discovered that the
> Pope was a catholic.*

Still is as far as I know <g>. Yes—all code is owned, and thus all code is the product of a cathedral approach—don't see why that implication is so hard to follow. Which does mean that source code is effectively read-only in public places.

As for personal branches, telling someone that they'd be better off with open source presumes they have the time, background, and need to care. That's an extremely rare conjunction. In the real world, if Delphi was open source and I found one of the developers who works for me patching the compiler or rewriting the IDE, I'd counsel him pretty plainly about 'career limiting decisions.' We've got our own work to do.

bobD