

Re: Replacing Delphi developers

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From: David Reeve (*dree4456_at_big-pond.net.au*)

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"Doug Kanter" <ancientangler@hotmail.com> wrote in message
news:MLrzb.148\$c54.64@news02.roc.ny...

[snip]

- > *However, I'm curious: If Delphi didn't exist, what would be your next choice*
- > *for a 14 year old who seems to be serious about pursuing programming (and*
- > *whose dad is a stickler for good coding habits)?*

Some people can foresee future difficulties, and some need to fall over them. Good coding practice is one of those things that many people take on board only because they have fallen on their faces through bad coding practice.

If you never do more than 1000 line programs, the need for structure and order is not mandatory. Indeed, I find that young people can keep track of a page of spaghetti better than their elders. But, and here is the rub, there comes a time when either because the project has become too large, or often because other programmers are called in to assist, that chaos management fails and suddenly nothing seems recoverable. Its that 'Oh no, we are going to have to re-write it all' sound that management just loves to hear :-).

Delphi, as does VB, encourages 'component jockeys' and you don't have watch this ng for very long to come across a poster who has reached the limits of what you can do by hanging all your code off visual components. You know the ones, 'I've got these variables on this form and I need to access them from this other form but if I close the first formetc'. However, is this such a bad thing? In my experience, the first step is to provide a fun environment, and sitting a 14year old down with Turbo C or Turbo Pascal with nothing clickable in sight is hardly going to excite. The interface looks 'old fashioned', and you are going to sound 'old fashioned' insisting on doing everything the hard way. Experience, funnily enough, can only be gained with age, not from sitting in lectures, nor from the choice of some sort of puritanical programming language that keeps you on the straight and narrow'No GOTOs here, my son!'. Programming practice is a cultural attribute and must be learnt from other programmers, by hanging out on a ng, by being part of team working on a multi 100,000 line project. Only then do

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you begin to see that this is elegant code, this is ugly code, and this other is a time-bomb waiting to explode.

Dave