Twenty Years of CrossTalk

It is my privilege to congratulate CrossTalk on 20 years of publishing articles for and by the defense software community. Longevity in any field is not easy, but longevity in the fast-paced world of software is indeed a notable accomplishment. The occurring changes during the past 20 years are far too countless to mention, yet they have all contributed to the present state of defense software today. Likewise, those of us currently involved with CrossTalk stand on the shoulders of the authors, editors, sponsors, and publishers who went before us, all of whom significantly contributed in assisting CrossTalk in fulfilling its mission of informing readers of new industry trends, proven methodologies, cutting-edge technologies, innovative practices, and, of course, lessons learned.

In my role as Director of 309 Software Maintenance Group, I feel a renewed resolve and duty to see CrossTalk thrive in its role to disseminate information to a community with such diverse and crucial responsibilities. CrossTalk has proven its worth by educating countless engineers and adding value to our processes and projects. The continued publication of CrossTalk can only further enhance those advances.

In this special 20th anniversary issue, Gerald M. Weinberg takes a bi-directional view of where defense software had been and where it is going in his article *What Have 20 Years Accomplished and What Is Left to Accomplish in the Next 20 Years?*, while Dr. Linda Ibrahim provides insightful thoughts about the progress of the industry as a whole in *A Process Improvement Commentary*.

Watts S. Humphrey cautions readers in his article, *The Process Revolution*, not to repeat mistakes and to build reliability and consistency into your processes by consistently recording and learning from history. In the same vein, Paul Kimmerly's article, *Heroes: Carrying a Double-Edged Sword*, discusses the benefits and limitations of heroes in process improvement efforts.

You may have heard the saying *the more things change the more they stay the same*. Interestingly, Dr. Alistair Cockburn explores the merits of this platitude in a software sense by reviewing Agile practices in his article *Good Old Advice*, and focuses on Agile's applicability in today's world.

Conversely, Jamie Hohman and Dr. Hossein Saiedian provide guidance in their article, *Wiki Customization to Resolve Management Issues in Distributed Software Projects*. This article adds new dimensions to the dynamics of traditional project management and provides methods of easing the stresses brought on by trying to manage distributed projects.

Lastly, don't miss Gary A. Petersen's witty walk down CrossTalk's memory lane in his article, *CrossTalk: The Long and Winding Road*, as he examines the maturity and growth of the magazine as it developed from a diminutively distributed black-and-white copy to its current form and shape.

It is my hope that CrossTalk continues to publish insightful articles for another 20 years and that together we can celebrate just as many accomplishments in the defense software community with the 40th anniversary issue.

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