CMMI "Just-in-Time" Training CD-ROM offered to STC Conference attendees

Working in collaboration with the Software Engineering Institute to help organizations transition to the use of the Capability Maturity Model® (CMM)® Integration (CMMI^{SM}), the Computer Resources Support Improvement Program (CRSIP) is sponsoring and funding an effort to demonstrate the utility and feasibility of using Just-in-Time CD-ROM-based training with access to the Internet. A CMMI CD-ROM is being developed, for distribution to all attendees of STC 2000, that demonstrates the use of the technology in providing an alternative CMMI training and information delivery scheme. Since STC 2000 precedes the release of CMMI v. 1.0, draft material will be used. Anyone who offers review and feedback comments on the presentation alternatives and use of the technology in supporting the CMMI transition and training will be offered a free CD-ROM update after release of CMMI v 1.0.

Software Engineering Certification

The IEEE Computer Society and the ACM approved a Software Engineering Code of Ethics and Professional Practice to provide a standard for teaching and practicing software engineering. http://computer.org/en/tab/swecc/code.htm. Many states are considering laws similar to that in Texas that requires certification of individuals claiming to be a "software engineer." Because of the topic relevance, IEEE will sponsor a special track during Software Technology Conference in May 2000 to discuss software engineering best practices, standards, education and accreditation.

Beware the Ides of March Madness

BACKTALK

This time of year, it can be difficult to concentrate on anything but basketball, specifically the NCAA Men's College Basketball Tournament. If you have accrued a couple of extra sick days, you can watch the opening rounds.

The CBS SportsLine® streaming real-time scoreboard with moving X's and O's and detailed statistical information can help you "work" more efficiently during March, providing you work where such tantalizing items make it past the firewall.

However, when an avid basketball fan is deprived of the opportunity to watch every minute of every game (sometimes in a split screen) of the tournament, it can result in a temporary psychotic break that causes this fan to free-associate numbers of the tournament with numbers of software and ~~hardwood~~ hardware.

This tournament is a single-elimination event that is the epitome of fairness: anyone can win. All games are played on neutral courts, and anything can happen. School Never-Been-There-Before is capable of beating School Been-There-Every-Year. In a way, it's like the software market.

Each year, 64 teams make it to the so-called Big Dance. It used to be 32 in the good old days and some say it should now be 128 so every (basketball) program is given a chance to run. These numbers remind me of RAM.

Now, 64 MB of RAM is not enough to efficiently run a program like Quark Xpress, but since there are only 64 teams in the tournament, it suffices.

After the first tournament round, 32 teams remain. That makes me think of all the 32-bit programs I can install. Those 32 teams play against each other and are whittled to a so-called Sweet 16. And those 16-bit programs were sweet in their day.

The (basketball) programs take a few days off before moving to the regional finals, where 16 teams are pared down to eight. Some call them the Elite Eight; others refer to them as to the Super Eight. Whatever you call them, you definitely need at least 8 GB of storage space to hold all that software.

The winners of the eight become the Final Four, the finest teams in the land. You do not have to be a basketball fan to be acquainted with the *hoopla*. By the way, we are in the fourth generation of computer systems with an eye on the fifth with implications of natural languages and artificial intelligence. The fifth generation will be akin to a fifth wheel. How could we want anything more than four?

Duke and Utah will defeat Cincinnati and North Carolina to become the final two teams (OK, so maybe I won't win my office pool . . .) and the final two contestants in the computer realm will be the human being and the computer.

Am I a cynic if I can imagine that the computer will be the last one standing?

Wait a minute. While this enormous Quark file was freezing up my computer, Randy the systems guy told me he would install 64 more MB of RAM. I'll need to go back and add some more ~~buzzers~~ bells and whistles to this issue. And please understand I wrote this from a ~~layupman's~~ layman's perspective.

—*Matt Welker*