

# Coma

Gunnar Schaefer   Marcel Kyas   Martin Steffen

Christian-Albrechts University Kiel

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Intro

Raw results

Evaluation

# Coma

*Conference Manager: a web-based conference manager assistant tool*

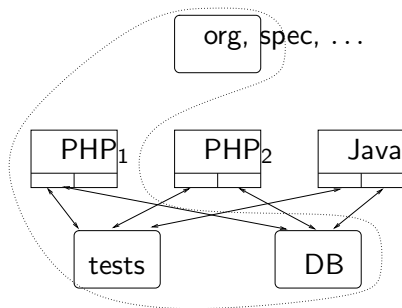
- rather **standard** kind of (small) web application
- rather **standard** kind of **techniques**
  - apache ...
  - JAVA
  - php ...
  - *mysql*
- **given** informal spec, discussion with us
- **to be done:**
  1. concept, specification, choice of tool (platform ... )
  2. implementation,
  3. presentation & roll-out: **today!**

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# Results & structure



- **Structure:** 4 + 1 groups
- 3 installable<sup>1</sup>, runnable<sup>2</sup>, tested (sort of) tool(oids), all modules integrated (ah, well)
  - common **data model** as core
  - (perhaps) common **test data** (in principle)
- no **CD-Rom** this time ...

<sup>1</sup>I'm optimistic, this is a prophecy as of the 7th of February ...

<sup>2</sup>stuttering

## Raw and mindless statistics

|                |                                 |                                |
|----------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| work directory | 30M                             |                                |
| revisions      | $\geq 5000^3$                   |                                |
| snapshots      | none (!)                        |                                |
| files          | JAVA                            | > 50                           |
|                | php,tpl                         | > 250, 60                      |
|                | L <sup>A</sup> T <sub>E</sub> X | > 50                           |
| communication  |                                 |                                |
|                | global meetings                 | ca. 14 <sup>4</sup>            |
|                | emails <sup>5</sup>             | > 500                          |
|                | bugzilla                        | > 230 reported errors, 40 open |
|                | bulletin board                  | > 400 articles                 |

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<sup>3</sup>The statistic is rather misleading, since some of the groups “misused” the version management also as “web-space deployment tool”.

<sup>4</sup>Not all where globally important

<sup>5</sup>in my inbox/outbox

## Tools

| name               | version     | description     | installed at |     | needed by      |                |   |           |     |        |        |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|-----|----------------|----------------|---|-----------|-----|--------|--------|
|                    |             |                 | snert        | lab | developers     |                |   | customers |     |        |        |
|                    |             |                 |              |     | p <sub>1</sub> | p <sub>2</sub> | j | test      | org | server | client |
| common development |             |                 |              |     |                |                |   |           |     |        |        |
| ant                | 1.6.2       | build tool      | +            | +   | o              | o              | + | [+]       | o   | +      | -      |
| gnu make           | 3.80        | build tool      | +            | +   | o              | o              | - | o         | +   | +      | -      |
| subversion         | 1.0.9       | CM              | +            | [+] | +              | +              | + | +         | +   | o      | -      |
| common basis       |             |                 |              |     |                |                |   |           |     |        |        |
| apache             | 2.0.51      | web server      | +            | [-] | +              | +              | + | +         | -   | +      | -      |
| mysql              | 3.23.58     | data base       | +            | [-] | +              | +              | + | +         | -   | +      | -      |
| "java"             |             |                 |              |     |                |                |   |           |     |        |        |
| jakarta tomcat     | 5.0.30      | web server      | +            | -   | -              | -              | + | +         | -   | +      | -      |
| java               | 1.5.0       | language        | +            | +   | -              | -              | + | +         | -   | +      | -      |
| java lib's         | various     | further libs    | [+]          | [+] | -              | -              | + | +         | -   | +      | -      |
| "php"              |             |                 |              |     |                |                |   |           |     |        |        |
| php                | 4.3.8       | scripting lang. | +            | -   | +              | +              | - | +         | -   | +      | -      |
| php doc            |             | doc generation  | +            | -   | o              | o              | - | o         | -   | -      | -      |
| common testing     |             |                 |              |     |                |                |   |           |     |        |        |
| junit              |             | unit testing    | +            | +   | -              | -              | + | +         | -   | -      | -      |
| php unit           |             | unit testing    | +            | +   | [+]            | [+]            | - | +         | -   | -      | -      |
| puretester         |             | web app. test   | -            | +   | -              | [-]            | - | +         | -   | -      | +      |
| common spec + doc  |             |                 |              |     |                |                |   |           |     |        |        |
| jude               |             | design          | +            | +   | +              | +              | + | +         | +   | -      | -      |
| ΛT <sub>E</sub> X  | tetex 2.0.2 | doc             | +            | +   | o              | o              | o | o         | +   | o      | -      |
| hevea              | 1.07        | doc/html        | -            | +   | o              | o              | o | o         | +   | -      | -      |

# Development process

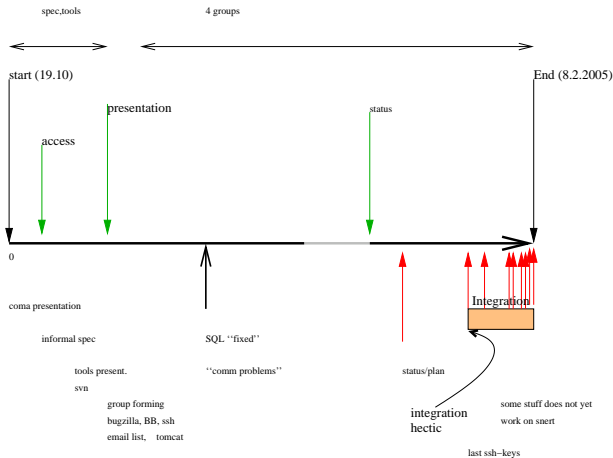
- [subversion](#) for version management<sup>6</sup>
- [bug tracking](#) with Bugzilla
- email-list(s), bulletin board,
- common public [web-page](#)
- (almost) weekly progress [report](#)
- 3 [review](#) meetings, including this one.

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<sup>6</sup>some CVS descendant



# Timeline



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# What's good?

- it's over!

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- it's **over!**
- we have running tools ready-oid and shipped
- not a single **drop-out** during semester (that was a **serious!** problem in previous F-Praktika)
- the **task** as such was ok
- **snert** (despite it's age and performance limitations) did quite **ok**, little down-time, **no data loss**
- quite some heterogenous environment/tool sets  $\Rightarrow$  lots of (well, practical) stuff to cope with, to find ones way

# Neutral/beyond our control

- many participants
- some communication overhead: Yes! that beyond our control. Even with 1 person there's communication overhead<sup>7</sup>
- little theory (some people like that, some don't)
  - in addition to (fail to) work together and get organized etc, we did not learn anything theoretical
  - + more effort into other stuff.
- lot's of tiny little problems: well, that how it is ...

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<sup>7</sup>if the task is big enough/long enough, the programmer at some point during of the task has to communicate with the programmer later state (himself, only older), for instance via documentation.

## Things we did not like

- **passivity**
- some internal **in-fighting** within some groups
- “**death march**” or at least monstrous hectic at the end (year after it’s the same)<sup>8</sup>
- **laaaate** integration/testing on the target platform (year after year, it’s the same)<sup>9</sup>
- we did not manage to have a **common spec**
  - the common **data model** costed to much sweat/time/friction already, the course was on the brink of breaking!
  - we (as org) did not had the **time** to hunt after that issue as we tried for the **data-model spec**.

<sup>8</sup>Actually, it seems almost to be a universal constant for all human endeavor

...

<sup>9</sup>In this year, it was in some of the groups in particular postpone **till the veerry end** to try out *snert* even if it was said from the beginning: there is exactly/only **one platform** which counts, namely snert. Note that even if we pretended that we intend to do it platform-independent, announcing a predefined machine in advance is of course the opposite of platform-independence

## Other remarks, heard

- the task is **too small** for so many people?<sup>10</sup>
  - well, could indeed be ...
- **too many comm. channels** actually, we don't exactly know what to leave out
  - indispensable: **svn**, also **bugzilla**<sup>11</sup>
  - **bulletin board**: you will have noticed: the BB went much out of use lately, when the hacking effort became harder!
- **global meetings**:
  - perhaps one should make meetings smaller,
  - sometimes they seem to be a **waste of time** for most participants, but no: **I'm not talking about the data-base discussions!**

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<sup>10</sup>remarked by more than one participant. E.g. in the form "If I were alone, I could ..."

<sup>11</sup>Some did not like bugzilla, but I think it was more important to have some bug tracking



## Other remarks, heard

- the task is **too small** for so many people?<sup>10</sup>
  - well, could indeed be ... **But think again!** This implies either
    - only projects with **less people** are possible, or
    - **adding** more requirements/tasks/feature would have made it **simpler!**
- **too many comm. channels** actually, we don't exactly know what to leave out
  - indispensable: **svn**, also **bugzilla**<sup>11</sup>
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# What about the org group?

- **be harder/stricter** (deadlines, requirements, whatever) ??
- **specify** exactly what you want, and we do it
  - can be advantageous. On the other hand: the challenge here was: we (the org) are the *clients* we know (a bit) what we want, you have to find a solution
- **monitor** exactly what's going on, repair . . .
  - not really possible with  $> 20$  participants
- **repeat** the *Praktikum*
  - + less effort for us, more time for monitoring etc
  - + better feeling for the hard parts, better assistance in “load-balance” etc.
  - less “realistic”, later your boss/manager . . . will not exactly know what you are doing, there won't be “Musterlösungen” in your later life.

# Things to do/org better

- not two spec groups?
  - avoids bickering/merging/friction/disappointment which spec to take
  - we cannot have all the rest as tools-groups, because the tools groups where wasted time
- testing
  - the integration/set-up for the testing **must** be organized differently, this year the set-up did not work out
- tools/platform choice:
  - largely a **waste of time, just do it/document it** and that's it<sup>12</sup>
- some small stuff:
  - we **lost** some weeks:
    - for instance after the first demo,
    - because of protracted SQL-discussion
    - after X-mas, delay in the status/plan
  - **hard deadline/milestone** around X-mas

<sup>12</sup>In realistic situations, the choice of weapons and platforms is of course not a waste of time. In our case, I'd say it was.

## Famous quotes from development hell

We collected those during this semester (sources kept [anonymous](#))

*“in the course of Hanus, the work-load is 3 times as hard, and it scores only 4 hours”*

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*“if the testers/some others needs a `Readme` to understand what’s going on in my code, then they are free to let it be”<sup>a</sup>*

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<sup>a</sup>See again the foil with the “raw and mindless statistic” and think of an answer to that yourself.

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*“of course we have a spec; it’s not written down, however, because we have it all in our head”<sup>a</sup>*

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<sup>a</sup>Ya, ya

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*year after year our all-time favorite: "it's not my fault. At my machine it works . . . "*<sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup>shorter still: "Ah, [trust me](#), you don't need to try it. It works!". A variant is "we don't need to test it [there](#), because it works [here](#)". still shorter: it's [compatible](#)!

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*integration will be a piece of cake, don't worry.*



# Famous quotes from development hell

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*Request from group-X to their tester: “additionally, an [in-stallation](#) test<sup>a</sup> would be handy, such that our tool is installed in a “Weissbrotwelt” as well”<sup>b</sup>*

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<sup>a</sup>1. February

<sup>b</sup>in the same bug thread a comment is again the classic: “bei mir aufm Laptop funktioniert alles”.

# Famous quotes from development hell

We collected those during this semester (sources kept [anonymous](#))

*Request from group-X to their tester: “additionally, an [in-stallation](#) test<sup>a</sup> would be handy, such that our tool is installed in a “Weissbrotwelt” as well”<sup>b</sup> and please note down exactly what steps are needed [ . . . ]. We have the problem that [we](#)<sup>c</sup> have forgotten what we did to install our tool.”<sup>d</sup>*

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<sup>a</sup>1. February

<sup>b</sup>in the same bug thread a comment is again the classic: “bei mir aufm Laptop funktioniert alles”.

<sup>c</sup>the programmers/developers!

<sup>d</sup>Remember the “*Real-programmers-don't-need-Readme's*”-comment 2 minutes ago?

## Why is it not a tool?

*The result/the process is not “professional”, why is this?<sup>a</sup>*

<sup>a</sup>Professional in the sense of “good” (best-practice/state-of-the-art, or whatever jargon word you prefer). “Professional” is not meant in the sense of making a living out of it. After all, rather soon **you are professional** computer experts/scientists! Also it does not imply that all tools that one can sell/buy are better than yours ...

## Why is it not a tool?

- well, we listed some points which we think did not work/haven't been organized too well
  - almost everyone was mainly busy with **his module**, little serious effort outside one's own home ground field.<sup>13</sup>
  - **symptom**: in the general meetings: desinterest or even “**bad vibes**” if “**forced**” to discuss things beyond one owns interest<sup>14</sup>
- ⇒ **much more** effort into “boring” stuff] e.g., 2 persons (or more) in a group doing nothing else than **integrating**, checking whether all **fits together**, having an **technical overview** over the **interplay**, perhaps group “sub-leader”
- difficult in a course: “what's my contribution?”, “do I pass the exam without a line of code written?”, who is the subleader
  - one single semester afterwards: just **testing**/documenting/making it usable?

<sup>13</sup>we don't know directly, it's an impression: especially the PHP1 group, they kept problems —if they had any— under the carpet.