# Painless Bug Tracking

Michael Tsai

2013/10/18

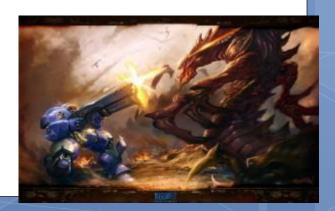# Reference

- http://www.joelonsoftware.com/articles/fog0000000029.html

# Painless Bug Tracking

- "At any given time, I can only remember two bugs."

- "Keeping a database of bugs is one of the hallmarks of a good software team."

- "… without an organized database listing all known bugs in the code, you are simply going to ship low quality code. "

# Every good bug report needs exactly three things

- Steps to reproduce,
- What you expected to see, and
- What you saw instead.

| | |
|---|---|
| **ID** | <u>1203</u> |
| **Project** | Bee Flogger 2.0 |
| **Area** | FTP Client |
| **Title** | **Uploading file causes FTP server to dump core** |
| **Assigned To** | CLOSED |
| | |
| **Status** | CLOSED (RESOLVED - FIXED) |
| **Priority** | 2 - Must Fix |
| **Fix For** | 2.0 Alpha |
| **Version** | Build 2019 |
| **Computer** | Jill's iMac, Mac OS 9.0, 128M RAM, 1024x768 millions of colors |
| | |

A Bug gets assigned to one person. ("hot potato")

**Description**

**11/1/2000 Opened by <u>Jill the Very, Very Good Tester</u>** * Start Bee Flogger
* Create an unnamed document simply containing the letter "a"
* Click on the FTP button on the toolbar
* Try to ftp to your server

BUG: Observe; the ftp server is no longer responding. Indeed ps -augx shows that it is not even running and there is a core dump in /.

EXPECTED: No crash **11/1/2000 Assigned to Willie the Lead Developer by <u>Jill the Very, Very Good Tester</u>**
**11/2/2000 (Yesterday) RESOLVED - WON'T FIX by <u>Willie the Lead Developer</u>**
Not our code, Jill, that's just proftpd which comes with Linux.

**11/2/2000 (Yesterday) Reactivated (assigned to Willie the Lead Developer) by <u>Jill the Very, Very Good Tester</u>**
That doesn't sound right. I've never been able to crash proftpd when I connect with a normal ftp client. Our code crashes it every single time. Ftp servers don't just "crash".

When it gets "resolved", it will get assigned to the original opener

**11/3/2000 (Today) Assigned to Mikey the Programmer by Willie the Lead Developer**
Mikey, can you look at this? Maybe your client code is doing something wrong.
**11/3/2000 (Today) RESOLVED - FIXED by Mikey the Programmer**
I think I was passing the user name instead of the password or something...
**11/3/2000 (Today) Reactivated (assigned to Mikey the Programmer) by Jill the Very, Very Good Tester**
Still happens in Build 2021.
**11/3/2000 (Today) Edited by Mikey the Programmer**
Whoa. That's strange. Lemme debug this.
**11/3/2000 (Today) Edited by Mikey the Programmer**
I'm thinking it might be MikeyStrCpy()...
**11/3/2000 (Today) RESOLVED - FIXED by Mikey the Programmer**
Ahhh!
FIXED!
**11/3/2000 (Today) Closed by Jill the Very, Very Good Tester**
Appears fixed in build 2022, so I'll go ahead and close this.

# Ten tips

- Reduce the repro steps to the *minimal steps*
- **The only person who can *close* a bug is the person who opened it** in the first place. Anyone can *resolve* it, but only the person who saw the bug can really be sure that what they saw is fixed.
- There are many ways to resolve a bug. For example: *fixed*, *won't fix*, *postponed*, *not repro*, *duplicate*, or *by design*.
- ***Not Repro* means that nobody could ever reproduce the bug**. Programmers often use this when the bug report is missing the repro steps.
- You'll want to keep careful track of versions.

# Ten tips

- **If you're a programmer**, and you're having trouble getting testers to use the bug database, just *don't accept bug reports by any other method*. If your testers are used to sending you email with bug reports, just bounce the emails back to them with a brief message: "please put this in the bug database. I can't keep track of emails."

- **If you're a tester**, and you're having trouble getting programmers to use the bug database, just *don't tell them about bugs* - put them in the database and let the database email them.

- **If you're a programmer**, and only some of your colleagues use the bug database, just start assigning them bugs in the database. Eventually they'll get the hint.

# Ten tips

- **If you're a manager**, and nobody seems to be using the bug database that you installed at great expense, start assigning new features to people using bugs. A bug database is also a great "unimplemented feature" database, too.

- **Avoid the temptation to add new fields to the bug database**. For the bug database to work, everybody needs to use it, and if entering bugs "formally" is too much work, people will go *around* the bug database.