SPA: The conference for reflective practitioners

How to make a submission

Submissions should be made at www.spaconference.org by 9th September 2005.

A submission will explain:

- The session content.
- The target audience.
- How the session will work.
- What the session will deliver.
- Who will lead the session.

Please note

- The closing date for submissions is 9th September 2005.
- Material for inclusion in the conference documentation must be received by 6th February 2006.
- Session that involve interaction between participants are preferred.
- You may propose more than one session.
- Session leaders qualify for very low fees for accommodation and conference attendance.
- Joint proposals are particularly encouraged (but only the first two session leaders will qualify for the session leader rate).

Chairs

Conference Chair: Rachel Davies, Agile Experience
Programme Chair: Jane Chandler, University of Portsmouth

SPA Conference Executive

John Daniels, Syntropy Limited; Matt Stephenson, Royal & SunAlliance; Helen Sharp, The Open University; Eoin Woods, Zuhlke Engineering Limited

What you get

- 4 days of learning and discussion with Europe's leading software practitioners
- Accommodation (all rooms en-suite)
- All meals and snacks
- Delegate pack including full conference documentation on CD-Rom
- Free Wireless Internet Access and chill-out zone

Full payment, refund and cancellation policy details can be found on www.spaconference.org.

Accommodation in the main conference venue is limited and will be prioritized for speakers on first come, first served basis. Overflow accommodation of a similar quality is available within walking distance.

Contact details

Conference administrator: Andy Moorley, Truedata Computer Services

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Web: www.spaconference.org

Web Master: Dave Cleal, Syntropy Limited

Lead a session at Spa 2006

Software Practice Advancement

26 - 29 March 2006

The Robinson Centre, Bedfordshire, England

TECHNOLOGY
PEOPLE
PROCESS
PRACTICE

SPA2006 is run by the British Computer Society's Software Practice Advancement group. The SPA conference series features innovative session formats and a programme brimming with leading edge topics. It is the successor to the world famous OT conference series.

LEAD A SESSION AT SPA2006

SPA builds on over a decade of OT Conferences as the place where leading software development practitioners gather to share their latest thinking.

One of the most rewarding ways to participate in SPA is to lead a session. The sessions - their subjects and formats - define the character of the conference and this is your opportunity to ensure the conference deals with the issues that affect and interest you. You don't necessarily have to be an expert - a good session is one that provides a structured forum for participants to develop their ideas, skills, knowledge and understanding. A well-established shepherding process is in place to provide assistance and support to presenters.

We welcome proposals for sessions on any aspect of contemporary software practice. The topics list is given for indication only and we encourage sessions that cut across these areas, or explore entirely new areas, as well as sessions that fall squarely within them.

www.spaconference.org

Conference Topics and Themes

Technology
Technology is the bottom line in software. Sessions might explore established or up-and-coming technologies such as:

- Enterprise Development Platforms (J2EE, .Net)
- Internet technology, eCommerce and Web Services
- Languages (Java, C#, Python, Perl, PHP)
- Systems development

People
Software is an intensely human activity and understanding how to organise and support people is a key challenge in software development. Sessions might deal with:

- Dynamics of software development
- Communication, motivation and reflection
- Problem solving and thinking models

Process
Understanding the 'how' of software development and delivery is a central issue. Sessions might examine:

- Software or system architecture
- Requirements capture
- Modelling techniques
- Agile verses plan-driven lifecycles
- Balancing stakeholders' needs
- Software Product Lines

Practice
Sharing knowledge and experience of successes and challenges is critical in the face of rapidly increasing complexity. Sessions might deal with:

- Creativity
- Knowledge management and capitalisation
- Management of change
- Comparative experience (what we have learned or can learn from other disciplines)
- Experience reports that highlight lessons learned
- Patterns and pattern languages

Session formats

The SPA Conference has a long tradition of active participation. We encourage conference sessions that bring people together to work and learn. In most cases, sessions are highly interactive, involving participants fully with the session leaders and each other.

Usually sessions are either 75 or 150 minutes long and what follows are typical structures. However each session type can take a number of forms and submitters are free to propose their own structure and process (but this should be explicit in your proposal).

Brief details of the types of session that typically make up the programme are given below and are fully described on www.spaconference.org, although if you want to do something different, we always welcome new suggestions.

Classic session types

Workshop - normally 150 minutes
Interactive, structured session in which participants work on a topic, producing some conclusions and avenues for further investigation.

Tutorial - 75 or 150 minutes
A presentation on a clearly focussed topic. Contains formal lecturing, but should also incorporate some interaction between participants. 150 minute slots are also available on the Sunday for introductory tutorials on basics.

Goldfish Bowl - normally 75 minutes
A structured discussion format involving the whole audience but seeded with four or five specially invited participants.

Case Study - normally 75 minutes
A session describing real-life experiences and lessons learnt in implementing technology. Discussion of failure as well as success is welcome.

Simulation - 75 or 150 minutes
Reflection on or experimentation with complex real-world environments facilitated by means of a simulation, role-play or games.

Think Tank - normally 75 minutes
A small group of people meeting to solve a particular problem or to find an agreed position on some issue.

Hot Topic Presentations - 20 minutes
Short presentations by delegates on a current hot topic of their choice. Three Hot Topics would be clustered into a 75 minute session with a moderator.

Working Group 150 or 330 minutes
A working group conducts a detailed exploration of some aspect of technology and/or puts into motion the work needed to achieve a technological advance. These normally take place on Sunday afternoon, before the main part of the conference.

Pioneering Session Types

For 2006 a room will be kitted out as a chill-out zone with comfy sofas, wireless access and a laid back atmosphere. While available for much of the time as an informal quiet area we also welcome innovative ideas for sessions to be run in this zone. These might include:

Sofa Sessions
Laid-back chats, discussions and brain-storming on a pre-arranged topic.

Out-of-the-Box
A session taking place in virtual reality making use of the internet, participants' laptops and the wireless network.

On the Edge sessions
Experiments in ways of working, interacting and transferring knowledge.