

Who Is This Guy, Anyway?

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All of a sudden you happen to be browsing some weirdo's website, plenty of blogs and some of them speak about software development.

Now, who's this Adrian Kosmaczewski, anyway? Some cheap copy of Joel?

I'm glad you asked. This blog has many purposes, one of them being try to be a reference on software development and architecture at least as good as Joel's brilliant website. I will follow a similar pattern to his writings, since I've been involved in quite a few software development teams, in Argentina and Switzerland mostly, since 1997. Other valid purpose would be satisfy my urge to writing; I just love it.

First things first. Let me introduce myself; I am Adrian Kosmaczewski, from the Jastrzebiec clan. Because of a series of quite sad facts of history, my grandparents emigrated to Argentina, between 1929 and 1936. This explains the funny accent when I speak any language, including Spanish. People think I come from Italy, and when they see the family name, or worse yet, the Swiss passport I got 20 years ago, they just stop asking questions and shake their heads in dismay.

Lately my life has more to do with a ping-pong ball, bouncing over the Atlantic, but lately I have settled down in Lausanne, Switzerland. Who knows for how long?

In 1997 I started working as a web developer in Buenos Aires for FIS.com, the world's largest industrial fishing resource on the web. It was a pure dot-com, in the middle of the dot-com world. There I did a lot of ASP in VBScript, SQL Server (back then it was versions 6.5 and 7.0), JavaScript (at the time Netscape 4 was still widely used and XML was just a rumor). It's amazing to see how things have changed since. Working there was truly cool. Well, almost.

In 1999, I worked for a month as a web GUI developer for t/subcero; that was fun and I could do heavy Internet Explorer DHTML... A real startup, with cool offices in downtown Buenos Aires, venture capitalists and the will to jump as far as possible into the high tech stock market.

Then in 2001 I left FIS and returned to Switzerland; the situation in Argentina was pretty tough. And my job at FIS was over; the website was done, and I felt

that there was no more room for improvement. Besides, the development world was indeed changing a lot, and I badly wanted to be part of the change: .NET had just appeared and people started to talk about it; XML was the next big thing; Apple had (finally!) launched Mac OS X. Looking back, I feel that I was right in taking a step back and returning to Switzerland.

In 2002 I started working as a full-time developer of the ill-fated SoftPlumbers, a Geneva-based startup company that tried grosso modo to reproduce Microsoft's Systems Management Server on a web server. It didn't work, for many reasons, the first being management, the second being marketing, the third being fundamental architectural problems on the product. In SoftPlumbers I had my first experience with C#, .NET and software architecture: I had the great opportunity to work with my boss Adam in the creation of a whole framework to be used by web developers in the company to access the core of the system. The project was called "DataServices", and had it all I could dream of: AOP (Aspect Oriented Programming), COM Interop, WMI (Windows Management Instrumentation) integration, a Service-Oriented architecture, lightweight XML communication protocols, you name it. But it was cut off, because the company went bankrupt less than a year after I got in.

And so I found myself in the street, looking for a job again. In the meanwhile I did some training, which is something that I like to do; and then, finally, I found my current job, at Thales Information Systems, in Geneva.

In all these years, I've seen at least 4 different ways to manage a software team; I've worked in 4 different languages (Spanish, English, Italian and French); I've shared the joys of the dot-com boom and also the fears of what would happen after March 2000; I've had a swimming pool beside my desk and shared a big noisy room with plenty of french developers.

I've got something to say about this; if you don't mind, I will pour some thoughts in this blog, and I would be pleased that you come every so often, just to take a look, and why not, argue with me :)

And Joel, if you happen to read this, well, what can I say: you are simply the best! I hope you will enjoy these lines as much as I enjoy writing them.