Subversion Worst Practices

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Google

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TOP TEN WAYS

to Sabotage your Project... with Subversion!

10. Argue about Version Control Systems

- Centralized or distributed?
- Make a checklist describing your perfect system!
  - Compare to all systems
  - Repeat this every 3 years
  - Stick to CVS anyway
- Remember, version control is a religion

9. Do a Brute-Force Transition

- Don't test
- Don't train
- Just switch to Subversion ASAP
- Tell users to quit whining
- Toss out existing scripts and tools, start over.

8. Backups? What Backups?

- We've got working copies, after all
- Or, for more fun: backup every night with 'svnadmin dump' instead of hotcopy.

7. Loads of Locales

- Commit interestingly encoded filenames (CJK), don't tell anyone else.

- Hilarity ensues!

6. Rule with an IRON FIST

- Use path-based access control everywhere
  - all of your users are bad children
  - skip the social issues, just put up roadblocks

- Lock everything
  - concurrent edits are dangerous!
  - avoid annoying conflicts
  - avoid annoying communication
  - lock, then go on vacation
    - take sysadmin with you

5. Hide the Version Control

- Your users are too dumb and scared
- Don't waste time teaching
- Write scripts to guess what happened

4. Use Complex Branching Schemes

- Protect the sanctity of the code. At all costs.
- /trunk is holy!
- Give every developer their own branch
  - every change must be on a sub-branch!
- Hire people to merge branches all day.
- Confused? Consult Clearcase manual.
- Tip: create all branches on the client. It's safer.

3. Put Everything in the Repository

- It's just a file server, right?
- Useful things to throw in:
  - object code
  - per-user preference files
  - generated docs
  - ISO images
  - release tarballs

2. Use a Network Drive

- Real server jobs are too hard to configure
- chmod -R 777 /path/to/repository
- Everyone use file:///
- What could possibly go wrong?

1. Really Clever Hook Scripts!

- Pre-commit:
  - add notes, reformat the code.
  - checkout code, build everything, run tests, then allow commit.

- Post-commit:
  - do another commit.
  - dump the whole repository.

0. Edit the Repository Database

- Can't figure out what to do? Open the repository files in your editor.

[12:01pm] <johndoe> can I modify the age of a tag? we moved from cvs to svn and created tags for our major releases but we'd like the dates on the top directory of those tags to be correct.

[12:02pm] <sussman> johndoe: yes, you can change the svn:date property attached to any revision.

[12:03pm] <johndoe> sussman: I thought I did when i modified the /var/lib/svn/repositories/models/db/reprops/5 file but the trac code browser still shows the tag being 2 days old

[12:03pm] <sussman> johndoe: good lord! DO NOT edit the repository by hand!

Summary

- Ignore the docs.

- "Pet the Dog Backwards" Technique:
  - close eyes, envision what you want svn to be.
  - force it to be that!

Q&A

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