



# Atlanta SPIN

## Software Process Improvement Network



The Atlanta SPINnaker

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### Rave Reviews for Model Driven Architecture Demo



*Robert Lario Demoing an MDA Tool*

Robert Lario of Inherit.com took a unique approach to the May talk on Model Driven Architecture. He covered a series of slides that addressed the topic while in parallel he executed a tool that exercised these concepts for the audience.

Robert's objective for the talk was to provide a foundation for further investigation by the audience, and based on the audience's feedback, he accomplished this very nicely.

Some of the key observations that Robert made during the presentation:

- With Model Driven Architecture (MDA), one isn't trying to generate everything that a programmer would normally do. Rather, he likened this approach to that of a booster rocket, that helps to give the project a significant jump start.
- Use of MDA can reduce the development cycle and the associated effort significantly, in some cases as much as 75%.
- One major advantage of MDA is its ability to create a reusable architecture, that can then be customized to meet the specific needs of the project at hand.
- The heart of the MDA approach is the capture of the requirements in an abstract business model defined in a Unified Modeling Language (UML) that can then be transformed into a desired set of work products. The two key concepts here are Modeling & Transformation.

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### June Presentation: Achieving Consensus in Technical Meetings

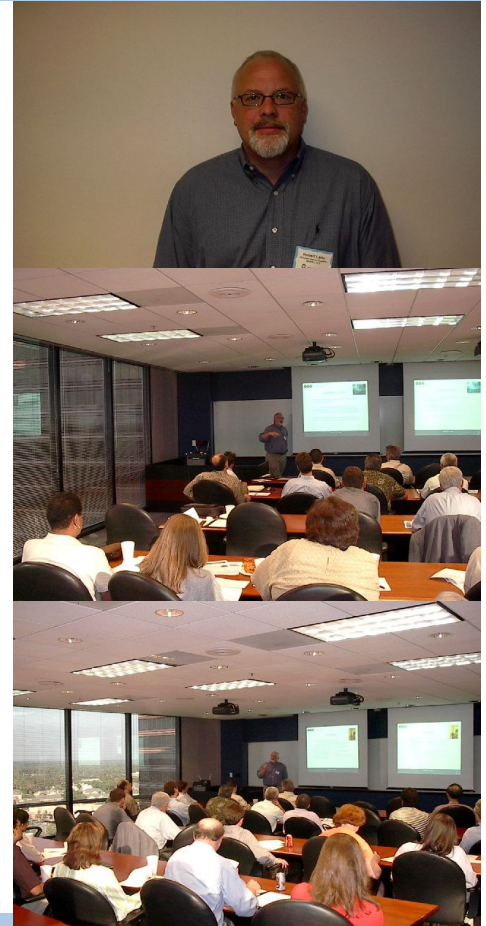
Imagine this: The design session has been going great. The participants are engaged, significant progress is being made, and the project sponsor is well pleased. You are in facilitator's heaven! **Suddenly, without warning, a major disagreement erupts.** While some are vehement about one position, several people take an opposing stand; and still others believe the entire discussion is a waste of time. Voices get louder, people stop listening, others check-out. You know you have to take control and help the group move to consensus. What do you do? What techniques do you use? What are the key underlying principles for reaching consensus? This session will equip you with a clear understanding of the three reasons people disagree and four techniques for getting to yes when disagreements occur.

**Michael Wilkinson is the Managing Director of Leadership Strategies, Inc. - a leadership training and strategy consulting firm specializing in group facilitation. He is considered a leading authority on facilitation. Michael is the author of *The Secrets of Facilitation* and *The Secrets to Masterful Meetings*.**

## MDA Presentation Highlights - continued

Robert Lario

- In the SDLC, MDA considers everything a model or a transformation from one model to another. As an example, a word document of business requirements is a *business model* of the users' needs and the code produced by a developer based on this model is a *code model* constrained by an *architectural model*.
- Transformations that turn one model into another - a requirement model into a code model for example - are traditionally attributed to analyst, architects and developers. MDA provides a means for an enterprise to capture, automate and reuse these transformations.
- There are four models that address the separation of concerns:
  - Computation Independent Model – business requirements
  - Platform Independent Model – activity diagrams & process work flows
  - Platform Specific Model – implementation architectural details
  - Text Model – code, XML, scripts, etc.
- Transformation rules become a living asset and MDA in general provides a tight linkage between your requirements and architecture/design; in essence you compile a diagram into code which provides the basis for “finishing” the effort, in particular adding the “look and feel” of the solution.
- The resulting code, which Robert showed real examples of during the talk, looks like it was written by hand.
- Code is most often thought of when considering the generation process, but MDA can be used to produce word documents, project plans, test procedures and harnesses, even Microsoft Excel files.
- MDA generated code gets tested like other code; errors that are found may result in fixes to the transformation rules.
- It is important to do a good job with the UML model.
- With MDA, the intellectual property captured in software is found in the Platform Independent Model, versus tucked away in the heads of developers and the code that they produce.



## Work in Progress Within The Atlanta SPIN Board

As an update to our membership, we've listed some of the efforts that the Board is pursuing. We expect that you'll see the fruits of this labor during the upcoming months:

- Finalize the Speaker List for 2006 (Education Committee)
- Produce a Brochure for Use in Sponsor Recruitment (Marketing Committee)
- Establish an Atlanta SPIN LinkedIn Group (Membership Committee)
- Signature Event Definition & Action Plan (Education Committee)
- Web Site Updates—Board Member Biographies (Marketing Committee)

## Coming in July: Leading From The Middle

**July 19, 2006**

**Stuart Smith, Director, Organizational Development & Training**

**Harland**

## On the BOARD walk Stewart Forscher - Treasurer Atlanta SPIN

Stewart Forscher has played a key role on the Atlanta SPIN Board since 2002. He has worked a rich set of activities, often behind the scenes. He has worked diligently to attract new sponsors; gotten non-profit status set up; and kept the books, among other things. Stewart also helped arrange the Watts Humphrey and Don Putnam signature events.



Stewart began his career with Tellabs in Chicago as a software developer in 1997. This project proved to be a great training ground for him in software engineering. In 2002, he came to Atlanta, and joined Broadcom as a test engineer specializing in automation of cable modem and VoIP-over-cable testing. Stewart holds a BCE from Georgia Tech and a MSCS from Illinois Institute of Technology.

### **How did you get involved with Atlanta SPIN?**

In 2002, my job was eliminated as part of a division closure within Tellabs. Having moved back to Atlanta only nine months prior after five years in Chicago, I was looking for ways to keep my career moving forward and expand my professional network. While in Chicago, I had heard of C-SPIN but never had a chance to attend because of work and graduate school demands. Then was a perfect time to join Atlanta SPIN.

### **What process improvement-related activities have you personally participated in?**

While at Tellabs, my project was chartered with the task of achieving TL9000 certification. Our software team was using the Shlaer-Mellor Method, an object-based software development methodology never used before by the company. As such, it was our job to create and document a software development process for the group. When then had to follow and demonstrate that process during periodic internal and external audits. In the end, we achieved TL9000 certification. That achievement gave us a competitive advantage in the marketplace because no competing product had such certification.

### **What benefits have you personally derived from participation in SPIN?**

Participating in SPIN has allowed me to step "outside the box" of my everyday job. Whether through networking with other members or attending the presentations, it exposes me to different areas of software development and process improvement that I don't gain exposure to in the day-to-day grind. Additionally, I have met a lot of great and knowledgeable people.

### **What motivated you to join the Atlanta SPIN Board?**

A former president, Gregory Losik, invited me to join the Board. I was honored by the invitation and viewed it as a great learning opportunity. Participation in the board has really allowed me to expand my professional network.

### **What do you hope to achieve this year within Atlanta SPIN?**

As part of the Marketing Committee, I'm currently working on ways to expand the visibility and presence of Atlanta SPIN locally and nationally. Atlanta in particular has a large software development community, much of which SPIN has yet to reach. Our goal for the year is to implement a marketing/branding strategy that will help us attract a larger audience.

## Spotlight on our Sponsors: MDI Management Decisions



The alignment of IT with the business demands requires the proper processes to suit the organizational climate and maturity; the organizational support to act as the foundation and support for these processes; and the tools to achieve efficiencies and accuracy for the processes. MDI's ([www.mdigroup.com](http://www.mdigroup.com)) specialization in Project Governance (PG) provides its clients service across all three of these areas. PG critical skill sets encompass Project Management, Business Analysis, Quality Assurance, and Instructional/ Instructional Design. These skills govern the project lifecycle, driving the tight coupling of IT's activities with business vision, strategy, and objectives. Without these skills, there is a high risk of not properly translating business needs into the appropriate IT solution. A flawless link between business and IT is no easy task, and there is no one solution. A company's environment, its process maturity, and its strategic plans must all be factored into a workable solution. MDI's ability to leverage its cross-industry view of best practices across the nation's top companies gives MDI the knowledge and experience to create customized frameworks for any company around all of the PG disciplines, regardless of whether the framework being implemented or incorporated is ITIL, Six Sigma, CMMi or OPM3.

Atlanta SPIN's focus on and promotion of software process improvement is a logical fit with MDI's services, and a key reason why MDI supports Atlanta SPIN.

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### Atlanta SPIN Sponsors—They Make Our Efforts Possible!



And our 19 Individual Contributors!

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### About Atlanta SPIN

The Atlanta SPIN organization was chartered in 1991. This group has been a force for software process improvement in the Atlanta area since then. The organization has a growing membership list that currently numbers 650+ members.

The group typically meets every third Wednesday of the month. Our meetings typically attract audiences of 35 – 50 people. These meetings provide a forum for like-minded people, interested in learning from others and sharing their own experiences. There is time allowed before and after the meeting for networking among the participants, including a review from the audience of any job openings that are available. The Board, through its work with Sponsors, ensures that food and drinks are also available at no cost to the membership.

The Board has a process for identifying excellent speakers, and provides guidelines and necessary support to help ensure the presentations are top quality. The Board sees these as the cornerstone of its value proposition to the overall group. To this end, the Board conducted surveys last year to gain a better understanding of its members' interests. This analysis has directly influenced the choice of specific presentations during the past six months. The Board continues to seek excellent relevant talks of interest to the membership; please advise us of potential talks and speakers that you think may be of interest; contact us at [education\\_committee@atlantaspin.org](mailto:education_committee@atlantaspin.org).

In future Newsletters, we plan to provide more information about the goals and activities that Atlanta SPIN is pursuing. We welcome your feedback on how to improve this newsletter; contact us at [newsletter@atlantaspin.org](mailto:newsletter@atlantaspin.org).

Ron Wojcik, editor