



# Atlanta SPIN

## Software Process Improvement Network



**Robert Raygan**

The Atlanta SPINaker

April 2007

Volume 2, Issue 4

### Enterprise Configuration Management



*Robert Raygan Opening the Meeting*

With forty members in attendance, Robert Raygan of Synovus Financial Corp. led a wide-ranging discussion on Enterprise Configuration Management at the April Atlanta SPIN meeting. This work arose from a Ph.D. dissertation he is currently researching in an enterprise environment and reflects some of his experiences in helping to institute a more disciplined approach.

Robert started off by questioning the audience to understand its composition and experience in this arena and continued to do so throughout the presentation. His initial focus was on the differentiation between "Configuration Management" and "Change Management." He stressed the importance of a business view to drive such efforts, then dove into the various views of CMMI, ISO 20000 and ITIL on configuration management.

Given its best practices approach from a business perspective, Robert indicated he had found

the ITIL approach to be particularly useful for the challenges he faced. He noted that this approach is supported by a set of off-the-shelf practices and guidebooks. Its focus on an "IT Service" as a stream that connects business provision to customer consumption, versus a product-focused approach, was a strong point to Robert.

He compared the Configuration Management Database (CMDB) to a total "IT Awareness System". This system could correlate the various information sources that contribute to the ultimate delivery of the IT Service to the business. It then became apparent that authentic sources of record be identified for each constituent component within the CMDB.

Robert noted that no standard exists for a CMDB and that there was typically a myriad of sources for the information that belonged in a CMDB. All of this has led to considerable implementation challenges with an observation that 80%+ of initial implementations do not fare well. He viewed Configuration Management as the most difficult part of ITIL and advised that efforts start in a focused area that is best understood, then branch out as more experience is gained through an evolutionary development approach. Robert alluded to a framework from the Gartner Group that he had extended. He then discussed a variety of tools that were used and useful within that framework.

*Continued on Page 2*

#### Inside this issue:

- More from Robert Raygan 2
- Process Improvement Conference Info 2
- Recent News from the Software Engineering Institute 3
- Spotlight on our Sponsors: BORLAND 3
- About Atlanta SPIN 4

### What's Next? - April 18th



**Kevin Schaan - Global Engagement/Program Manager at Borland Software**

*Presents:*

**Requirements Management & Definition Best Practices**

## Robert Raygan Highlights - continued

Robert then provided a new perspective that considered enterprise configuration management as a collection of smaller services. He identified the roles and responsibilities (e.g., Asset Management, Content Management, etc.) encompassed within this model. He then walked through some of the elements of his model at a high level while making the point that if an approach was cumbersome, there was little or no chance that people would in practice follow it.



Robert concluded his presentation by noting that:

- Enterprise Configuration Management brings value and is required by Sarbanes-Oxley
- There are significant challenges and barriers to success that include genuine upper management support, coping with internal organization silos, and handling third party-provided components
- Trust must be established amongst the relevant parties for success to be achieved
- There are still challenges in enabling the engineering discipline of configuration management to work well from a business versus technical perspective

If you are interested in learning more about Enterprise Configuration Management, Robert's presentation can be found on our website at

<http://www.atlantaspin.org/meetinginfo.htm>

## Process Improvement Conference Information

### [Call for Papers for the 7th Annual CMMI Technology Conference and User Group](#)

The primary objective of this conference is to share experiences and lessons learned in implementing CMMI®, the state-of-the-art in Process Improvement. Technical and management presentations are the key tactic in achieving this goal. You are invited to submit short abstracts, of approximately 250 to 300 words, describing what you would like to present, relative to the topics previously listed. Presentations on directly related subjects are also welcome. Abstracts should fully describe the planned content and note the relationship to the Conference objectives. All abstracts accepted will be presented at the Conference in electronic (PowerPoint) format. The abstracts will also be posted on the NDIA website prior to the Conference. Abstracts must be submitted no later than April 27, 2007 via the following web link: <http://application.ndia.org/abstracts/8110/>. Abstracts will only be accepted through this web link, and all required information must be completed. Upon completion of the required information, you will receive an emailed confirmation. For more information on the conference, see: <http://www.sei.cmu.edu/cmmi/events/cmmi-techconf/>

## Recent News from the Software Engineering Institute

### [Atlanta SPIN Leads Panel Discussion at SEPG '007 Conference!](#)

Last year, our President, Abi Salimi, suggested that the Software Engineering Institute include a panel discussion on creating and maintaining an effective SPIN organization in its SEPG '007 Conference. The suggestion was well received, and the panel discussion was included in the conference.

As a result, Atlanta SPIN led a panel discussion at the SEPG '007 conference on March 27, 2007. The leads from four SPINs in the country shared their experiences with the participants. The title of the panel session was "How to Start and Sustain an Effective Local Charter of SPIN." The panel discussed the details of how to start and run a productive and effective chapter of SPIN and how to evolve an existing SPIN over time, covering the impact of the SPIN in the panel members' respective regions. The participants were: Abi Salimi, Ph.D., President, Atlanta SPIN; Chad Haggerty, Chair, Philadelphia SPIN; Jeff Smith, President, Austin SPIN; and Mary M. Watson, Leader, Great Lakes SPIN.

In the next issue of the SPINnaker, we'll summarize the discussion that was held.

### [Additional SEPG '007 Conference SPIN-related Efforts:](#)

The above initiative helped drive a larger set of SPIN-related activities at the SEPG '007 conference. These reflected an indirect influence of Atlanta SPIN on the larger conference agenda and focus, and our interactions with Shane McGraw, who is the SEI SPIN Coordinator. Beyond the panel discussion, the following events were conducted :

Monday Evening, March 26th, *SPIN Birds-of-a Feather (BoF) Session*

Thursday, March 29th, Lunch, *Peer-to-Peer Daily Lunch Topics, How to Establish a SPIN* (being introduced this year at the [SEPG '007 Conference](#) will be a series of five peer-to-peer lunch topics daily. Anyone was welcome to participate and further discuss what they heard during the day or introduce a new topic that they wanted to discuss with their peers)

## Spotlight on our Sponsors: Borland

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Borland solutions are aimed at all phases of the application delivery lifecycle – plan, define, design, develop, and test – with an integrated platform aligning core functionality for the specific roles within the application lifecycle – manager, analyst, architect, developer, and tester. This comprehensive offering, addressing the broadest set of application delivery capabilities, positions Borland to help align software development organizations with the goals of the enterprise.

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### Process Improvement Sites:

#### Software Engineering Information Repository

<http://seir.sei.cmu.edu>, has over 30,000 registered users and is a forum used to contribute and exchange information about software engineering improvement activities, including CMMI.

#### The CMMI Process Improvement Yahoo! discussion group

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cmmi\\_process\\_improvement/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cmmi_process_improvement/) is a forum used to contribute and exchange ideas about CMMI-based improvement.

**BSCW Shared Workspace** <https://bscw.sei.cmu.edu/pub/bscw.cgi/0/79783> is a forum used to contribute and exchange CMMI-related materials.

Information courtesy of SEI Customer Relations. Find out more about SEI Membership online at [www.sei.cmu.edu/membership](http://www.sei.cmu.edu/membership)  
[customer-relations@sei.cmu.edu](mailto:customer-relations@sei.cmu.edu)

### 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 850+ members. The group typically meets every third Wednesday of the month. Our meetings typically attract audiences of 40 – 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.

Ron Wojcik, editor