



# Atlanta SPIN

Software Process Improvement Network

The Atlanta SPINaker

September 2007 Volume 2, Issue 9



David Card

## How am I doing? The challenge of productivity management.

When Ed Koch was mayor of New York City, he had a habit of asking people he'd meet on the street a simple question: "How am I doing?." As a project manager or team lead, walking around the office asking your staff, "How are we doing?" will get you lots of different answers. You need to define what you are doing in order to measure your productivity in your particular organization. And, as with many tools and techniques, one size does not fit all.

David Card of Det Norske Veritas (DNV), our speaker for August, sought to convey what productivity is, how to measure it and how it widely varies across organizations. David's presentation focused on "The Challenge of Productivity Management."

ments are 1) estimating new projects, 2) evaluating and controlling process performance, and 3) making investment decisions.

David started the presentation by asking the audience if they knew what the first industry to use metrics was. His hint to us was that the software industry was actually the second industry to adopt measurement and use of metrics. You are probably like me and first thought of manufacturing but the answer is the advertising industry! David also made the point that software development productivity has a "dis-economy of scale" in that, unlike manufacturing, the larger the product or greater quantities functionality, the less productive it will be.

The presentation covered both the taking of measurements on productivity and the analysis and use of the information gleaned from those measurements. David stressed the point that merely taking measurements is meaningless if you don't do anything with them. Among the uses for measure-

David's presentation included real life examples of productivity measurements. He made the point that the term "metrics" cannot be readily defined and in fact, has so many different meanings as to be a useless term. David stated that the ISO/IEC Stan-

*Continued on Page 2*

### Inside this issue:

- August Meeting Synopsis 1
- Signature Event!!! 2
- New Sponsor: Natural SPI 3
- Free Seminar - Lean CMMI-DEV & Six Sigma 3
- About Atlanta SPIN 4

## What's Next? - Signature Event

September 19, 2007

Ed Yourdan

The Internet's Second Wave: Web 2.0



## Productivity Management—Continued

standard 15939 uses the term “measurement” rather than metric and moves software measurement in the direction of more mature engineering disciplines.

At the heart of measuring are three concepts: the taking of accurate base measurements, the calculation of one or more derived measurements (using the base measurements) and the comparison of the derived measurements to some previously established baseline or standard (target).

David stressed the need for an organization to have multiple measurements of productivity. These measurements should be taken from several perspectives to ensure that a true representation of the productivity of the organization is portrayed and understood.

To the question of what measurements are best, the response was, “they need to be the ones that are right for your company.” Typically we hear of Lines of Code, or Functions points. Every company can take measurements based on any number of estimation models combined with anything else that can be measured. Also, people forget that measurement is “of something” and that you can’t measure a concept.

David stressed that the most important measurements of productivity are the ones that address the real objectives of the business. The point was well made that companies need to take ownership of their processes and productivity data focusing on the ones that really matter to them.

David summarized the presentation with some general statements about measurements. Many factors must be considered in selecting measure and analysis models. Use multiple measures and tailor them to the specific needs of your company. Finally, interpretation of productivity requires an understanding of the behavior of productivity measures.

Many questions from the audience focused on what measure to pick, how to measure them and when to measure them. An interesting question arose about how to apply the principles of David’s presentation in an Agile environment. David explained that regardless of the development method or size of the project, the general effects of decisions made based on solid productivity data, do not go away.

## Don’t Miss it! Our Next Signature Event - September 19th

**Speaker: Ed Yourdon**

### The Internet's Second Wave: Web 2.0

- **6:00 - 6:30 Networking, Free fancy food and soft drinks, and sponsor booths**
- **7:30 - 6:35 Welcome, Introductions, SPIN Business**
- **6:35 - 6:45 Platinum Sponsor and Signature Event Sponsor Remarks**
- **6:45 - 8:15 Presentation + Q&A**
- **8:15 - 8:30 Job Openings / Announcements / Book give away**

**Southern Polytechnic State University  
1100 South Marietta Pkwy**



## Spotlight: Natural SPI Becomes Atlanta SPIN Sponsor!



The Atlanta SPIN board would like to welcome our newest sponsor, Natural SPI, to our organization.

Natural SPI is an extraordinary consulting firm that will help your organization achieve its process improvement goals without the high cost and high pain usually associated with such change.

Using an unprecedented approach to CMM/CMMI-based process improvement and project management, we transfer to you the knowledge you need to successfully plan and manage your SPI project or program. You will achieve your process improvement goals, and you will do so faster, less expensively, and with greater positive impact than with traditional approaches.

Finally, you don't want your continued success in process improvement to be dependent on individuals, including your consultants. After we've worked with your organization, you'll probably want us back, but you won't need us ... and that's a good thing!

## Free Seminar from Natural SPI—September 14th

### High Velocity Development of a World Class Software Capability using Lean, CMMI-DEV, and Six Sigma

Natural SPI would like to extend a personal invitation to Atlanta SPIN members to attend a FREE one hour seminar on High Velocity Development of a World Class Software Capability, using Lean, CMMI-DEV, and Six Sigma.

Natural SPI, an SEI Partner, has spent nearly three years researching, developing, and applying Lean, CMMI-compliant, Six Sigma controlled software processes in support of customers. If your team or organization is experiencing time to market issues, integration problems, defective products, or cost overruns, it may be time to consider a better way of doing things.

The seminar will be held at:

The Hilton Garden Inn Atlanta North/Alpharetta  
4025 Windward Plaza, Alpharetta, GA 30005  
(770) 369-7766

Friday, September 14th, 11:30 AM - 1 PM

*Snacks and drinks provided  
Seating limited to 50 people*



To be guaranteed seating, please email [jeff@NaturalSPI.com](mailto:jeff@NaturalSPI.com) to reserve a seat.

Dean Morrow, editor  
 The Atlanta SPINnaker  
 Email: [newsletter@atlantaspin.org](mailto:newsletter@atlantaspin.org)

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



And our 18 Individual Contributors!

### Atlanta SPIN Board of Directors

Director	Role
Abi Salimi	President
Larry Hyde	Vice President
Mike Sweeney	Treasurer
Mike Murphy	Secretary
Garrison Atkisson	Program
Scott Banks	Membership
Stewart Forscher	Sponsorship
Larry Hyde	Marketing
Dean Morrow	Logistics
Bill Reister	Webmaster

### 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, Incorporated

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.