



White paper

It crashed; what did I do wrong?

Making your software product robust and crash-proof

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Scoutwest, Inc.

It crashed; what did I do wrong?

When a software product crashes, users think it is their fault. Operating systems even hide the fact that a program crashes with vague language like “an error has occurred.” Users are sure that they did something wrong to cause it. They ask “what did I do wrong?”

Let’s be perfectly honest here; when software crashes, it’s your fault, not the user’s. A lot of software crashes. It’s safe to say that about 25% of all software applications crash on a regular basis. Maybe only about 10% remain stable for weeks or months without a crash.

The questions we should be asking ourselves are, do we have a formal policy to minimize product downtime? Have you identified the main reasons programs crash? Is a policy in place to ensure that none of those possibilities can exist in your product? Is it possible for your product to avert a crash in the debug version, but not the release version? Do you feel that it is the tester’s job to catch crashes, or your job as a developer to prevent them? Are junior programmers monitored to ensure they are using best practices learned over the years? Do you spend time reviewing your code to make it bulletproof?

The answers to these questions can save your company money. Software crashes can become a blemish on your company’s good reputation, costing untold dollars. Potential customers who experience bugs and crashes don’t always know why it happens, but they do know that it leaves a bad aftertaste, and makes them want to keep looking for a better solution. Existing customers will never rave about your product if it causes them ongoing inconvenience. Product returns, warranty fixes, and other side effects are some other reasons to use preventative measures to eliminate crashes.

About Us

Scoutwest, Inc. develops and publishes project management and time tracking products for consulting, manufacturing, government, and general business applications.

Thousands of small to large businesses, in dozens of countries worldwide, trust their mission critical business processes to Scoutwest products. Standard Time® and Standard Issue® work together to offer well-rounded project management solutions.

We specialize in packaged software for timesheets, project management, time tracking, defect tracking, and issue tracking. Standard Time is a web-based timesheet that also runs on Windows, Palm OS, and Pocket PC. It can be used for client billing and task management. Standard Issue is used for bug tracking and general issue tracking.

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