Speaker Spotlight - Aaron West

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Aaron West - For the past nine years I have been heavily involved in the Web development space building enterprise-level, database-driven Web applications and leading technology teams. I'm incredibly passionate about what I do and attempt to inject my enthusiasm and love for technology in all those around me.

CFUnited session: New Caching Features in ColdFusion 9

1. Have you spoken at CFUnited in the past?

Yes! I've attended CFUnited for years but last year was my first time speaking. I did a talk on ColdFusion 9, BlazeDS, and AIR integration.

2. Why should people attend your sessions?

Because it will be the best? Ha, all kidding aside, my talk on caching should be attended by those who need to make the most out of their Web apps. It's not enough to write code and deploy it to a badass server. You need to write code a certain way to ensure it performs as expected and scales as needed. Understanding caching in ColdFusion 9 (as well as how to use it) should be a critical component in every developers toolbox.

3. Do you have any projects in the works that you will be revealing at CFUnited?

Absolutely. I'm currently working on a new technology startup that's using ColdFusion (and other Adobe technology) as part of our development stack. By the time CFUnited rolls around we should have our first customers in production.

4. Besides your topic, what other sessions are you looking forward to?

What interests me most are the ColdFusion integration topics. My favorites are the ones that tie Flex/AIR and ColdFusion together, but anything that involves building compelling Web applications with ColdFusion and other technologies are the most intriguing.

5. What are some of the hot topics you'd like to see at RoundTable discussions?

Personally, I'm interested in the role cloud technology will play in the application server space. I used to think this was cutting edge stuff until I started researching and found people deploying cloud solutions as early as 2006. From a developer perspective, it's still somewhat new and there's not a lot of exposure to folks using ColdFusion in the cloud. I think this will be changing throughout 2010 and beyond. Roundtable discussions are always fun, and one centered on the impact of cloud technology on ColdFusion would be delicious!

6. Where can people find you at CFUnited?

Simple, where the action is! During the day I'm attending sessions and hanging out in the hallways and vendor booths. I love chatting it up with other developers and enjoying hearing about other folks projects. At night, I can be found wherever the beer is located.

7. What's the latest news with you? Has anything changed since last CFUnited?

What hasn't changed? The last several months have been quite awesome. Toward the end of 2009 I made a big decision to leave my employer of 5 years. I'm now working on a new technology startup and loving every single minute of it. It's amazingly challenging work but comes with some great rewards too. I've had to break out of my shell and learn several new technologies and bone up on a few rusty ones. The experience has been positive and I hope to be sharing much more about what I'm doing at CFUnited 2010.

8. What is unique about CFUnited?

CFUnited presents the most unique opportunity to learn from other developers. Sure there are fantastic topics and speakers - all of which are extremely valuable - but CFUnited is the one spot, all year, where hundreds of ColdFusion developers get together to talk shop. If you can't engage with others and learn something from both the sessions and the unstructured time, you are simply discarding a big part of what CFUnited is all about. Forget about going to bed early; you can sleep when you get home. Attend sessions, talk to the speakers and other attendees. Learn what others are doing (and what they aren't doing) and leave the conference having capitalized on every opportunity to grow as a developer.

9. What do you like to do in your free time?

Many geeks will say they don't have free time but I'm not one of them. Having time to recharge my batteries and focus on non-technical things is very important to me. Most of my free time is spent with my wife and son who are the most important things in my life. I love coming home to them and simply hanging out and playing cars or trains. I'm also big into reading and spend a lot of time with my Kindle. I try to read at least one book a month and often get in two. I'm also an avid motorcyclist - I ride a Yamaha R6 sportbike - and scuba diver.