

Nat Papovich: Reviving the Lost Craft of Writing Specifications

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1. Is this your first time speaking at CFUnited?

This will be my first CFUnited presentation, but I've spoken at the old CFUN conferences, the old Fusebox conferences, the more-recent Frameworks conferences and dozens of CFUGs around the country.

2. Why should people attend your session?

Most everyone knows what a spec doc is. Some people may have read one. Some people may have written one. But the fact that so few projects successfully employ spec docs means that, for some reason, we aren't using spec docs to their maximum potential. I'm a big fan of spec docs myself, having written and read many of them over the years. My goal is to encourage people to write and advocate for spec docs by showing them all the benefits they provide during a development project. I'm also going to cover how to write a spec doc step-by-step, since I think that's a tripping point for a lot of people. They have a white page in Word and don't really know how to go about writing one.

3. Will people get a template to help them write spec docs?

I do have a spec doc template that I'll be showing to attendees and which will be available to all conference attendees. Although I'm not an advocate of a one-size-fits-all spec doc template, I think having a starting point of reference is crucial to assisting the spec doc creation process.

4. Will you address concerns that spec docs are a waste of time?

The highlight of my session will be how I systematically debunk every single argument against writing spec docs. No critic will come through unscathed and I'll leave no rock unturned in my attempt to root out the evil of people who insist that spec docs are a waste of time and resources.

You can find more information on Nat Papovich's presentation on his blog
<http://www.webapper.net/index.cfm/2008/3/12/Building-treehouses-in-code>