



The Sport BOF



Sport

- A Smalltalk portability ~~library~~ API
- Allows **identical** source code to work with many Smalltalk dialects
- Support for
 - Sockets
 - Files
 - Exceptions
 - Date and Time
 - other stuff



Dialects with Sport

- VisualWorks
- GemStone
- Squeak
- Dolphin
- Visual Smalltalk ~~Enterprise~~
- Visual Age (work in progress)
- Planned for GNU Smalltalk and ST/X



How to “port” Sport

- Choose a Sport based library you want to use
 - You **need** to be motivated
 - I recommend the Hyper or PostgreSQL libs
- Choose a Sport-free dialect
- Have an existing Sport for reference (e.g. VW)
- Write your local Sport:
 - Try to run the library and watch it crash
 - Implement the missing bits of Sport
 - try again
- There are some SUnit tests too



How will Sport evolve?

- Dialect inconsistency will cause Sport to grow
- ANSI standardisation (and implementation) will cause Sport to shrink
- At any moment Sport should be as small as possible, but no smaller
- The goal is to have Sport go away because the dialects all implement a comprehensive ANSI standard



Managing Sport evolution

- Two kinds of change:
 - Extend the API (does not break existing code)
 - Refactor the API (**DOES** break existing code)
- Extending is OK, but make sure that other (target) Sport implementations agree.
- Refactoring should be discussed, planned and infrequent



Why refactor?

- As we live with Sport and work towards ANSI standardisation we may wish to have “better” structures for sockets, files etc.
- Noooooo!
 - I don't want my library to be broken!
 - I don't need no stinkin' new version!
 - I want to use libraries that rely on different versions of the Sport API in the same image at the same time. Help!



API versions

- API versioning will let us have new API versions without breaking existing code.
- Each version has a name and a class prefix...
 - The names will be A,B,C etc (e.g. SportD)
 - The prefixes will be Sp, Spb, Spc etc.
- The first version of Sport is special because:
 - Not designed (It Evolved)
 - Not documented
 - Name/Prefix is “Sport” / “Sp”
 - Call it “Sport(A)” to be clear in docs



ANSI

- Important that the ANSI process is restarted
- The process should indeed be a process
 - Not a one-off
 - Regular deliveries (every 18 months?)
 - Community defined priorities
- Sport is a tool for the ANSI process
 - Testing ideas
 - Setting priorities



Summary

- Sport smooths dialect inconsistency
- Sport is a dirty fix. ANSI should fix the problem.
- The Sport API will change, but with API versioning should mean nothing breaks
- Documented on the OpenSkills wiki.
 - <http://wiki.openskills.org>
- See the wiki for the location of a Sport implementation for your dialect.



Discussion