

The Object-Oriented Trivia Show (TOOTS)

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ABSTRACT

OOPSLA has a longstanding tradition of being a forum for discussing the cutting edge of technology in a fun and participatory environment. The type of events sponsored by OOPSLA sometimes border on the unconventional. This event represents an atypical panel that conforms to the concept of a game show that is focused on questions and answers related to SPLASH, OOPSLA, and Onward! themes. The goal of the panel is to provide an educational opportunity for attendees to learn about a broad range of topics in a style that encourages audience participation.

Categories and Subject Descriptors D.1.5 [Programming Techniques]: Object-oriented Programming; D.2.2 [Software Engineering]: Design Tools and Techniques; D.2.3 [Software Engineering]: Coding Tools and Techniques

General Terms Design, Languages.

Keywords Objects, Game Show.

1. Overview of the OOPSLA Trivia Show

OOPSLA (and now SPLASH) has one of the most diverse collections of attendees among all computer science conferences. At SPLASH, academic researchers working on theoretical areas of language design may share a conversation with a developer from industry who is working with the latest agile development tools. Moreover, a SPLASH first-timer will have the opportunity at a workshop or social event to converse with a veteran researcher, such as Turing Award Winner Barbara Liskov (at OOPSLA 2009). This game show panel continues this tradition by encouraging students, faculty, and industry researchers to collaborate, compete, and share their knowledge related to the SPLASH research themes and history. The objective of this panel is to educate the audience on diverse topics important to the SPLASH/OOPSLA/Onward! communities, foster new relationships between participants competing as teams, and provide technology takeaways in a style that is entertaining. To meet this objective, the panel will conform

to the concept of a game show that is focused on topics related to research and history related to the conference.

The results of current and past TOOTS panels is archived at: <http://www.cs.ua.edu/~gray/external/toots>

2. TOOTS Rules

The panel will follow the general rules of the Jeopardy game show, with a few variations. The list below summarizes some of the particular rules that will be observed in the panel:

- All responses must be given in the form of a question. Each team gets one warning when this rule is violated. Subsequent violations will be counted as an incorrect response, even if the content of the response is correct.
- There will be three teams, each with three players. The teams will represent attendees from industry, academia, and students.
- When a team answers a question incorrectly, one of the team members must leave the game (typically, the member that suggested the incorrect response). A member of the audience from the same group may join the team to keep each team size at three. Thus, the concept of panel member replacement, as typical in a Fish Bowl arrangement, is adopted to improve audience participation.
- Each audience member will be given a number when entering the room. Numbers will be drawn at random to select new participants.
- Once eliminated, a participant cannot come back into the game.
- The teams have 30 seconds to provide an answer. Any question that is unanswered will be asked to the audience at large. Thus, a fourth team is represented by the general audience, who also have the opportunity to respond and have their cumulative score recorded.
- There will be three rounds of play with each round having five categories and each category having five questions of increasing difficulty and value. The initial two rounds will be similar, but the final third round represents a single question.
- In the final round, a single category will be revealed and the participants must wager a portion of their current

score. The answer is then revealed to the contestants and they must provide the correct question within one minute. The score of each team is updated based on the correctness of their answer and the value that they waged.

- After the final round, the team with the highest score is declared the winner.
- All decisions relating to the correctness of a team response will be determined by the Judge.
- At the end of the contest, all participants will be asked to join their team on stage for photos that will be used to archive the event. All members of the winning team will receive a token prize.

3. Sample Question Areas

Because SPLASH has attendees from diverse backgrounds and experience levels, the questions will be defined broadly to cover many topics of interest at different levels of difficulty. The questions will be designed in a manner to educate a general audience in an engaging way. When possible, questions involving multimedia will be offered, such as short video clips, images, and sounds.

A total of two full rounds (25 questions per round) and a final round will provide 51 questions for consideration in the contest. The following represent a sample of the categories that will be covered:

- OOPSLA History: Trivia from past OOPSLAs
- SPLASH 2010 Research Trivia: Questions based on the papers published in the proceedings of OOPSLA and Onward! 2010
- Popular Topics from SPLASH: Design Patterns, Enterprise Middleware, OO Language Design
- Crash: Factoids about various failed software projects
- Rosetta Stone: Challenges to interpret legacy, obfuscated, and strange code

4. Key Participants

The participants of the panel come from three separate groups: the question curators (who design the game show content), the contestants, and the organizers (who moderate and coordinate the production of the game show).

Question Curators

The committee of “Question Curators” assists in defining questions for each category and ensuring the correctness of each answer. This committee will be comprised of members who are well-known in the SPLASH community from both industry and academia.

Contestants

The three contestant teams will represent the categories of the primary constituents at OOPSLA: industry, academia, and students. Contestants representing the teams from industry and academia are leaders in the OOPSLA community and those who had a prominent role in previous OOPSLAs. The student team will be seeded with participants who are SPLASH student volunteers, or student authors of OOPSLA 2010 papers. Due to the “Fish Bowl” format, when questions are answered incorrectly the contestants will also be dynamically replaced by members of the general audience. As noted in Section 2, there is a fourth team that is composed of the entire general audience (i.e., the general audience has the opportunity to provide a response to each question that goes unanswered).

Organizers

Jeff Gray is an Associate Professor in the Department of Computer Science at the University of Alabama where he co-directs the research in the Software Composition and Modeling (SoftCom) laboratory. His research interests are in aspect-oriented software development, model-driven engineering, domain-specific languages, and generative programming. He is an NSF CAREER award winner and the 2008 Carnegie Foundation Professor of the Year (Alabama). Jeff was the 2009 Program co-Chair of the conference on Software Language Engineering (SLE), the 2009 Organizing Chair of the conference on Aspect-Oriented Software Development (AOSD), and serves as the 2010 SPLASH workshops chair. Jeff has attended every OOPSLA since 1995. Over the past 9 years, he has co-organized the popular OOPSLA workshop on Domain-Specific Modeling (DSM), as well as organizing an OOPSLA 2008 panel on Domain-Specific Languages and the OOPSLA 2009 TOOTS panel.

Dr. Jules White is an Assistant Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Virginia Tech. Dr. White’s research focuses on using a combination of modeling and constraint/heuristic/metaheuristic optimization techniques to automate the generation, deployment, and configuration of software. His research on automating the diagnosis of software product-line configuration errors won the “best paper” award at the 2008 International Conference on Software Product-lines, sponsored by the Carnegie Mellon Software Engineering Institute. He is the project leader of the Eclipse Foundation’s Generic Eclipse Modeling System.

As formal participants, Jeff will serve as the moderator and Jules will play the role of judge, score keeper, and award presenter.