EPICS – Today’s Control System of Choice

… but what about tomorrow?

Ned Arnold
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Argonne National Laboratory

A U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Science Laboratory
Operated by The University of Chicago
The Collaboration Grows ...

LANL develops Ground Test Accelerator Control System (GTACS)

ANL APS & LANL begin collaboration on EPICS

May 2004 Meeting
- 100+ Attendees
- 34 Institutions
- 75+ Presentations

Still the “Control System of Choice”

LANL, CEBAF, DESY, FNAL D0, KEK, KECK, LBL, IPNS, IPNS DAQ, SLAC, BESSY, SLS, CLS, SNS, DIAMOND, Australian Synchrotron, RIA
Reflection on the Collaboration

• Pros
  - An extremely beneficial and effective collaboration
  - Synergy – yields many good ideas
  - Common requirements have a single solution
  - Large installed base improves robustness

• Cons
  - No one is in charge – tasks can not be delegated or assigned
  - Contributors do what they want to do [i.e. the un-fun yet important work is often left undone]
  - When money gets tight, there is less effort donated to the community good
The Cons are Starting to be Felt

• No one’s in charge …
  - In light of advancing technology, some of EPICS’ core facilities could be substantially enhanced
    - More good ideas than resources, no common direction

• Contributors do what they want to do …
  - Many of the things required to enhance EPICS user support are not voluntarily addressed by the collaboration
    - Consistent documentation
    - Consistent method in packaging/testing contributions

• Money getting tight …
  - Construction Funds: Running out … not much on the horizon
  - Operations Funds: Already being used …being pinched
Looking to the Future

• What has been attempted?
  - EPICS 2010 Meetings (three in the last two years)
    - Good discussions
    - The seed has been sown …
    - An attempt was made to move forward …

    - It is now time to fertilize, water, and make something grow
Looking to the Future

- What is Needed?
  - “A plan”
  - “A plan” that encourages the Pros and mitigates the Cons
  - “A plan” that receives wide acceptance and support
    - … which then becomes “The Plan”
  - Implementation of “The Plan”
  - Demonstration that we can deliver on “The Plan”, which will build additional momentum for further plans
Vision ... (i.e. A Plan)

• Establish and promote a direction for the future

• Aggressively solicit resources from collaborating institutions

• Make something happen
Establish a direction …

- Divide the numerous topics into four categories
  - EPICS Core
    - iocCore
    - Channel Access
    - SNL
  - Core Tools/Extensions
    - Display Manager, ALH, Archiver, StripTool, Gateway
    - VDCT
    - Other? (rdbCore?)
  - Collaboration Support Issues
  - Ideas and R&D for EPICS 5.0 and beyond
How can we build momentum?

• For each category …
  - Identify a category “lead” – the person(s) responsible for making something happen
  - <not sure what authoritative body actually approves these “leads” >

• Responsibilities of Category “lead”
  - Identify interested people who are committed to contributing both ideas and effort in this category (i.e. build a team)
  - Ensure that plans, implementations, etc are sufficiently distributed/exposed for comments and all effort is kept “collaborative”, i.e. beta releases, <appropriate> reviews (e.g. Ben Franksen’s e-mail).
  - Maintain web page(s) that clearly describes the activity (current plans, future plans, wild ideas, current status) occurring in this category. [Post plan -> solicit feedback -> post plan -> solicit feedback -> …]
  - Report at every EPICS Collaboration Meeting what progress has been made in this category (accountability on collaborative skills)
## Action Items

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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Leads</th>
<th>Immediate Pursuits</th>
<th>Imminent Deliverables</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EPICS Core</strong></td>
<td>Bob Dalesio</td>
<td>O iocCore 3.15</td>
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<td>Marty Kraimer</td>
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How might a lead proceed?

- Identify a cooperative team
- Hold frequent consultations with the team
  - E-mail, video conference, meetings
- Solicit input from the wider community
- Solicit/identify tangible resources
- Consider “short term sabbaticals” for intense implementation efforts

- It might be that the report at the EPICS Collaboration Meeting is …
  - “I contacted 15 people and no one was interested”.
Available Resources?

• Can you help?