JANUS: Software Tools - Looking Back/Looking Forward

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Abstract

With a dozen or so colleagues, I've spent the last decade creating software tools which could be used in the production of software systems, and "selling" those tools to a large community of users [1]. At this point, there is a reasonable amount of "mass" to the effort. Many papers and patents, a few books, nearly 1 Million Lines of Code, and an estimated annual benefit to our company of over $50 Million.

While we were busy creating this "mass", the software tools industry was maturing very rapidly, both technologically and economically. At various times, we have stepped back to reassess our position and direction. Almost 2 years ago, it became clear that the business and technical environments demanded new strategies for software tool researchers, builders, and users. I've spent much of the last year putting together an organization to implement a version of these strategies. This talk describes learnings looking back, and strategies looking forward. They are roughly described in chronological order in terms of important areas of focus: Tools & Technology Transfer; Portability & Reuse; Configuration and Architecture; Riding the Technical Waves; Process; and Systems/Information/"minilabs".

References