

Re: Computer programmers' habits in electronics

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.electronics.design/2005-12/msg03515.html>

- *From:* Jim Thompson <~~To-Email-Use-The-Envelope-Icon@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~>
 - *Date:* Tue, 20 Dec 2005 11:19:01 -0700
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On Tue, 20 Dec 2005 17:53:16 GMT, Ignoramus10397
<ignoramus10397@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

>A newbie question...

>

>As a computer programmer, I am used to programming without drawing
>"design diagrams", "flow charts" and other bullshit. I just start
>coding and try to make sure that I have some working prototype most of
>the time, and that I do things nicely. Usually things work out okay
>and programs do their job quietly, as intended.

>

>Not doing too much "design" also helps when the purpose of the program
>is not quite known from the beginning, as it usually happens.

>

>I find it very difficult to change this mindset and do any sort of
>diagram drawings or some such when it comes to electrics or
>electronics. For example, I put together a pretty intricate phase
>converter in the last month, for instance, with two motors, some turn
>on logic, blah blah. That seemed to work.

>

>What I am worried about is that if I try to do something involving more
>than say 20 wires, I would run into a wall and that electronics is not
>the same as computer programming.

>

>So, I am curious if anyone can relate and tell me either just how
>mandatory drawing is, and how to get accustomed to it, or how they
>make things without detailed plans.

>

>i

As a circuit designer I've always liked "block" diagramming of a
system before I begin, so I don't create redundant (or useless)
circuit chunks.

So I find it hard to fathom how you can write software without some
similar organizing scheme.

I once took a course at the community college in Pascal (that will
date me :-)

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The instructor insisted on using "outlining" which, to me, was trying to write raw code without any sense of direction.

When I kept using block diagramming she got pissed at me and started giving me F's on the assignments, in spite of the resulting code being quite compact.

Then I skipped the final since I could care less about the credit.

So I got a F for the course.

The dean, Shirley something or other, wrote me a letter expressing concern for my academic future.

I sent her back a note, "Surely Shirley, Aren't you capable of reading my records? I already possess a Masters in electrical engineering."

She didn't reply ;-)

...Jim Thompson

—
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"Winners never quit, quitters never win", Jack Bradley Budnik ~1956

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