Persona Non Grata -
Don't Forget the Users!

Brian Fitzpatrick, Sr. Software Engineer
bfitzpat@redhat.com
Version 1.0
Welcome!

- Thanks for coming!
- Why are you here?
  - You're involved in software development.
  - You use traditional approaches.
  - You realize that sometimes they don't always work.
  - And you're looking for a different way...
WhyPersona-BasedDevelopment?

Who are your users?
What do they know?
Where do they start?
When they get stuck, what do they do?
Why do they do what they do?
How do they use your products?

… How do you get inside their heads?
What about you?

Traditional Requirement(s) + Use Case(s) = New Feature(s)
Let's go back to Kindergarten for a moment...
Learning styles vary...

How do you teach addition?
Learning styles vary...

- Kinesthetics
- Kinesthetics + Visual
- Auditory
Learning styles vary...
So why did we go back to Kindergarten again?
Users are more than a title and some requirements...
Back to JBoss Tools...

- Too much functionality
- Like a “Swiss Army Knife”
  - Tried...
    - … more documentation
    - … cheat sheets
    - … simplifying the UI
- No “One Size Fits All” solution
Where do personas come in?

- Created by Alan Cooper
  - Refined in *The Inmates are Running the Asylum*

- Persona = more than a title or a "role"

- Collection of details
  - Picture
  - Personality
  - Background
  - Skills
  - Etc...
How do we use them?

- A **persona** is a character in a **user story** based on a plot inspired by your use case.
- So like any good story, you have a plot, characters, and a setting. And, also like any good story, **context** is important.
Obligatory *Star Wars* reference...
How do you create a persona?

Easy to create if you use the “assumption-based” approach.

- Come up with a skill set.
- Come up with a key question or quote.
- Come up with a picture and name.
Meet George Olsen!

George Olsen is in his mid-30s with about 10 years of experience in enterprise software development.

Image from Flickr/aromano – Some rights reserved (CC)
(http://www.flickr.com/photos/aromano/465571944/)

Common Quote:
“Where do I start?”

Sample Resume

- Environments: Windows, UNIX, Linux, Eclipse, JEE, WebSphere, Glassfish
- Programming: JSP, Java, JavaScript, XML, Perl, PHP, Oracle, Maven, ANT, HTML, EJBs, Web Services
- Development: OO Design, Agile Development, Project Management

Software Engineer II/Quiddit, Inc.
2006 to Present
- Led a recent initiative to update sales reporting systems to offer additional information from back-end systems
- Developed key web service infrastructure for pulling details from other systems

Software Engineer/ABC Inc.
2002 to 2006...

Large State University, B.S. Computer Science, 2002
What is George's use case?

Though George is not new to JEE applications, he is new to the world of JBoss Tools and the JBoss Application Server. But now he's been given the following assignment:

- Quiddit recently bought a new company and needs to integrate some of their back-end systems
- George is to use JBoss tooling and runtime components to link up the sales forecast and sales reporting applications through the use of web services
And here's where the rubber meets the road...

- How does George approach this problem?
- The process requires a little roleplaying.
- Looking at it from George's perspective, what questions would he have? Where would he start?
- What quick starts or project examples are available? Can I take an example and tweak it to my purposes? Where are the docs?
Persona use is iterative...

- ... and each iteration may bring up different questions as your tooling changes.
Benefits of Persona-driven Development

- Consistent approach
- Shared vision that keeps the user in mind
- Everyone can use the personas – QE, docs, project management, developers, and so on
- And as new personas are developed it simply enhances the conversation
Brief Recap So Far

- **Persona** = Fictitious person around a collection of knowledge, skills, attitudes, attributes, name, picture, quote
- **User Story** = Persona + Use Case
Recommendations

- Come up with a collection of personas – we call it a Persona Catalog
- Keep a list of user stories as well
- Limit the number of personas for a particular project to 2 or 3 main ones or defining user stories gets out of hand quickly
- Be sure to document where personas are used – which user stories they appear in – which can then be expanded or referred to by others
Now it's YOUR turn...

What we need:

• A Use Case
A Few Faces...
Some Resources For Further Reading

Persona Details
* Usability.gov (Web site usability, but generally applicable) (http://www.usability.gov/analyze/personas.html)
* Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persona_(marketing))
* Personas in User Research (http://www.gurtle.com/ppov/2007/06/14/squiggles-help-find-personas)
* Alan Cooper's Site (http://www.cooper.com/journal/personas/)

Great Random Name Site
* The Random Name Creator (http://www.kleimo.com/random/name.cfm)

Sources for Faces (and other images)
* OpenClipart.org (http://openclipart.org)
* Flickr.com (http://www.flickr.com)
And a few books...

- The Inmates Are Running the Asylum by Alan Cooper
- The Persona Lifecycle by John Pruitt & Tamara Adlin
- The Essential Persona Lifecycle by Tamara Adlin & John Pruitt

Thanks for Listening!