

Pairing via Shared Remote Host

Ben Vandgrift / @bvandgrift
Relevance, Inc. / @thinkrelevance

Pair Programming

- Two people, one screen
- Roles: Driver, Navigator
- Gained popularity via XP, ~1996
- ACM Papers ~1999+
- Common feature of Agile Methodology

The Benefits

- **Increases Accuracy**
 - Four eyes > two eyes
 - Fewer stupid syntax mistakes
- **Increases Productivity**
 - Focus on strategy and implementation simultaneously
- **Creates Focused Atmosphere** (*most of the time*)
 - Pairs tend to keep each other on task

Benefits, Contd.

- There is no better way to learn something than 1-1 teaching.
- Failing social skills? Solved.

It's also **FUN**

(so long as the person you're pairing
with isn't a jackass)

The Drawbacks

- Clearly, not for one-man shows
- Project managers won't get it
- Technology preferences
- Personality conflicts

Brief Q/A?

The Problem

- Relevance has ~40 employees
- Most developers work remotely
- We live and travel all over

The Solution: Pairing Over the Interwebs

it's tube-tastic!

Local Shared Access? No.

- It works on my machine!
- Granting access to my box? No.
- Multitasking is hard.
- Stay out of my pr0n, bro.

Solution: Pairhosts

- Audio: Skype
- Host: Linux on AWS via SSH
- Window Manager: iTerm + tmux
- Editor(s): Vim (rb), Emacs (clj)
- Chat: Campfire

Want Your Own?

- Set up an base EC2 instance using a vanilla linux AMI
- Create a pair user with appropriate `authorized_keys`
- Load development tools, db, etc.
- Save this to an AMI for easy retrieval
- Boot when needed, connect w/ `ssh -A`

Ben's Essentials

- apt or homebrew? dealer's choice.
- build-essentials: everything else requires this
- mysql or pg and development headers
- vim, and with your most-used plugins
- tmux
- git
- rvm, w/ global bundler, rake, rails, etc.
- truecrypt (security is hard and AMIs are public)
- auto-shutdown (AWS ain't free, son.)
- for repeatability: use chef

STOP! DEMO TIME

- Pairhost Setup Time: ~90 minutes
- Signing in with tmux
- Signing in with tmux -C
- Signing in with pairhost gem

Brief Q/A?

Thanks!

Ben Vandgrift – ben@vandgrift.com