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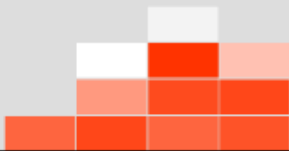
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[Developers 'should be accountable' for security holes](#)

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As a professional software engineer, I strongly di...


As a professional software engineer, I strongly disagree with the stance that "Software developers should be held personally accountable for the security of the code they write". My opinion is based on an engineering disaster that I studied when I was in college.

In 1986, the spaceship Challenger exploded, killing the astronauts that it carried. Upon investigation, it was found that the engineers who designed the faulty parts discovered the problem and notified management. The real fault for the Challenger disaster was miscommunication and an unwillingness to miss a launch date.

Negligent Software Developers are not the only cause of security holes. Inadequate testing, complicated development tools, lack of "proofreading" source code, poor user interfaces, and bad management also need to share the blame. For example, it is common in the software industry for management to set unrealistic development timelines, resulting in software is written quickly and shoddily.

With automobiles and baby strollers, the entire company is held liable for defects, not the engineers. Likewise, it is appropriate to hold software companies, not software developers, liable for security holes.

Posted as a reply to: [Developers 'should be accountable' for security holes](#)

By **Andrew Rondeau** - 13/10/05  [Reply](#)

 [If you are writing programs for a specific OS then...](#) (oldator - 12/10/05)

 [Howard Schmidt sounds like yet another egghead who...](#) (Bruce Allen - 12/10/05)

 [Schmidt seems to be suggesting that the manager/an...](#) (jim bob - 16/10/05)

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- I love the idea. But if I wonder if any employer ... (Twan - 12/10/05)
- If the developer is legally liable for his own cod... (Bill Hauck - 12/10/05)
- This is a standard business tatic...the company wa... (Charles H Martin, PhD - 12/10/05)
- Poor Howard embarasses himself with this one.... (Anonymous - 12/10/05)
- CEO's should be liable for company failures. The ... (Bernard Deuce - 12/10/05)
- Howard Schmidt obviously has no understanding of h... (Anonymous - 12/10/05)
- Step up to plate Developers - don't just hide behi... (Ben Williams - 12/10/05)
- Great idea if - You want to ensure that al... (Anonymous - 12/10/05)
- Schmidt almost certainly doesn't know what he's ta... (Rex Page - 12/10/05)
- So going by Mr. Schmidt's logic, if tomorrow there... (Rajesh Sharma - 13/10/05)
- Seeing that lawyers have squeezed every drop of li... (Anonymous - 13/10/05)
- Ex-White House huh? Let me guess -- Bush crony? ... (Anonymous - 13/10/05)
- Anyone who works in software security (and has a c... (Anonymous - 13/10/05)
- As a professional software engineer, I strongly di...** (Andrew Rondeau - 13/10/05)
- He is a cowboy. Security is moving target dumber.... (Anonymous - 13/10/05)
- Mr. Schmidt is obviously a fool. But if he is will... (Sam - 13/10/05)
- There is a total disconnect with reality! Quality... (Franz - 13/10/05)
- Howard Schmidt is so naive about the subject of so... (Rob C - 13/10/05)
- Somebody has to stand up and say these things, Sec... (Rob Lewis - 13/10/05)
- I agree that software companies should try to make... (Anonymous - 13/10/05)
- How about to include any type of bug into company'... (marius herghelegiu - 13/10/05)
- The problem is that customers and employers don't ... (Anonymous - 14/10/05)
- Mr. Schmidth seems to have found a way to quickly ... (Arthur B. - 14/10/05)
- So, according to his theory, if someone hot-wires ... (Anonymous - 17/10/05)
- Schmidt is unskiled and unaware of it. His inflat... (Kathleen Fasanella - 20/10/05)
- So, I assume he also wants to hold assembly line w... (Anonymous - 21/10/05)
- Another management guy pushing responsibility down... (Anonymous - 24/10/05)
- Does he believe that developers have the ultimate ... (Anonymous - 04/11/05)
- As much as I'd like to be accountable, the level o... (Anonymous - 15/11/05)

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