Practical Erlang testing techniques

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Introduction

Mochi Media's Code

- Substantial multi-language codebase
- Erlang code going back to 2006
- Did not always have good tests :(

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- Write code without tests or review
- Push to production branch
- Deploy
- Firefight [and repeat]

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- Write code, tests and docs
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- Review [and repeat]
- Merge to production branch
- Continuous Integration server runs tests (again)
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Cool Tools (for testing)

- rebar
- EUnit
- cover
- meck
- PropEr
- dialyzer
- Jenkins

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- A sophisticated build-tool for Erlang projects that follows OTP principles
- `https://github.com/basho/rebar`
- Handles common build tasks
- Builds your .app from an .app.src
- Manages dependencies (somewhat)

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rebar src/yourapp.app.src

```
{application, yourapp,
 [{description, "..."},
  {vsn, "1.2.3"}]}.
```

rebar.config

```
{erl_opts, [fail_on_warning, debug_in
{cover_enabled, true}.
{clean_files, ["*.eunit", "ebin/*.bea
{eunit_opts, [verbose,
   {report, {eunit_surefire, [{dir, "
```

rebarized Makefile

```
REBAR=`which rebar || ./rebar`
all: deps compile
deps:
    @$(REBAR) get-deps
compile:
    @$(REBAR) compile
test:
    @$(REBAR) skip_deps=true eunit
clean:
    @$(REBAR) clean
```

rebar alternatives

- In open source Erlang code, rebar seems to have already won
- Agner complements rebar, provides better package discovery and dependency management
- Other tools include CEAN, EPM, Sinan/Faxien but these seem unpopular
- Consolidation would be good here

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EUnit boilerplate

```
-ifdef(TEST).
-include_lib("eunit/include/eunit.hrl"

%% TEST CODE HERE

-endif.
```

EUnit test

```
inc_0_test() ->
  ?assertEqual(
    1,
    increment(0)).
```

EUnit test generator

```
inc_test_() ->
  [{"inc by 0",
    fun () ->
        ?assertEqual(1, increment(0))
    end},
   {"inc by 1",
    ?_test(?assertEqual(2, increment(1
```

EUnit fixture

```
inc_setup() -> return_value_from_setup

inc_cleanup(setup_return_value) -> ok

inc_fixture_test_() ->
  {foreach,
   fun inc_setup/0,
   fun inc_cleanup/1,
   [{"inc by 0",
     ?_test(?assertEqual(1, increment
```

running EUnit tests

```
$ make test
==> inc (eunit)
Compiled src/inc.erl
================== EUnit ================
module 'inc'
  inc: inc_0_test...ok
  [...]
 [done in 0.012 s]
=========================================
  All 4 tests passed.
Cover analysis: [...]/.eunit/index.htm
```

EUnit alternatives

- Common Test also ships with OTP. Much more powerful, but also more complicated. We're not writing a lot of system tests yet, so we haven't explored this
- Yatsy is an alternative to Common Test used by Kreditor. Doesn't seem very popular
- etap is based on Perl's Test Anything Protocol. Not very popular

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cover html output

- open `.eunit/index.html` in a browser
- Lists analysed modules with module coverage
- 100% is awesome, go for that
- Click on module name to see report
- Source lines not covered are colored red

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- https://github.com/esl/meck
- Makes it possible to test non-functional code
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meck usage (constants)

```
-define(WHENEVER, 1303513575954).

statebox_test() ->
  meck:new(statebox_clock),
  meck:expect(statebox_clock,
    timestamp, 0, ?WHENEVER),
  [...],
  meck:unload(statebox_clock).
```

meck usage (funs)

```
next_minute_test() ->
  meck:new(mochierl_util),
  meck:expect(mochierl_util, now_to_ms
    fun() -> 55000 + 60000 * 123345 en
  [...],
  meck:unload(mochierl_util).
```

meck fixture for EUnit

```
meck_setup() ->
  Modules = [mocked_modules, ...],
  meck:new(Modules),
  Modules.

meck_fixture_test_() ->
  {foreach,
   fun meck_setup/0,
   fun meck:unload/1,
   [{"meck test...",
     [...]}]}.
```

meck caveat: OTP modules

- Modules that are “stuck” can’t always be mocked
- `code:unstick_mod/1`, `code:stick_mod/1` might work
- Better to just refactor with a proxy module
- For example, `statebox_clock:timestamp/0` instead of `os:timestamp/0`

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meck workaround: OTP modules

```
-module(statebox_clock).
-export([timestamp/0, now_to_msec/1]).

%% @doc ...
-spec timestamp() -> integer().
timestamp() ->
  now_to_msec(os:timestamp()).
```

meck caveat: side effects

- The output doesn't depend (only) on the input
- More than one call happens to this function in the test
- We have several hacky workarounds for this
- BUT good solution is in development (see github eproxus/meck)

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meck workaround: side effects

```
now_test() ->
  meck:new(statebox_clock),
  meck:sequence(statebox_clock, clock,
    [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]),
  ?assertEqual(1, statebox:clock()),
  ?assertEqual(2, statebox:clock()),
  ok.
```

meck alternatives

- erlymock is probably the only worthy “competitor” for meck
- effigy, emock are unmaintained and do not work with cover
- We only have experience with effigy (legacy code) and meck

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- https://github.com/manopapad/proper
- You declare high-level properties, it generates the tests
- Great at finding edge cases

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PropEr EUnit Skeleton

```
%% Before eunit.hrl include
-include_lib("proper/include/proper.h

%% EUnit tests
proper_module_test() ->
  ?assertEqual(
    [],
    proper:module(?MODULE, [long_resu
```

PropEr Specs Example

```
-spec int_ceil(float()) -> integer().
int_ceil(X) ->
  T = trunc(X),
  case (X - T) of
    Pos when Pos > 0 -> T + 1;
    _ -> T
  end.

int_ceil_spec_test() ->
  proper:check_spec({?MODULE, int_cei
```

PropEr Property Example

```
-spec digits(float()) -> string().
digits(F) -> [...].

%% In the EUnit test block
prop_digits_exact() ->
  ?FORALL(F, float(),
    begin F =:= list_to_float(digits(F
```

PropEr Generator Example

```
unichar() ->
  union([integer(0, 16#d7ff),
         integer(16#e000, 16#10ffff)])

utf8_binary() ->
  ?LET(L, list(unichar()),
    unicode:characters_to_binary(L, ut

prop_valid_utf8_bytes_valid() ->
  ?FORALL(B, utf8_binary(),
    begin B =:= valid_utf8_bytes(B) en
```

PropEr Caveats

- GPLv3 license might be complicated to integrate with your source
- It's a work in progress, no proper release yet
- Missing some useful features (improper lists, custom generators for automatic spec testing, etc.)
- Make sure to include PropEr hrl before EUnit (`?LET` macro conflict)

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- Static analysis tool
- Great at finding stupid mistakes

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dialyzer plt building

```
$ dialyzer --build_plt \
  --output_plt .dialyzer-R14B01.plt \
  --apps kernel stdlib sasl erts ssl
    tools os_mon runtime_tools crypto
    inets xmerl webtool snmp public_k
    mnesia eunit syntax_tools compile
    ./deps/*/ebin
```

dialyzer analysis

```
$ dialyzer ./ebin --plt .dialyzer-R14
  -Wunmatched_returns \
  -Werror_handling \
  -Wrace_conditions \
  -Wbehaviours \
  -Wunderspecs
```

dialyzer analysis notes

- You may not want to turn on all of the warnings
- You may want to disable other warnings
- See dialyzer(3) for all options

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dialyzer caveats

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- Could use better tools to manage PLTs, they are expensive to generate and specific to an OTP release
- We'd use it a lot more if it weren't for the hassle of PLTs

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- Add build steps:
  - Execute shell: `make clean`
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  - Parsers: Erlang Compiler
- Publish JUnit test result report
  - XMLs: `**/TEST-*.xml`

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Jenkins - Watch a build

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- Click entry in Build History
- Console Output

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Wrap-up

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- Adding EUnit tests is easy
- Use cover to gauge progress (100% is #winning)
- meck can help you test non-functional code
- PropEr / QuickCheck is REALLY GREAT
- Please improve the dialyzer toolchain
- Setting up Continuous Integration is easy

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Questions?

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