

LightningTools

A little background history

Lightning Tools was founded in 2007 by SharePoint MVP Nick Swan and Brett Lonsdale. Brett was a full time SharePoint developer and instructor and often found gaps in SharePoint features while running training classes.

One of these gaps became very clear with the launch of MOSS 2007 and the Business Data Catalog feature, which was powerful but difficult to use.

This was when Lightning Tools was formed with a new product that made working with the Business Data Catalog easy – that product, BDC Meta Man, still exists today and still helps thousands of customers connect SharePoint On-Prem and Online to external data.

Lightning Tools since have gone on to fill many other gaps such as

- Content Rollup
- Permissions Management
- Discussion Forums
- List Forms
- Charting
- Data Views

Learn more:
www.lightningtools.com



Development Best Practices
CERTIFIED

A Rencore and Lightning Tools Success Story

Saving time, money, and mitigating risks through achieving high-quality SharePoint customizations are the main reasons Rencore's clients choose to implement our tools. This allows our clients to be extra confident of their code and process as they protect their SharePoint investment and company reputation.

Additional to the SPCAF product benefits for dev and testing teams in IT Departments, ISVs, and Consultancies; the Rencore certification program was added to allow companies to publicly demonstrate their commitment to quality.

We were thrilled when certified partner Lightning tools decided to talk openly about how their Rencore partnership has improved their business through the usage of SPCAF, and later certification.

The challenges Lightning Tools faced

Reviewing code is a cost to any business who writes it. As Lightning Tools developed a growing code base it was clear that automation was the best route to saving money and improving quality. With automation a given, the question became a matter of selection and specialization.

Lightning Tools' CEO Brett Lonsdale saw a demonstration of SPCAF at a conference in London and knew instantly that the product would be a huge time saver; solving the problems around bug finding, code-review, automation, and the manpower needed to do this effectively over time.

The key point was not simply having a code analysis tool for these purposes, it was having a code analysis tool that specialized in the SharePoint platform for which they develop.

Solution

To answer these challenges the implementation of Rencore's SPCAF product, and the later introduction of the certification program was phased in to Lightning Tools' processes.

The SPCAF tool checks over 1000 rules for general and SharePoint-specific code issues on both Full-Trust (WSP) solutions, as well as Add-ins and SPFx solutions.

Given SharePoint customers today need solutions in both client-side and traditional development methodologies, SPCAF's broad range of SharePoint specific best practices and compatibility gave a clear advantage in supporting solutions across SharePoint's notoriously treacherous customization landscape.

Thanks to SPCAF, Lightning Tools has cut overall development time, technical support cases, and quality assurance costs **by over 35%**. Developers have become accustomed to working with SPCAF as part of their daily activities ensuring that as they write code, they are already following best practices meaning it's also become a skills improvement tool, leading to greater staff productivity and satisfaction.

Results in numbers:

Quantitative ROI is a tricky thing to pin down, so we roped in Rencore Lead Developer and resident über-geek Hugh Wood to make sure we had credible numbers. We looked just at code-review ROI from the SPCAF product usage for these numbers.

In short, the method is based around "logical lines of code" – an industry recognized approach that factors in that a line of XML has a different cost than a line of C#.

We based our review costs on how long it should take a mid-level team member to review the lines of code, this allows us to calculate a cost against manual review. Of course, an automated review is more accurate as well as faster.

Lightning Tools' Lead Developer Ara Arakelyan wrote: *"At Lightning Tools, we are widely using the tool SPCAF for analyzing multiple products. You can see a concise list with an approximation of the costs savings in the table below"*

SPCAF ROI Calculation Method	Total
Logical Lines of Code	922,716
Inspection Rate (Lines per Hour)	224
Code Review hours (over 5 years)	5492
Hours Per Week	105
Hourly Rate (typical mid-level)	22
5 Year Savings (GBP)	£ 102,242

This calculates down to a saving of over 20,000 GBP per year - just for the code-review benefits, and only for the subset of the Lightning Tool's product lines we have investigated. When factoring in the benefits highlighted elsewhere in this case study, it's clear to see why Lightning Tools are so happy with their Rencore investments.

In closing

Beyond the quantitative benefits above, there are a range of qualitative benefits to adopting both SPCAF and the Rencore Certification.

Here's what it means to CEO Brett Lonsdale:

"Ultimately, the Rencore Certification demonstrates to the customer that our products' code meets the highest standards. The certification program pays for itself because we gain more sales as a result of displaying the certification logo. It was definitely worth going through the vetting process, and it also gives us satisfaction to know the company is offering our customers the very best."

Brett Lonsdale, CEO Lightning Tools

Brett's words were exemplified when a recent large sale was closed with a **Global Top-5 Auto Manufacturer** - they shared that Lightning Tools' adoption of SPCAF immediately swept away any concerns that the Lightning Tools product stack might degrade their SharePoint security and performance.

Having SPCAF implemented in their development and testing operations gives Brett and his team a high level of confidence and cost savings. The certification goes a step further to help them demonstrate this.

No matter if you're an ISV, Consultancy, Managed Service Provider, or in-house SharePoint dev team – visit www.rencore.com today or drop us a line on sales@rencore.com to see how we can help you.

