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Best Practices for Describing Defects

To ensure quick resolution to defects that are found, it is important to provide as much information as possible in your defect reports, allowing developers to quickly resolve the issue. Below are some tips for creating a solid defect report:

Tip 1 - Create a descriptive Title

Include a descriptive title with each defect. The title is the short description of a defect. Notice in the 2n example below, the defect titles contain error numbers and better describes the issue.

Poor defect titles:

Screen crashes
Issue found when adding an invoice

Better defect titles:

Error -214123556 when printing an invoice using HP 6210 printer Invalid Use of Null error when adding an invoice in Customer Portal

Tip 2 - Create detailed Steps to Reproduce

Steps to Reproduce are the most critical part of your defect report, it should describe how to reproduce the error. It is easiest to follow if the Steps to Reproduce are numbered and begin with information about the person logging in and what project or workspace they were working in. Notice in the 2nd example below, we first told the programmer what software we were logging into, along with the User Id we used. Next, we identified the workspace we were working in. Next, we described the exact invoice number we were working on and explained the exact steps to produce the issue, along with our expected results.

Poor Steps to Reproduce:

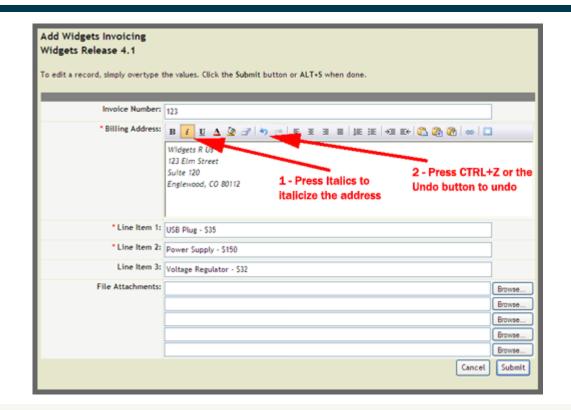
Once italic font style been applied to the text it cannot be undone clicking the "i' or Remove formatting icons.

Better Steps to Reproduce:

- 1. Log into Widgets Invoicing program (version 4.1) using User Id abc00012
- 2. Select workspace named "My Sandbox"
- 3. Click Search, enter Invoice number 18738766, press Go
- 4. Once invoice is displayed, click EDIT
- 5. Once in edit mode, highlight the invoice address
- 6. Press the italics button on the editor toolbar to change the entire address to italics font.
- 7. Once italics is pressed, press CTRL+Z to undo the italics
- 8. It keeps the address in italics, it should revert back to no italics

Tip 3 - Attach Screen Shots

When describing a defect, many times a picture is worth a thousand words. In most cases, you should attach a screen shot that describes the error you received or what is not correct. Learn to use a basic paint program to draw on the screen shot to give more details. Below is an example:



Helpful Templates

Below are some helpful templates to aid you in developing software solutions on-time and onbudget:

- Pragmatic Agile Development (PAD) Overview http://www.PragmaticSW.com/PADOverviewPresentation.pdf
- PAD Road Map
 - http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/RoadMap_Template.pdf
- PAD Best Practices Excerpt http://www.PragmaticSW.com/PADBestPracticesExcerpt.pdf
- Additional PAD Information http://www.pragmaticsw.com/PADOverview.pdf
- Project Management Guidelines
 - http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/ProjectMgtGuidelines.rtf
- Functional Specifications
 - http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/FunctionalSpec.rtf
- Architectural Overview
 - http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/ArchitectureOverview.rtf
- Detailed Design http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/DetailedDesign.rtf
- Strategic Planning Document
 - http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/StrategicPlanning.rtf
- Test Design http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/TestDesign.rtf
- Risk Assessment http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/Risk%
 20Assessment.rtf
- Weekly Status http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/WeeklyStatusRpt.rtf
- User Acceptance Test Release Report
 - http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/UATRelease.rtf

- Post Mortem Report http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Pragmatic/Templates/PostMortem.rtf
- All Templates http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Templates.asp
- Prior Newsletters http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Newsletters.asp
- Software Planner http://www.SoftwarePlanner.com/SoftwarePlanner.asp
- **Defect Tracker** http://www.DefectTracker.com
- Remoteus (Remote Desktop Sharing) http://www.PragmaticSW.com/Remoteus.asp

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