

BoF - C++ session

12/12/19

Summary: Robert Nabel from Improbable gave a C++ lightning talk about the power of toolchains. He described several painful scenarios, one in particular, involving the same copts in many different cc_library targets. With the basic functionality provided by toolchains: features, action_configs as well as configurations, he showed how the maintenance burden can be reduced.

From the general Bazel C++ discussion we had after the lightning talk, the main takeaways are:

1. We need better documentation. There were some things that users wanted to do that they didn't know were possible simply because there was no proper documentation
2. cc_shared_library is welcome by many users not just Tensorflow and Android
3. Open source libraries with no BUILD files are painful, although some users didn't know about foreign-cc which solves some of the problems.
4. Several requests, which we won't work simply because we don't have the bandwidth. For example, improving toolchains in general, people complained about readability although this is much better than before, now that they are in Starlark