Engineer Advisory

Held 4 repositories to one history standard

Held four repositories to one history standard — conventional, emoji-free, no attribution trailers, enforced by a commit-message hook — alongside 48 instruction documents that govern how the work is done.

July 2026

48

instruction documents
governing how the work is done

Situation. Four repositories built over eighteen months by one person is the situation where process is easiest to skip, because there is nobody to coordinate with and the cost of an unreadable history is paid entirely by a future self who has not complained yet. It is also the situation where an inconsistent history is most likely, since each repository can drift into its own habits with nothing pulling them together.

Task. One standard for history and one standard for instructions had to apply across every repository the work is authored in, and it had to be enforced mechanically rather than remembered.

Action. The commit standard is a conventional prefix naming the kind of change and a scope, a subject under a fixed length, no emojis, and no attribution trailers of any sort — the last of these because a trailer crediting a tool is not a fact about the change, and history is for facts about changes. A commit-message hook rejects anything that does not conform, in every repository that carries work, so the standard is a property of the repository rather than of whoever is committing. The distribution on the largest repository shows what the work actually was: 156 feature commits, 133 fixes, 128 documentation, 81 chores, 26 refactors, 20 style, 5 performance and 3 test. Documentation is close enough to fixes to be worth noticing, and that is a consequence of the second half of this — 48 instruction documents across the

four, each covering one domain, each written as rules rather than description, all reachable from a single entry document per repository so there is one place to start. A documentation linter enforces per-file size budgets and index membership, so the set stays navigable rather than growing into an archive.

Result. Four repositories share one history format and one instruction structure, both enforced by hooks rather than by discipline. What this does not do is make the history good: the format is checked and the content is not, so a conforming subject line that describes nothing passes exactly as well as one that explains the change.

Bring this experience to your project

Use “Held 4 repositories to one history standard” as a starting point for a similar challenge in your organisation. The services behind this work are available for your project. Somebody on your side of the table when a supplier, a budget or an architecture decision needs a second informed opinion.

Explore our services Get in touch →

Look behind the result

Read the situation, decisions and result in this example. We can discuss which parts transfer to your constraints and which need another approach. Held 4 repositories to one history standard — 48 instruction documents governing how the work is done

Explore our services Get in touch →

Want one standard holding across every repository?

Talk through your project with the engineer responsible for delivery. We agree the scope, price basis and handover in writing before work begins.

Role context: Technical Writer. It draws on DevOps, Automation & CI/CD, Technical Leadership, Project Management, Agile & Scrum and Documentation. And while you are here, we are rather good at DevOps & CI/CD Automation, Technical Leadership & Consulting, Project Management (Agile) and Technical Documentation.

Get in touch Explore our services

One piece of **a longer record** — and it is all on this site.

Every entry is written the same way: the situation, the task, what we did and what changed.

See the whole record

Define the improvement you need

Bring the decision, the people affected and the options already considered. We can make the tradeoffs explicit and leave a documented recommendation.

See what it costs Get in touch →

Want one standard holding across every repository?

Ask about the decisions behind “Held 4 repositories to one history standard”. You will speak with the people who can explain the work and assess your own project.

Explore our services

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Contact card

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