

PROJECT CONTROL: SATISFYING THE CUSTOMER

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The conference is co-located with the IEEE
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Metrics

Project Control: Satisfying the Customer

Preface

We are proud to present the proceedings of the 12th European Software Control and Metrics Conference (ESCOM). The conference this year also includes a Software Certification Programme in Europe (SCOPE) track. ESCOM was established in 1990 in order to support the metrics and management science communities in the software industry. The conference's focus is on the software-related issues of project and risk control, process improvement, quality and certification, cost estimation and productivity, and the measurement to support these activities. The annual conference provides a special opportunity for face-to-face contact between researchers, consultants and practitioners.

Contributions are peer reviewed to ensure that they reach high academic standards, and / or address practical needs. New ideas are shared and find support from inception through user acceptance – hence the conference slogan “You heard it first at ESCOM”. The innovations first reported at ESCOM conferences are often expanded and published in prestigious academic journals.

*Software is developed for people.
Customer participation has an impact on productivity and quality, and the
wise management of requirements specification changes is key to project
control and satisfied customers.*

One theme that appears frequently in papers and discussions in the area of software control and measurement, and in particular software cost estimation, is the importance of requirements volatility. Even a slight change to requirements at a late stage in a project can have a disastrous impact on cost, schedule and quality.

Because of this, software engineers have been trying for years to manage requirements better. However, unless we are developing software for our personal use, we cannot control requirements, nor can we dictate the frequency or desirability of changes. What we can do is quantify the amount of change to re-negotiate cost and schedule estimates.

Nor must we lose sight of the fact that software is developed for people. A project in which requirements remain fixed may not be a success from the customer's viewpoint. Our goal should be to develop software on time, within budget and which satisfies the customer. While much research has been devoted to the cost and duration aspects, what are we doing to measure customer satisfaction?

To address these important issues we chose “Controlling Software Projects: Satisfying the Customer” as the conference theme this year. Thus in addition to traditional papers, several papers present pioneering work to better understand the human factor aspect of requirements volatility and its impact on software projects and product quality. The proceedings include experience reports, studies of best practice, new research concepts, and in-depth quantitative analyses.

Ultimately, the quality of the Conference depends on the quality of the contributions submitted and the processes that govern their review and selection. Many people helped to put the ESCOM 2001 program and proceedings together. In particular, we thank the authors for creating and submitting their work, and the members of the Program Committee for their prompt reviews and constructive comments.

Katrina D. Maxwell, Serge Oligny, Erik van Veenendaal, Rob J. Kusters

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