

Lecture Notes in Computer Science

Edited by G. Goos, J. Hartmanis and J. van Leeuwen

1675

Springer

Berlin

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Jacky Estublier (Ed.)

System Configuration Management

9th International Symposium, SCM-9
Toulouse, France, September 5-7, 1999
Proceedings



Springer

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Cataloging-in-Publication data applied for

Die Deutsche Bibliothek - CIP-Einheitsaufnahme

System configuration management : 9th international symposium / SCM-9, Toulouse, France, September 5 - 7, 1999. Jacky Estublier (ed.). - Berlin ; Heidelberg ; New York ; Barcelona ; Hong Kong ; London ; Milan ; Paris ; Singapore ; Tokyo : Springer, 1999
(Lecture notes in computer science ; Vol. 1675)
ISBN 3-540-66484-X

CR Subject Classification (1998): D.2, K.6, K.4.3

ISSN 0302-9743

ISBN 3-540-66484-X Springer-Verlag Berlin Heidelberg New York

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Printed in Germany

Typesetting: Camera-ready by author
SPIN 10704193 06/3142 - 5 4 3 2 1 0 Printed on acid-free paper

Preface

This workshop series is now over ten years old, which is a pretty long time for a very focussed topic: Configuration Management. The first conference took place in 1988 (Grassau, Germany) and the topics were focussed on version control and rebuilding.

Many people consider that SCM is one of the few areas of software engineering that can be considered to be really successful. Products, that more or less fulfill their purpose, exist, and everybody agrees that they are now mandatory for a successful software project.

Indeed, during the second half of the nineties, SCM has entered a maturation phase, in which good commercial products have been incorporating many of the features designed and discussed at previous conferences of this workshop. With the generalization of commercial products, the question now is: What are the objectives of a scientific workshop on this topic? Is there any more research to be done in SCM today?

This ninth volume in the series reflects pretty well the current state and mood in the CM community. There are an unprecedented number of papers discussing the current state of the art and trying to identify research directions (session 6). On some core topics, like versioning (session 3), and following SCM8 tracks, papers present work on unified models. Versioning models, after years of raging discussions, now seem to have found a consensus.

Nevertheless, SCM is facing new challenges, and new solutions are required to manage systems consisting of tightly integrated hardware and software, dynamic systems that change at run-time, or non-traditional artifacts such as Web sites. Moreover, new solutions are required to deploy complex systems within large organizations, to support development teams from multiple disciplines, located in different settings, and constrained by important quality and time objectives.

The following papers do not propose new solutions to all these issues (session 5), but at least make an effort to identify the new needs and challenges of SCM in such a context (sessions 1 & 3). We believe there are still many aspects to be addressed and enhancements to be made in the area of System Configuration Management.

June 1999

Jacky Estublier
General Chair

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