

Lecture Notes in Business Information Processing

35

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Software Engineering Approaches for Offshore and Outsourced Development

Third International Conference, SEAFOOD 2009
Zurich, Switzerland, July 2-3, 2009
Proceedings

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2009929830

ACM Computing Classification (1998): D.2, K.6, K.4.2, J.1

ISSN	1865-1348
ISBN-10	3-642-02986-8 Springer Berlin Heidelberg New York
ISBN-13	978-3-642-02986-8 Springer Berlin Heidelberg New York

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Printed in Germany

Typesetting: Camera-ready by author, data conversion by Scientific Publishing Services, Chennai, India
Printed on acid-free paper SPIN: 12717293 06/3180 5 4 3 2 1 0

Preface

SEAFOOD 2009: Enabling Global Partnerships to Deliver on Business Needs

Companies have been outsourcing areas of software development work for many years, either because of the engineering challenges or because the outsourced aspect is not central to their core business. A profound transformation has been affecting this model over recent years: a massive transfer of development activities from the USA and Europe to a skilled labor force in service-providing countries. This transformation has been driven by the demands of a global business climate seeking to increase the value delivery of IT investment. However, the ability to realize this value can prove problematic in practice. Of particular concern are the hidden costs of globally distributed models of working, such as understanding and communicating the true business needs across organizational and cultural boundaries.

To address such issues, offshore outsourcing requires different support from in-house development and this means adapting familiar techniques, processes and tools to this setting, as well as perhaps creating innovative new ones. Coupled with this industry transformation there is hence a pressing need to re-examine those software engineering approaches that either facilitate or impede this model of working. With an inevitable focus on the economy in 2009, business decisions regarding the sourcing of software development projects will come under close scrutiny. It will become increasingly critical to design global partnerships that both clarify cost/benefits and enable delivery on business needs.

SEAFOOD 2009, the Third International Conference on Software Engineering Approaches for Offshore and Outsourced Development, was held at ETH Zürich during July 2–3, 2009. Bertrand Meyer and Mathai Joseph established the SEAFOOD series of conferences in 2007 in an attempt to not only bring software engineering to outsourcing but also to bring outsourcing into the collective consciousness of the software engineering community. SEAFOOD seeks to provide an opportunity for participants from academia and industry to present and discuss experiences, ideas and proposals related to this topic.

Reflecting the global nature of offshore outsourcing, SEAFOOD 2009 received submissions from Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Denmark, Finland, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Switzerland, The Philippines, Thailand and the USA. The 12 articles in this volume were selected for presentation and discussion. These include 9 papers from industry (5 full papers and 4 short position papers) and 3 full research papers from academia. The conference program also included two keynote presentations and the abstracts are contained in this volume: “Decentralized Software Development: Pitfalls and Challenges,” delivered by Carlo Ghezzi, Politecnico di Milano, Italy; and “An Empiricist View of

Managing Globally Distributed Software Development,” delivered by Narayan Ramasubbu, Singapore Management University, Singapore. The conference program was supplemented by an industry panel discussion organized by David Michael of United Business Media on the theme of “Software Engineering Practices to Ensure Success in a Multi-country Environment.” The conference site at <http://seafood.ethz.ch> includes information on this conference, as well as on past and future SEAFOOD events.

Many people contributed to SEAFOOD 2009. In particular, Martin Nordio played a central role throughout the organization of the conference, assisting with the program logistics, local arrangements and preparation of this volume. We thank the industry and education Program Chairs, David Michael and Christelle Scharff for their attention to the industry and education submissions. We also thank the entire Program Committee for their timely work in reviewing submissions and Patrick Mäder for attending to publicity. SEAFOOD 2009 was co-located with TOOLS 2009 and we are further grateful to Claudia Günthart for assisting with the local arrangements.

May 2009

Olly Gotel
Mathai Joseph
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