User-Centred Engineering

Michael Richter • Markus Flückiger

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Creating Products for Humans

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Foreword

This book is aimed first and foremost at people involved in software and product development – product managers, project managers, consultants and analysts, who face the major challenge of developing highly useful and usable products. Our objective is to provide you with an expert overview of the subject. You will find answers to the following questions:

- What is user-centred engineering?
- How do user-centred activities fit into the development process?
- How do I schedule user-centred techniques and what is the process involved?
- What results will I obtain and how can I verify them?
- How can I establish a user-centric culture within my business?
- What related fields are there and where can I find further information?

However, you *won't* find in this book:

- Rules, adherence to which guarantees great user experiences
- Cookbook instructions to improve usability
- User interface guidelines for developers
- Theory which has no practical application

We hope also to provide interested lay readers with an easily comprehensible introduction to the subject. As users of technical systems, we all have a choice – either we accept what is put in front of us or we don't. Of course it is not always possible to switch to a different product whenever we feel the need, but even then we can at least contribute to improving the existing one. The first step is to understand how this can be achieved.

Schlieren, Switzerland — Michael Richter
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