PM World Journal (ISSN: 2330-4480)
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www.pmworldjournal.net   Book Review

PM of Large Software-Intensive Systems
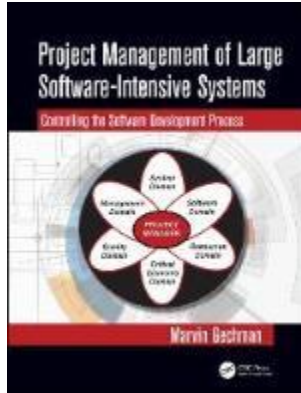Author: Marvin Gechman
Reviewer: Bill Sundermann

PM WORLD BOOK REVIEW

Book Title: **_Project Management of Large Software-Intensive Systems_**

Author: **Marvin Gechman**

Publisher: CRC Press Taylor and Francis Group

List Price: $79.95   Format: Large, soft cover, 366 pages

Publication Date: April 2019   ISBN: 978-0-367-13671-0

Reviewer: **Bill Sundermann**   Review Date: November 2019

Introduction

The author, Marvin Gechman, is a long-time, seasoned manager of engineering and government contracts and it shows. A very detailed, organized book is arranged to provide the reader with every possible topic of software project management for large systems.

Overview of Book's Structure

The book has five sections focused on software project fundamentals, followed by domains of software management and quality, software resources, systems software engineering, and finally critical software elements.

The fundamentals introduce how to use the book, terms and definitions, and team structure. Project management activities are laid out to cover objectives, control areas, and process improvement. Software life cycles and development methodologies are described in detail with adequate coverage of agile and scrum.

Each domain section starts out with an explanation of what is covered with references to the numbered sections of the chapter.

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Highlights

The first section of software project management fundamentals lays the foundation by stressing the importance of having a solid software development plan (SDP) and the key success factors specific to a software-intensive system implementation.

Explanations of the role of software work products in developing documentation are a key to developing a sustainable product.

As a PM working within in a large software services company, there are usually management directives on the standards and methodologies expected by the PMO. The chapter on Software Development Methodologies makes it clear that the framework used can be a hybrid of process models such as agile, incremental, iterative and others – whatever best fits the project.

A chapter on the software management domain provides an outline of all the issues that must be addressed in the SDP (control, process, measurement, quality, and testing) and a list of software planning tasks with accompanying reference to other parts of the book – a valuable byproduct of the author's attention to organization.

Highlights: What I liked!

As a long-time project manager, I valued the authors approach to organizing the book in a way that allows quick access to the information needed. There is a lot of ground to cover! The Table of Contents reflects an engineer's attention to detail and efficiency with each detail of each chapter enumerated for ease of reference. This helps to give an overview of the chapter and is helpful when going back to review.

The book is full of tables and diagrams that reinforce the concepts, summarize the topics in bulleted form, and show workflows. Along with descriptive explanation, there are quotes and lessons learned that make for an interesting read.

Who might benefit from the Book?

A new project manager will find the book a good resource for learning terminology and gaining appreciation for the level of detail needed to manage a successful software project. Topics like process audits, software quality factors, and risk handling are all covered.

An experienced project manager, and any manager new to software development, will benefit from the detailed structure that allows for quick reference and reminders to cover all these topics in each phase of the project.

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Conclusion

As Gechman points out in the Preface of the book, software development is both an art and a science. This book leans heavily toward providing structure to developing systems, and with that base the art can be applied!

Some of the content may come across as too rigid and structured within a culture of agile development methodologies, but it is important to note that all of the collaboration, planning, and review described are critical to building a quality system that the customer demands.

The book is a valuable resource for the PM who wants to complete a project having covered all functional areas in detail.

For more about this book, go to: https://www.crcpress.com/Project-Management-of-Large-Software-Intensive-Systems/Gechman/p/book/9780367136710

Editor's note: This book review was the result of a partnership between the publisher, PM World and the PMI Dallas Chapter. Authors and publishers provide the books to PM World; books are delivered to the PMI Dallas Chapter, where they are offered free to PMI members to review; book reviews are published in the PM World Journal and PM World Library. PMI Dallas Chapter members can keep the books as well as claim PDUs for PMP recertification when their reviews are published.

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About the Reviewer

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Bill Sundermann, PMP, is a senior project manager with FIS, a leading provider of technology solutions for merchants, banks and capital markets firms globally. Our 55,000 people are dedicated to advancing the way the world pays, banks and invests by applying our scale, deep expertise and data-driven insights. We help our clients use technology in innovative ways to solve business-critical challenges and deliver superior experiences for their customers.

Bill Sundermann holds a degree in economics from Vanderbilt University and an MBA from SMU in Dallas. A 36-year veteran of the banking and financial services industry, he is a credentialed Project Management Professional and a member of the Dallas Chapter of the Project Management Institute.

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