A Process View on Product Management in Software Engineering Companies

Vladimír Bureš, Faculty of Informatics and Management, University of Hradec Králové, Rokintského 62, 500 03 Hradec Králové, Czech Republic, vladimir.bures@uhk.cz

Abstract

Software development is considered as a knowledge-intensive set of activities. Therefore, several business concepts are usually used to support it. Product management is not an exception. However, qualitative and quantitative characteristics of its application are influenced by the size of an organization, since small and medium-sized enterprises differ when compared to large companies from the process perspective. Based on the analysis of the Czech business context this paper analyses the current state of the product management in small and medium-sized software developing organisations. Results reveal that the majority of investigated software developers consider as the most significant problem the process of requirement gathering, analysis and consequent implementation. This paper presents an alternative process model which includes selected activities and establishes responsibilities. The paper also offers a brief analysis of possibilities that can be used for software-based support of described processes.

Keywords: product management, process perspective, software engineering, small and medium-sized enterprises.

Introduction

Latest developments in both technical and research aspects of software engineering allow to consider is as one of the most agile and progressive economic sectors. As it is a case in other sectors, large software engineering enterprises became global players with financial strength and substantial influence on the overall business development. These organisations usually master particular business concepts and related processes. However, this is in contradiction to situation in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which have their own specifics ranging from organisational structures and processes to culture or available financial resources. For this reason, this paper deals with product management in small and medium sized software engineering companies in the Czech business context. The problem is that although product management is well-known concept, it is differently interpreted and not always successfully used in practice. The aim of the paper is to identify the weakest point of product management in the aforementioned setting and to suggest possible solution. The paper is structured as follows. In the next section basics of product management are summarised. Following section describes methods used in the described study. Then acquired results together with discussion are presented. Finally, the main conclusions are stated.
Acknowledgment

This paper is supported by the research project 5.1 SPK01/013 “Investigation of methods, procedures and organisational structures suitable for optimisation of product management processes influencing the management of new ICT products development” coordinated by the Hradec IT cluster.

References


