

Software Economics Newsletter

Happy Summer– We are at the mid-point of the new year and a lot is happening in the world of software economics and measurement especially as it pertains to agile developments. We will attempt to capture what we are doing to keep up with these developments in this new issue of our newsletter.

July 2018 Edition of Software Benchmarking Report to be Issued - The second release of our Software Benchmarking report for 2018 will be issued towards the end of July 2018. *These benchmarks are being used by our clients to assess their performance and competitiveness and to check the reasonableness of their estimates.* The current issue of the report is based on a new and improved data set which includes findings based on a subset of completed developments from our database of over 20,000 completed software projects, none of which is over 10 years old.

Each release of our software benchmarking report is updated and improved based on feedback from subscribers. This new edition contains the following changes:

- We have added a new domain called integrated business systems for which we now have data. This is a significant addition because it portrays benchmarks for collections of integrated applications.
- We have updated all of our productivity and cost figures to reflect the results of our benchmarking analysis using data collected during the 2008 to 2018 timeframe.
- Trend information has been enhanced using the method of moving averages.
- All of our quality ratings have been revised using the most current development data set available.
- Our technology watch lists have been updated to identify trends that impact our application domains.

We will continue to publish our software benchmarks twice a year in the January/February and June/July timeframes. These reports are sold on an annual subscription basis. Substantial university, government and not-for-profit discounts are available for new subscribers. If you would like information about how to subscribe to our software benchmarking service, please contact us at info@reifer.com.

On Data Availability– lots of people ask us about the availability of our data and whether they can buy subsets of it. The simple answer to such queries is “no” because the data is proprietary. In order to get such data, we have to sign legal agreements which prohibit us from disseminating client data. This makes sense because such data can easily be misused. To avoid inappropriate disclosure of such data, we have established protection procedures and safeguards. We also take care not to release results that could be reverse engineered to reveal a specific organization’s software productivity, costs and quality are. This is easy to do when there are just a few firms doing work within a field (like aircraft, etc.).

On Data Mining– many people also ask us about how we acquire our data. We do this by working with our clients to setup best practices for measurement and data collection, sanitization, normalization and analysis. We start by inserting a defined set of metrics and conventions enterprise-wide. Next, we help put the practices into operations via pilot projects. Client data normally resides in-house. However, much of our analysis of the data is done in our facilities under strict controls. In all cases, we statistically check the data for reasonableness and to ensure its integrity. As you can imagine, it takes a lot of time to setup these practices. But, having benchmarks that can be trusted and are valid is worth the effort.

Of course, we are interested in establishing data sharing agreements with new clients. However, clients need to realize that they will have to commit the time and resources needed to make such a venture successful. If interested, please feel free to contact us about making such an investment.

World Tour Highly Successful – From February to May 2018, we visited 54 locations in five continents to lecture on and discuss agile estimating, measurement and management practices and productivity, cost and quality experience with leaders in the software field. Discussions focused mainly on agile efforts being done at scale and on enterprise level issues. As part of this tour, we met with key players in Australia, Hong Kong, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Singapore, and 17 other nations. We were able to share software benchmarking information with participants, gather data, explore issues, extract opinions and generate some interesting results as a product of this tour. In addition, we got commitments from 15 major organizations to share data. Once the analysis of this data is completed, we will be able to compare productivity trends by industry, country, and geographical region. Example questions that could be answered include “are U.S. workers more productive?” “If so, why?” and “What are the factors that drive such productivity?” By posing questions and developing answers, we believe that we will be able to generate some very interesting results once this data is gathered, sanitized, normalized and researched.

New Agile Webinar Series Now Available as a Subscription Service – As described in our previous newsletter, we have developed a new webinar series on agile topics. Based on the success of the initial pilots, these webinars have been *fully subscribed* for the next year. By working with our clients, we were able to tailor each offering to support their best practices and agile experiences using examples taken from their recent experience. Webinars that are being offered in the series include:

- Agile value streams – how to quantify the benefits
- Managing agile-at-scale enterprises – unveiling the mystery
- Agile software quality – “one team, one approach, build quality in”
- Agile estimation – determining how much it will cost and how long it will take to deliver
- Agile analytics – using your data to maximize your yield

More webinars are planned. The series will open to new subscribers early next year. Those interested in being put on our waiting list for these offerings can contact us for more information.

Agile Quality Book Available this Fall – Don Reifer’s new book on agile quality will be available this fall as a self-published volume on Amazon as a two volume set. As stated in our previous newsletter, both volumes focus on designing quality into the software product as it is developed using agile practices rather than trying to achieve an acceptable level of quality using testing techniques. Guidelines are offered on “how to” accomplish this feat throughout both volumes. Forwards by Mike Cohn and Scott Ambler, both leaders in the agile field, introduce you to each volume. A common example is used across both volumes to illustrate how to put the concepts described into practice operationally

Wow, We Have Been in California for Over a Year Now – the consultancy has now been in operation for over a year in our California location. Our contact information remains:

- Donald Reifer, Consultant, 79410 Azahar, La Quinta, CA 92253

Our phone number [(310) 922-7043] and web site (<http://www.reifer.com>) is unchanged.

Web Site Blog Updated – If you have not visited our web site, you should as it is continuously being updated. Besides providing an overview of our efforts the site provides interesting postings and a blog provides much more information about items identified in this newsletter.

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