



<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Master's thesis
Licentiate's thesis
Doctor's thesis

Subject	International business	Date	5.2.2010
Author	Melissa Ylijoki	Student number	
		Number of pages	109
Title	User involvement in software development		
Supervisors	D. Sc. Niina Nummela, M. Sc. Taina Eriksson		

Abstract

This thesis concentrates on user involvement, to the concept of engaging users into product or service development activities. The scope is to examine user involvement particularly from the perspective of software industry. Software industry is young business branch differing from the traditional business fields greatly. Therefore the target is firstly to describe software business in general and to explain the most fundamental processes and models that form the branch. Secondly the study deepens into the subject of user involvement and concentrates on the most central themes among the topic: value co-creation, intensity of the involvement, optimal user characteristics, user motivation and involvement methods.

The study is performed as a case study by utilising mixed research methods of qualitative interview and quantitative survey. The methodology was chosen in order to provide better understanding of the research purpose than a single method research would provide. The interviews were executed to examine the current state and opinions towards the involvement. Additional target was to get answers to how the involvement could be organised in an effective way. The survey was planned to support the interviews by backfilling the information from the users' perspective.

Recent product development and innovation researches support the user involvement. It is assumed among others lead to into advanced and differentiated solutions, reduce the product failure rates and on the whole to lead into better cost-time-result curve in product development. The major reason why involvement is not more actively rehearsed by the enterprises lies in the cultural orientation of the companies. Development ventures still are strongly system-centred instead of user-centeredness. The focus is on the systems' architecture and structure instead of the user for whom the solution is developed for. Besides users are not seen as resource on enterprise level unlike in research societies. Thus the greatest challenge for user involvement lie in changing the prevailing company cultures more open to the concept of user involvement and in turning the users into development resource instead of target.

Key words	user involvement, software, software development, value co-creation
Further information	