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December 2007

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Recommended Citation

Cho, Wooje; Subramanyam, Ramanath; Lee, Fei; and Krishnan, M.S., "Reexamining Software Project Success: The Perspectives of Developers and Users" (2007). *ICIS 2007 Proceedings*. 78.

<http://aisel.aisnet.org/icis2007/78>

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Reexamining Software Project Success: The Perspectives of Developers and Users

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Abstract

Previous research gives a relatively incomplete picture of understanding project success by focusing on user and developer viewpoints separately. In this paper, we aim to bridge this gap by simultaneously examining developer and user perceptions while adopting the generic framework of software development models. Specifically, we empirically study the effect of user participation, software complexity, and software scope on three principle project success criteria: development time, development cost, and perceived user and developer satisfaction. We use both archival and survey data from 117 projects (746 respondents) at a Fortune 100 firm during a four-year time period to investigate software-development project success. Our preliminary findings show that user participation in complex projects is associated with increased software scope change. We also find that increased levels of scope change are negatively related to project targeted schedule and that users are more concerned than developers with schedule delay.

Keywords: Software development, user participation, software complexity, satisfaction, project success.