

JUNE DINNER MEETING

Tuesday June 27, 2006

Software Requirements Reconsidered: Beyond Methodology

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More than most aspects of the software development process, requirements development is plagued by misconceptions, fallacies, and "best practices" that do more harm than good. Many project teams go about requirements definition like reporters or anthropologists, faithfully documenting what various stakeholders say they want. Because of this perspective, the requirements effort focuses on avoiding the three bugaboos of software specifications, incomplete, incorrect, and ambiguous. These problems certainly cause grief and annoyance, but the most serious threat to your project is altogether different and is invisible unless you know where to look.

What a requirements analyst really needs to do is facilitate the design of some future state, which involves creativity, assessment of alternatives, prioritization, and often fractious negotiation. One of the biggest dangers to any project occurs when these decision processes break down. We will look at some of the most common and serious forms of Specification Breakdown, and how some popular requirements techniques and methodologies can either help or exacerbate the situation. As an added bonus, by avoiding Specification Breakdown, you will also be producing requirements artifacts that are more complete, more correct, and less ambiguous.

The requirements development activity is the stage where a number of pathological organizational games play themselves out. Learn how to avoid these threats to your project; or at the very least, how to identify, expose, and mitigate them.

Shortly after graduation with a mathematics degree in the mid 1980's, Ian joined CIBC to lead the development of desktop and client-server trading and risk management systems with CIBC Investment Bank. Building on his system development experience, Ian moved to the CIBC Risk Management Division where he was responsible for the definition and implementation of trading room credit risk measurement and monitoring policy. As part of this responsibility, Ian served as product manager for a global, real time credit risk system which replaced over 60 standalone credit risk processes and took in data from over 50 trading room business systems. Ian applied this experience as Business Architect on an enterprise technology effort to unify credit risk process across the entire Bank, which has become a critical element of CIBC's Basel II compliance efforts.

Now a Managing Partner with ProRisk Group, Ian combines his business and technology experience to help clients adopt a risk-based approach to the implementation of business and technology change.

**Presentations are on the last Tuesday of the month at the Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel,
123 Queen Street West, across from New City Hall**

If taking the subway, exit at Osgoode station (Queen and University), walk one block east along Queen to York.
If driving, you can park at New City Hall, which is accessible underground to the Sheraton Centre.

Dinner and Presentation: \$35 Members, \$50 Non-Members
Cash and Cheques are accepted at the door.

Please RSVP by noon on June 22, 2006

5:30 P.M. Networking

6:00 P.M. Dinner

7:00 - 8:30 P.M. Presentation

**For reservations, information and membership inquiries,
visit our web site at www.tassq.org or phone TASSQ at (416) 444-4168**