# 软件评估、度量 与最佳方法

(影印版)

## SOFTWARE ASSESSMENTS, BENCHMARKS, AND BEST PRACTICES

Capers Jones

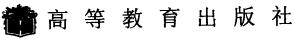


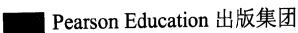
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进入 21 世纪,尤其随着我国加入 WTO,信息产业的国际竞争将更加激烈。我国信息产业虽然在 20 世纪末取得了迅猛发展,但与发达国家相比,甚至与印度、爱尔兰等国家相比,还有很大差距。国家信息化的发展速度和信息产业的国际竞争能力,最终都将取决于信息科学技术人才的质量和数量。引进国外信息科学和技术优秀教材,在有条件的学校推动开展英语授课或双语教学,是教育部为加快培养大批高质量的信息技术人才采取的一项重要举措。

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#### **Preface**

During my writing, this book evolved considerably from the first plan. Originally I intended to divide the book into two major sections. The first section was to discuss a number of assessment and benchmark methods used in the United States and Europe. The second section was to present an overview of software productivity and quality benchmarks, and associated "best practices" derived from benchmark studies. The benchmarks and best practices in this book cover six major kinds of software project: (1) management information system (MIS) projects, (2) outsource projects, (3) systems and embedded software projects, (4) commercial software projects, (5) military software projects, and (6) personal software projects developed by end users.

However, as the writing commenced, the focus of the book began to change. It soon became clear that a complete discussion of benchmarks and best practices for each of the six kinds of software would be about twice as large as initially planned. I had planned to devote approximately 30 pages to the benchmark and best-practice information for each type of software. But to do justice to the available data, almost 60 pages were needed for five of the six forms of software. Furthermore, a discussion of how assessment and benchmark studies operate and their technical differences may be of interest to those of us in the assessment and benchmark business, but it is not necessarily of great interest to those outside the limited circle of benchmark consultants.

As a result, the discussion of assessment and benchmark methods was cut back, and the sections devoted to information gathered during assessments and benchmark studies was expanded. Instead of a book with two sections of roughly equal size, the book now has a briefer introductory section and greatly expanded discussions of each type of software and the issues that confront each type.

This book also emphasizes assessments and benchmark data from the United States. Although my colleagues and I have gathered data in more than 24 countries, the issues of international benchmarks are quite complex. The international variations in working years and working days, how overtime is treated, and European restrictions on some kinds of data collection made me decide to concentrate on U.S. data.

Readers should note that this is a book about assessments and benchmarks written by someone who is in the assessment and benchmark business. Because my company has been performing assessments and benchmarks since 1985, we have an obvious interest in the topic. However, this is not a marketing book, nor is it a book about how my company's assessments and benchmarks work. The topics of software assessments and benchmarks are important ones, and this book attempts to include the general principles under which all assessment and benchmark consulting groups operate.

In my view, and also in the view of my competitors, assessments and software benchmarks are important to the global economy. Software has been the most labor-intensive product of the twentieth century, and the most error prone. Assessments, benchmarks, and empirical data are on the critical path to minimizing software project failures. Every software project manager, every software quality assurance specialist, and every software engineer should understand the basic concepts of software assessments and benchmarks. This is a view shared by all of the assessment and benchmark consulting groups.

The software industry has achieved a notorious reputation as being out of control in terms of schedule accuracy, cost accuracy, and quality control. A majority of large systems run late, exceed their budgets, and many are cancelled without ever reaching completion. Assessment and benchmarks followed by planned process improvement programs can aid in bringing software under management control. These are not "silver bullet" methods. Assessments, benchmarks, and process improvement programs require effort and can be expensive, but project failures are far more expensive.

This book discusses the kinds of complex software projects that benefit from assessments and benchmark studies. Small and simple projects are not the main focus of assessments and benchmarks. The proper focus of assessments, benchmarks, process improvements, and this book is on large and complex applications.

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the topic of software assessments and benchmarks. This chapter discusses the kinds of data that should be collected. It also cautions against some common problems, such as depending on data without validating it, and using hazardous metrics such as *lines of code*. This chapter also discusses the need to keep client data protected, and suggests some coding methods that can be used to perform benchmarks without revealing proprietary client information.

Chapter 2 deals with the history of software process assessments and discusses some of the kinds of information that are gathered during software process assessments. Although more than a dozen forms of assessment exist, the form made popular by the Software Engineering Institute is the best known. Some recent and more specialized forms of assessment, such as those performed for the Y2K problem, have also been widely used since about 1998.

Chapter 3 deals with the related topics of software benchmarks and software baselines. *Benchmarks* collect and compare quantitative data against industry norms. *Baselines* measure the rate at which a company can improve productivity and quality when compared with an initial starting point. Of course, sometimes productivity and quality can get worse instead of better.

Chapter 4 discusses 36 key factors that should be recorded during assessment and benchmark studies. If these 36 key factors are recorded, the data gathered by almost any benchmark and assessment consulting group, or by any company or government agency, could be compared meaningfully.

Chapter 5 addresses an important topic that is somewhat ambiguous in the software literature. When we speak of "best practices" what exactly do we mean? Chapter 5 discusses some criteria for including or excluding tools and technologies from best-practice status. It is suggested that any technology considered a potential best practice needs empirical results from at least ten companies and 50 projects.

Chapter 6 discusses an important follow-on activity to assessment and benchmark studies. Both assessments and benchmark studies are diagnostic in nature, rather than therapeutic. These studies can identify problems, but they cannot cure them. Therefore, a natural follow-on activity to either an assessment or a benchmark analysis, or both, would be to implement a process improvement program.

Chapter 7 deals with benchmarks and best practices for MIS projects. These are software applications that companies and government agencies build for their own internal use. MIS applications are often keyed to large corporate database access, and their main purpose is to convert raw data into useful information. Although MIS projects are often fairly high in productivity for small

projects, large MIS projects tend to experience more than average failure rates. Quality at the large end is often poor too.

Chapter 8 deals with benchmarks and best practices for outsource software projects. The emphasis in this chapter is on projects under contract for MIS, rather than for military or systems software outsourcing. The major outsource vendors such as Andersen, Electronic Data Systems, and IBM concentrate on the MIS market because it is the largest market for their services. In general, outsource projects have higher productivity and quality levels than in-house MIS projects; however, litigation between clients and outsourcers does occur from time to time.

Chapter 9 deals with benchmarks and best practices for systems and embedded software, which are applications that control physical devices such as computers, telephone switching systems, aircraft flight controls, or automobile fuel injection systems. The close coupling of systems software to physical hardware devices has led to very sophisticated quality control methods. The systems software community has the best track record for applications larger than 10,000 function points.

Chapter 10 deals with benchmarks and best practices for commercial software. Commercial software applications are intended for the mass market, and some of these applications are used by millions of customers on a global basis. The commercial and systems software domains overlap in the arena of operating systems because commercial products such as Windows 98 are both systems and commercial software. The commercial world needs to deal with special issues such as translation and nationalization of packages, piracy, and very extensive safeguards against viruses.

Chapter 11 deals with benchmarks and best practices for military software, with special emphasis on the U.S. armed services and the Department of Defense. The military software domain is fairly good at building large and complex applications, although military software productivity is lower than any other domain. The legacy of U.S. military standards has left the defense community with some very cumbersome practices. Plans and specifications in the military domain are approximately three times larger than equivalent civilian projects. The bulk is due primarily to military oversight requirements, rather than to the technical needs of the project.

Chapter 12 deals with benchmarks and best practices for end user software development. As the new century begins, there are more than 12,000,000 U.S. office workers who know how to write computer programs if they wish to do so.

Preface xix

By the middle of this century, the number of computer-literate workers in the United States will top 125,000,000. Indeed, there are some signs that computer literacy will actually pull ahead of conventional literacy in the sense of being able to read and write. End user applications are currently in a gray area outside the scope of normal assessments and benchmarks. More importantly, end user applications are also in a gray area in terms of intellectual property law. As end user applications become more and more numerous, it is important to set policies and guidelines for these ambiguous applications.

As this book is written, benchmarks based on function point metrics are dominant in the software world, except for military software, in which benchmarks based on lines of code still prevail. This book utilizes function point metrics and cautions against lines-of-code metrics for benchmarks involving multiple programming languages. Version 4.1 of the function point rules defined by the International Function Point Users Group is the standard metric used throughout.



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As always, special thanks to my wife, Eileen Jones, for her help. She makes all of my books possible. Eileen handles all of our publishing contracts, and by now knows the details of these contracts as well as some attorneys. Thanks also for her patience when I get involved in writing, even on holidays.

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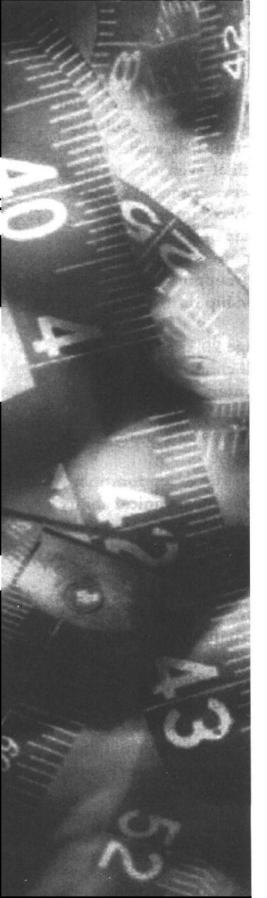
Thanks also to Mary O'Brien and her colleagues at Addison Wesley Longman. It is always enjoyable for an author to work with an excellent editorial and production team.

Much appreciation is due to the client organizations whose interest in software assessments, benchmarks and baselines, measurement, and process improvements have let us work together. These are the organizations whose data make estimation tools possible.

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Thanks also to my colleagues and competitors in software assessments and benchmark studies. Without the pioneering work of researchers such as Howard Rubin, Watts Humphrey, Bill Curtis, Ron Radice, Mark Paulk, and Bob Park, the assessment and benchmark domains would not be widely known in the software world. Special thanks to the late Ted Climis and Jim Frame of IBM, who were pivotal in introducing assessments and benchmarks into the IBM software community.

Capers Jones



#### **Abstract**

Benchmarks are collections of quantitative data that compare an enterprise against other similar enterprises in the same industry. Software benchmarks are often used for productivity and quality comparisons, and also for comparisons of salaries and spending levels.

Baselines are collections of quantitative data used to mark the starting point of a process improvement program. Baselines and benchmarks are similar in that they both collect quantitative data. Baselines are often used with outsource agreements that serve as the starting point for contractual obligations to improve productivity and quality.

Software assessments are on-site reviews of the methods, tools, and processes used to develop software applications. Assessment data is qualitative in nature. Assessments are used to place organizations on a comparative scale and show relative levels of capability.

When assessment data, benchmark data, and baseline data are combined, a powerful synergy results. The combination of assessments, benchmarks, and baselines can identify best practices, average practices, and worst practices. The term best practices refers to methodologies, tool suites, and organizational structures that raise software quality and productivity levels above average by at least 15% in repeated trials within at least ten companies and 50 projects.

#### **Contents**

Preface xv Acknowledgments xxi

#### CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION 1

Protecting and Comparing Confidential Data 4
International Country and City Codes 7
Using Standard Industry Classifications (SICs) for Software Studies 8
A Taxonomy of Software Projects for Benchmark and Assessment Studies 12

#### CHAPTER 2 SOFTWARE PROCESS ASSESSMENTS 21

The Origins of Software Process Assessments 24
The SEI Assessment Approach 29
The SPR Assessment Approach 34

Pattern of Client Strengths (Better than Average Performance) 40
Pattern of Average Results (Average Performance Within Industry) 40
Pattern of Client Weaknessess (Worse than Average Performance) 42
Correlating the SEI and SPR Scoring Systems 45
Readings and References on Software Assessments 47

## CHAPTER 3 SOFTWARE BENCHMARKS AND BASELINES 51

Benchmarks and the Problem of Size Metrics 67
Benchmarking Software Costs 84
Hazards of Using Project-Level Data for Software Benchmark Studies 93
Hazards of Mailed Surveys for Software Benchmark Studies 96
Moving to Activity-Based Software Benchmark Data 97
Software Quality Benchmarks 99
Software Baselines 105
Readings and References on Software Benchmarks and Baselines 108

#### CHAPTER 4

## THIRTY-SIX KEY FACTORS FOR SOFTWARE ASSESSMENT AND BENCHMARK STUDIES 115

Software Classification Factors 116
Project-Specific Factors 117
Technology Factors 118
Sociological Factors 118
Ergonomic Factors 119
International Factors 120

Readings and References on Factor Analysis 122

## CHAPTER 5 IDENTIFYING SOFTWARE BEST AND WORST PRACTICES 127

Factors That Influence Software Development Productivity 132
Factors That Influence Software Maintenance Productivity 136
Patterns of Positive and Negative Factors 139
Readings and References on Software Best and Worst Practices 141

## CHAPTER 6 SOFTWARE PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS 143

Annual Tactical and Strategic Software Improvement Plans 145
Annual Software Progress Report 146

The Six Stages on the Path to Software Excellence 146

Stage 0: Software Process Assessment, Baseline, and Benchmarks 147

Stage 1: Focus on Management Technologies 149

Stage 2: Focus on Software Processes and Methodologies 151

Stage 3: Focus on New Tools and Approaches 152

Stage 4: Focus on Infrastructure and Specialization 154

Stage 5: Focus on Reusability 154

Stage 6: Focus on Industry Leadership 155

The Costs, Timing, and Value of Process Improvements 156
Readings and References on Software Process Improvements 160

#### CHAPIER 7

### BENCHMARKS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR MIS SOFTWARE PROJECTS 165

MIS Applications and Corporate Databases 167 Lack of Data Metrics 168 MIS and Enterprise Resource Planning 169 MIS Applications, the Euro, and the Year 2000 169 MIS Technologies 170 Diverse Origins of Information Systems and Systems Software 174 MIS Demographics 178 MIS Benchmarks 183 MIS Software Successes and Failures 192 MIS Success Factors 196 MIS Failure Factors 196 Best Technical Practices for MIS Software 197 Best Project Management Practices for MIS Software 198 Best Requirements-Gathering and Analysis Practices for MIS Software 201 Best Design and Specification Practices for MIS Software 203 Best Coding Practices for MIS Software 205 Best Reusability Practices for MIS Software 207 Best Change Control Practices for MIS Software 208 Best User Documentation Practices for MIS Software 209 Best Quality Control and Pretest Defect Removal Practices for MIS Software 210 Best Testing Practices and Tools for MIS Software 212 Best Maintenance and Enhancement Practices for MIS Software 213 Best Personnel Practices for MIS Software 214 Best Staff Hiring Practices for MIS Software 215 Best Staff Training and Education Practices for MIS Software 216 Best Management Training and Education Practices for MIS Software 217 Best Practices for Specialization in the MIS Software Domain 219 Best Compensation and Salary Practices for MIS Software 219 Best Practices in Office Ergonomics for MIS Software 220 Best Practices in Organizational Structures for MIS Software 221 Best Practices for Employee Morale in MIS Software 223 Best Work Patterns and Overtime Utilization Practices for MIS Software 225 Best Practices for Minimizing MIS Staff Turnover Rates 226

Summary and Conclusions on MIS Software 227
Readings and References for MIS Software 229

#### CHAPTER 8

## BENCHMARKS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR OUTSOURCED SOFTWARE 235

The Growth of International Outsourcing 239
Choosing Outsourcing or In-house Development 243
Minimizing the Risks of Disputes between Outsource Contractors
and Their Clients 251
Outsourcing Technologies 255
Outsource Demographics 260
Outsource Benchmarks 266
Outsourcing Successes and Failures 275
Outsourcing and Contract Software Success Factors 279
Outsourcing and Contract Software Failure Factors 280
Best Technical Practices for Outsourced Software 280
Best Project Management Practices for Outsourced Software 282
Best Requirements-Gathering and Analysis Practices for Outsourced Software 285
Best Design and Specification Practices for Outsourced Software 288
Best Coding Practices for Outsourced Software 289
Best Reusability Practices for Outsourced Software 291
Best Change Control Practices for Outsourced Software 294
Best User Documentation Practices for Outsourced Software 295
Best Quality Control and Pretest Defect Removal Practices
for Outsourced Software 297
Best Testing Practices and Tools for Outsourced Software 299
Best Maintenance and Enhancement Practices for Outsourced Software 301
Best Personnel Practices for Outsourced Software 302
Best Staff Hiring Practices for Outsourced Software 303
Best Staff Training and Education Practices for Outsourced Software 304
Best Management Training and Education Practices for Outsourced Software 305
Best Practices for Specialization in the Outsource Software Domain 307
Best Compensation and Salary Practices for Outsourced Software 307
Best Practices in Office Ergonomics for Outsourced Software 308
Best Practices in Organizational Structures for Outsourced Software 309
Best Practices for Employee Morale among Outsource Vendors 311
Best Work Patterns and Overtime Utilization for Outsourced Software 313
Best Practices for Minimizing Outsource Staff Turnover Rates 314
Summary and Conclusions on Outsourced Software 315
Readings and References for Outsourced Software 316