

## The QSM Software Almanac Unveils Development Trends, Provides Guidepost to CIOs and Development Managers

**McLean, VA, March 10, 2006** – A compilation of 25 years of software development metrics and analysis experience was released today by QSM, Inc., which provides products and services that enable clients to measure, estimate, and control projects. “*The QSM Software Almanac: 2006 IT Metrics Edition*” provides a snapshot view of more than 550 IT projects that were completed between 2001 and 2004, and compares and contrasts them with nearly 5,000 projects that go back to 1980.

The almanac includes more than 100 pages of observations and analysis, and provides unparalleled access to the latest development trends in the software industry. It enables project leaders, CIOs, development executives, and others to analyze the interactions and relationships among time, project size and effort, productivity, and software reuse.

“The QSM Software Almanac is an invaluable resource,” said Tom DeMarco, a Principal of the Atlantic Systems Guild and a Fellow of the Cutter Consortium. “It establishes a norm for software projects, including best of class, worst of class and averages. In addition, it profiles the state of the art of software construction and enhancement. I wish I'd had this wonderful reference book years ago.”

One counterintuitive result of the research is that putting a large team on a software project can cost millions of dollars more, yet save only a few days' delivery time. While people have long suspected that larger teams operate more clumsily than small ones, there has been little quantifiable research on the impact of this phenomenon, until now.

Another interesting conclusion is that the best in class projects are both faster (3.4 times) to market and cheaper (7.5 times) than the worst. “It may seem unusual, but in software development, better can be both faster and cheaper,” commented Doug Putnam, managing partner of QSM. The reason may not be obvious, he added: excessive or poorly managed change characterizes the worst projects.

“Controlling change is the most important element to successful development projects. An inability to adroitly manage change can be the enemy of productivity and quality. Effective leadership creates a culture where change is well-managed by highly skilled teams with good domain knowledge,” Putnam added.

Michael Mah, managing partner of QSM Associates, commented, “Some remarkable changes in application development have surfaced in the 25 years that QSM has been collecting metrics on corporate IT projects. For example, overall average new and modified system size has more than halved since the early eighties. The reduction in median project size is even more dramatic: it amounts to more than a 75% reduction in developed size.”

The QSM data suggests a steady improvement over time up to the year 2000, but in the last five years there seems to have been a slight drop. “Even so, average schedule has been reduced, and the average MTTD has more than doubled. Those two facts are undoubtedly related,” commented Mah.

*The QSM Software Almanac: 2006 IT Metrics Edition* costs \$500/copy, with volume discounts, and is available through QSM at <http://www.qsm.com/almanac.htm>.

**About QSM, Inc.**

Founded by software engineering pioneer Larry Putnam in 1978, QSM's goal is to help clients become world-class software developers and reduce the overall expense of software development projects. QSM's SLIM software tools and consultative approach capture the management numbers that enable organizations to effectively estimate, track, and benchmark their software development and maintenance projects. The company is based in McLean, Virginia, with offices and affiliates in Massachusetts, France, the Netherlands, and the U.K. Additional information is available at [www.qsm.com](http://www.qsm.com).

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