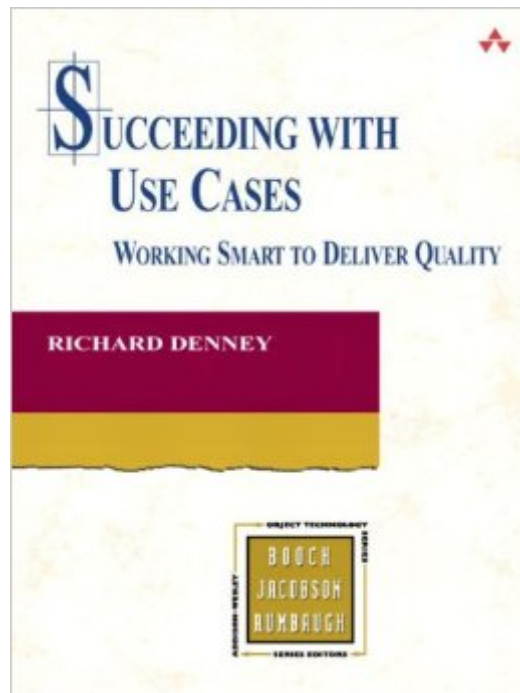


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Succeeding With Use Cases: Working Smart To Deliver Quality



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Customer Reviews

When I first picked up this book, my initial reaction was "Great, just what the world needs, yet another book about use cases." Then I noticed the subtitle, *Working Smart to Deliver Quality*, and thought I should invest a few minutes looking it over. I'm glad that I did. Perusing the table of contents, I noticed sections entitled "Planning the Length of Iterations and Number of Use Cases in Distributed Software Development", "Setting a Failure Intensity Objective", and "Savings from Avoiding Cost of Unnecessary Development" and realized that this was more than just another use case book. Denney provides real world advice, based on his more than 25 years of experience in software development, for how to apply use cases effectively in practice. For anyone wanting to improve their use case writing skills, his insights on preconditions, postconditions, and invariants is well worth the investment in this book. For project managers, Denney's advice for estimating and scheduling based on use cases is both practical and insightful.

As a specialist in the field of software reliability engineering, I have always felt that there were many fruitful relationships between use cases and software reliability engineering. Now Richard Denney focuses on these in his excellent new book *Succeeding with Use Cases*. I was impressed by the user-driven approach and the bridge Denney provides over the language gap between the business orientation of management and the technical orientation of software developers. The book is

readable, practical, and filled with examples. It should be required reading for anyone working with use cases.

I'm a software engineer, specializing in requirements and software quality. I've known about QFD and the House of Quality for over a decade, and I've been using Use Case methodology for years. This is the first (and perhaps the only) book which combines the two methodologies and explains in a straightforward yet sufficiently detailed way how to use these methodologies. If you are struggling with many requests from multiple customers and are trying to identify what is really important, you should read this book. In particular, if you want to satisfy the customers who drive your business, i.e., generate revenue, you need to read this book. This is a low-tech approach; all you need is a spreadsheet. Understanding Use Cases, QFD, or House of Quality is not a prerequisite. Even if you are already familiar with these methodologies, I think you will still learn a lot from this excellent book.

"Succeeding with Use Cases - Working Smart to Deliver Quality" walks you through four quality engineering disciplines: quality function deployment, software reliability engineering, model based specification and use case configuration management. Most of the book is readable by project managers, while model based specification (pre conditions, post conditions and invariants) is of special interest to developers and testers. As you can guess, the book assumes you already know about use cases. For the most part, the authors are good about going into detail without making any further assumptions of your background. Examples include concrete numbers and the diagrams are excellent. One chapter does get theoretical and use algebra, but it is immediately followed by a practical application. Personally, I found the reasoning and walkthrough of the ROI example to be most valuable. The book does read like a short textbook and academics are explicitly mentioned as one of the target audiences. However, you can tell the book is written by someone who has been through it personally. Overall, I found the book to be a valuable read.

Having consulted and taught use cases for the past 4 years, I'm wary about picking up another book on Use Cases - what's left to be said? I'm very glad that I looked at Richard's book despite this. Rather than focusing on how to write use cases, Richard has written a book that explains clearly and simply: how to decide which use cases to focus your energies on, managing risk in use cases, how to use use cases to drive test, and how to use pre/post-conditions to find potential defects whilst you write the use cases. Richard has definitely found a niche that was crying out for attention

This book is about uses of use cases in software engineering. The focus is on doing and managing projects. Topics are among others selection of standard products, management of project portfolios, or grounding projects in business goals. The last topic is an application of use cases to QFD, a process originally from the automobile industry. Other topics are reliability engineering, modelling and project management (this list is not complete). All the topics of the book have use cases as a common factor. It is not an introduction into use cases. The application of use cases in this book goes further than what is described in the Rational Unified Process for example. Therefore other books are better in introducing the topic of use cases. Demo excel sheets are available from the author. The examples are worked out excellently and instructive. The book focuses on the practicalities of software engineering and addresses primarily project leads, designer, architects and testers. Most of the material was new to new, although I have been using use cases for years. It will have the most value for organizations already modelling their software. In my opinion extreme programmers will not find it as useful.

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