

# Re: Use Case Point Estimation

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*Source:* <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/General/comp.object/2005-09/msg00292.html>

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- *From:* AndyW <[foo @xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:foo @xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* Wed, 21 Sep 2005 00:06:18 +1200
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On 20 Sep 2005 01:27:58 -0700, "Tomasz" <[tomasz@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:tomasz@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx)> wrote:

>I'm new to both Use Cases and Use Case Point Estimation.  
>I've ben reading some articles about it and found the following  
>(recommended as a reference on this site as well):  
>[http://www.geocities.com/shiv\\_koirala/fp/usecasepoints.html](http://www.geocities.com/shiv_koirala/fp/usecasepoints.html)  
>  
>As a person that learns best on practical examples I liked the approach  
>taken in this article.  
>  
>However:  
>1. The final estimate seems to me a bit excessive for such a simple  
>application.  
>2. As I understand from other articles this estimate includes:  
>Analysis, Design, Implementation and Unit Testing, it does not include  
>Testing effort which would add another 90 hours of effort.  
>3. The use case presented there seems a little to detailed (I mean it  
>goes down to almost pseudo code) and the resulting estimate is very  
>large.  
>  
>Can anyone give me their practical comments on this example?  
>I mean is this use case correct? If not how would a correct use case  
>look like?  
>Is the estimate correct? If not which parts should be modified?  
>  
>Regards,  
>  
>Tomasz

I get the feeling that work is not the authors own stuff. I've seen quite a lot of that in other books.

There are 7 requirements. Of these, 3 are just validations, 1 is the actual functional requirement (what needs to be developed), 1 is a non functional requirement, 1 is a business requirement (which when examined hides another functional requirement) and the last is some esoteric environmental constraint.

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Of the two functional requirements you have the operator to perform CRUD activities (this may be an already existing feature) and the other is to make one or more API calls (both need requirements analysis performed to confirm this).

So you are looking at at least 2 man days work minimum, considering its unlikely a foreign API actually works as intended – especially one from Ericsson [grin]. Try thinking in the ballpark of a minimum of about 5 man days.

I don't know a programmer who works 25 days (effectively a month) for only \$840. That's about \$28 per hour. I assume US currency – that's a bit low, I would expect perhaps \$70/hr would be a more reasonable rate.

[Note: I don't know the actual going rates in the US, but that's close to a rate I used in the last US company I worked for].

So I'd be looking at about \$2800 for 5 days work. And that would assume no setup costs/time.

Sod's law dictates that someone is going to have to manipulate some code in the customer's system and that's going to generate some effort involved in learning how to do that and creating a duplicate development environment.

Once you start adding in all these environmental factors, testing and all that, you get somewhere between 15 and 20 man days effort at whatever cost that works out to – more than \$840 anyhow.

As you can see I've already given a variation between 5 days and \$2500 and 20 days at \$10k. The reason for the difference is that the lower end would be a likely scenario if it was in-house development or you already had a development relationship with the customer. The higher end would be more likely if the customer walked in off the street. (not that the use case in the example also had a stated variation of +/- 40%).

Creating the Use Case is a good idea, but I tend (for personal reasons) to use function point analysis using historical metrics for job costings – it's way more accurate.

A common industry mistake for such a trivial piece of work (and one often made by programmers) is to say they could do it in a day. There is a lot of environmental uncertainty in that job, hence I've given a range estimate that includes risk rather than a more accurate single figure value – you'd do a normal job costing with. The author hasn't taken risk into account. Instead, under environmental factors, it's been deemed a simple project which is a classic example of the mistake in action. No-one would make that classification without performing some form of business environment and/or risk analysis first – that

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information isnt on that website. Without first quantifying the risk, your on a hiding to nothing should something unexpected happen.

Just my thoughts.

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- ***Follow-Ups:***

- ◆ ***Re: Use Case Point Estimation***

- ◇ *From: tomasz*

- Prev by Date: ***Re: Comparing design by contract with defensive development***
- Next by Date: ***Re: Comparing design by contract with defensive development***
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