

Preface

New scientific disciplines don't emerge overnight. Years pass from the first manifestation of a technical term to the establishment of a curriculum, even in the fast-paced field of informatics. What's often required is the growing together of different communities, and that just takes time.

Web Engineering as a scientific discipline follows this model and is directed towards engineering-type development of Web applications. Nearly one decade has passed from the first workshops about this issue at the ICSE Conference¹ and the WWW Conference² in 1998 to the current curricula discussions.

This book contributes to the establishment of the Web Engineering discipline by bringing together various communities with their modeling, programming, and design backgrounds. Our goal was to jointly work out the essential characteristics of Web applications and to take a comprehensive view on the Web Engineering issues based on traditional software engineering activities.

What do we need a separate Web Engineering discipline for? Current practice towards the development of Web applications is often characterized by an ad-hoc approach, lacking engineering-type development methods. Since the complexity and the pace of the proliferation of Web applications increase simultaneously, this approach has a negative impact on quality. But are these really new facets of software development? Isn't any software development project accompanied by intense deadline pressure, changing customer requirements, developers lacking experience, etc. from its very beginning? Yes, and no! The above facets are well-known in the software development world. And still, there have always been huge differences in projects, depending on the application domain (information systems, real-time systems, etc.). In this sense, Web applications represent a new application domain with its very own challenges to software development.

This book gives a comprehensive and practice-oriented introduction to the Web Engineering discipline and tries to address the problem of poor methodology. Building on the lifecycle of a Web application, it introduces concepts, techniques, methods, and tools for the systematic development of Web applications.

This book is for readers in universities and the industry alike, who are interested in the engineering-type development of Web applications beyond glazing user literature. The book addresses scientists, lecturers, and students eager to gain a current insight into the issue, and project managers and application developers in search for solutions to specific problems.

1 International Conference on Software Engineering, (<http://www.icse-conferences.org>).

2 International World Wide Web Conference, (<http://www.iw3c2.org>)