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Implementing Lean Software Development: From Concept to Cash

By Mary Poppendieck, Tom Poppendieck



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"This remarkable book combines practical advice, ready-to-use techniques, and a deep understanding of why this is the right way to develop software. I have seen software teams transformed by the ideas in this book."

--Mike Cohn, author of *Agile Estimating and Planning*

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--Alan Shalloway, coauthor of *Design Patterns Explained*

"I've enjoyed reading the book very much. I feel it might even be better than the first lean book by Tom and Mary, while that one was already exceptionally good! Mary especially has a lot of knowledge related to lean techniques in product development and manufacturing. It's rare that these techniques are actually translated to software. This is something no other book does well (except their first book)."

--Bas Vodde

"The new book by Mary and Tom Poppendieck provides a well-written and comprehensive introduction to lean principles and selected practices for software managers and engineers. It illustrates the application of the values and practices with well-suited success stories. I enjoyed reading it."

--Roman Pichler

"In Implementing Lean Software Development, the Poppendiecks explore more deeply the themes they introduced in Lean Software Development. They begin with a compelling history of lean thinking, then move to key areas such as value, waste, and people. Each chapter includes exercises to help you apply key points. If you want a better understanding of how lean ideas can work with software, this book is for you."

--Bill Wake, independent consultant

In 2003, Mary and Tom Poppendieck's *Lean Software Development* introduced breakthrough development techniques that leverage Lean principles to deliver unprecedented agility and value. Now their widely anticipated sequel and companion guide shows exactly how to implement Lean software development, hands-on.

This new book draws on the Poppendiecks' unparalleled experience helping development organizations optimize the entire software value stream. You'll discover the right questions to ask, the key issues to focus on, and techniques proven to work. The authors present case studies from leading-edge software organizations, and offer practical exercises for jumpstarting your own Lean initiatives.

- Managing to extend, nourish, and leverage agile practices
- Building true development teams, not just groups
- Driving quality through rapid feedback and detailed discipline
- Making decisions Just-in-Time, but no later
- Delivering fast: How PatientKeeper delivers 45 rock-solid releases per year
- Making tradeoffs that really satisfy customers

Implementing Lean Software Development is indispensable to anyone who wants more effective development processes--managers, project leaders, senior developers, and architects in enterprise IT and software companies alike.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Mary Poppendieck is a seasoned leader in operations and product development with more than thirty years of IT experience. She has led teams implementing solutions ranging from enterprise supply chain management to digital media, and built one of 3M's first Just-in-Time Lean production systems. Mary is the president of Poppendieck LLC, which specializes in bringing Lean techniques to software development.

Tom Poppendieck is an enterprise analyst, architect, and agile process mentor with more than twenty-five years of experience developing and implementing complex systems. He currently assists organizations in applying Lean principles and tools to software development processes.

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The Sequel

Lean was an idea borrowed from the 1990s when we wrote the book *Lean Software Development: An Agile Toolkit* in 2003. We had observed that breakthrough ideas from manufacturing and logistics often take a decade or two before they are adapted to provide suitable guidance for development efforts. So we decided it was not too late to use well-proven lean concepts from the 1980s and 1990s to help us explain why agile methods are a very effective approach to software development.

The strategy worked. The book *Lean Software Development* presents a set of thinking tools based on lean thinking that leaders continue to find useful for understanding agile software development. The book has been purchased by many a developer who gave it to his or her manager to read, and many managers have distributed multiple copies of the book to colleagues in support of a transition to lean/agile software development.

Meanwhile, something unexpected happened to *lean*. In the last couple of years lean initiatives have experienced a resurgence in popularity. The word lean was originally popularized in the early 1990s to characterize the Japanese approach to automobile manufacturing. In recent years, Honda and Toyota have been doing increasingly well in the North American auto market, while Detroit automakers are restructuring. For example, Toyota's profits rose from more than \$8 billion in the fiscal year ending March 31, 2003, to more than \$10 billion in 2004, \$11 billion in 2005, and \$12 billion in 2006. Many companies have taken a second look at lean to try to understand what's behind such steady and sustained success.

Lean initiatives seldom start in the software development or product development area of a company, but over time, successful lean initiatives make their way from manufacturing or logistics to development departments. However, lean practices from manufacturing and other operational areas do not adapt easily to

a development environment, so lean initiatives have a tendency to stall when they reach software development. While the underlying lean principles remain valid, it is usually inappropriate to apply operational practices and measurements to a development environment. When lean initiatives stall in software development areas, many companies have discovered that the book *Lean Software Development* gives them a good foundation for thinking about how to modify their approach and adapt lean ideas to a development organization.

The benefits of lean and agile software development have become widely known and appreciated in the last few years, and many organizations are changing the way they develop software. We have traveled around the world visiting organizations as they implement these new approaches, and we have learned a lot from our interaction with people working hard to change the way they develop software. As our knowledge has grown, so has the demand for more information on implementing lean software development. We realized that a new book would allow us to share what we've learned with many more people than we can contact personally. Therefore we have summarized our experiences in this book, *Implementing Lean Software Development: From Concept to Cash*.

This book is not a cookbook for implementing lean software development. Like our last book, it is a set of thinking tools about how to go about adapting lean principles to your world. We start this book where the last book left off and go deeper into the issues and problems that people encounter when trying to implement lean and agile software development. You might consider this book a sequel to *Lean Software Development*. Instead of repeating what is in that book, we take a different perspective. We assume the reader is convinced that lean software development is a good idea, and focus on the essential elements of a successful implementation. We look at key aspects of implementation and discuss what is important, what isn't, and why. Our objective is to help organizations get started down the path toward more effective software development.

The first chapter of this book reviews the history of lean, and the second chapter reviews the seven principles of lean software development presented in *Lean Software Development*. These are followed by chapters on *value*, *waste*, *speed*, *people*, *knowledge*, *quality*, *partners*, and the *journey* ahead. Each of these eight chapters begins with a story that illustrates how one organization dealt with the issue at hand. This is followed by a discussion of key topics we have found to be important, along with short stories that illustrate the topic, and answers to typical questions we often hear. Each chapter ends with a set of exercises that helps you explore the topics more deeply.

Mary and Tom Poppendieck
July 2006

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Virgil Arriola:

Often the book *Implementing Lean Software Development: From Concept to Cash* will bring one to the new experience of reading a new book. The author style to spell out the idea is very unique. In case you try to find new book to study, this book very appropriate to you. The book *Implementing Lean Software Development: From Concept to Cash* is much recommended to you to read. You can also get the e-book from official web site, so you can quicker to read the book.

Maria Saad:

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Richard Zhang:

The book Implementing Lean Software Development: From Concept to Cash has a lot info on it. So when you check out this book you can get a lot of gain. The book was published by the very famous author. This articles author makes some research just before write this book. This particular book very easy to read you can find the point easily after perusing this book.

Kerstin Torres:

In this era which is the greater individual or who has ability in doing something more are more precious than other. Do you want to become certainly one of it? It is just simple strategy to have that. What you should do is just spending your time almost no but quite enough to have a look at some books. On the list of books in the top list in your reading list is Implementing Lean Software Development: From Concept to Cash. This book that is certainly qualified as The Hungry Mountains can get you closer in getting precious person. By looking upward and review this e-book you can get many advantages.

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