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Product Focused Software Process Improvement

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Preface

On behalf of the PROFES organizing committee we are proud to present to you the proceedings of the 5th International Conference on Product Focused Software Process Improvement (PROFES 2004), held in Kansai Science City, Japan.

Since 1999, PROFES has established itself as one of the recognized international process improvement conferences. In 2004 the conference left Europe for the first time and moved to Japan. Japan and its neighboring countries are intensifying their efforts to improve software engineering excellence, so it was a logical step to select Japan as the venue for PROFES 2004.

The purpose of the conference is to bring to light the most recent findings and results in the area and to stimulate discussion between researchers, experienced professionals, and technology providers. The large number of participants coming from industry confirms that the conference provides a variety of up-to-date topics and tackles industry problems. The main theme of PROFES is professional software process improvement (SPI) motivated by product and service quality needs. SPI is facilitated by software process assessment, software measurement, process modeling, and technology transfer. It has become a practical tool for quality software engineering and management. The conference addresses both the solutions found in practice and the relevant research results from academia. This is reflected in the 41 full papers, which are a balanced mix of academic papers as well as industrial experience reports.

The business of developing new applications like mobile and Internet services or enhancing the functionality of a variety of products using embedded software is maturing and meeting the harsh business realities. The necessity for professional software development, quality, and cost effectiveness is becoming evident and there is a need to spread SPI beyond its traditional areas. Some of accepted papers focus especially on the latest activities in Japanese software engineering, which is facing new challenges in developing new types of software in new ways, such as mobile networking embedded software in ever shorter time.

We wish to thank the Nara Institute of Science and Technology (NAIST), Fraunhofer IESE, University of Osaka, VTT Electronics for supporting the conference. We are also grateful to the authors for high-quality papers, the program committee for their hard work in reviewing the papers, the organizing committee for making the event possible, and all the numerous supporters including Software Engineers Association of Japan who helped in organizing this conference.

Last, but not least, many thanks to Patrick Leibbrand at Fraunhofer IESE for copyediting this volume, Dr. Masahide Nakamura at NAIST for developing PROFES 2004 web pages, Gaby Klein at IESE, and Junko Inui at NAIST for helping in the organization of this conference.

January 2004

Frank Bomarius
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