



COSMIC/ISBSG Global Benchmarking 2009 Initiative

Dear COSMIC User,

With the publication of the latest version 3.0 of the COSMIC Functional Size Measurement Method at the end of 2007, the method has reached a new level of maturity and stability. The year 2008 has seen the 10th anniversary since COSMIC, the Common Software Measurement International Consortium, was founded. The year 2008 also witnessed considerable growth in acceptance of the method with many new users becoming known to us in countries such as Canada, China, Denmark, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Poland, Spain, Sweden, the UK and the USA.

Increasing awareness of the COSMIC method has also resulted in more frequent requests to COSMIC for benchmark data. However, the last time that COSMIC conducted an exercise to gather data for benchmarking purposes jointly with the International Software Benchmarking Standards Group¹ was four years ago. At that time there were still relatively few users of the method, but enough data was gathered to establish initial benchmarks. Today, there are so many users that we should be able to gather enough data to establish much more refined benchmarks, thus adding much greater value to those submitting data and to the user community in general.

For 2009, we have a goal to make a ‘great leap forward’ by gathering a lot more COSMIC-based performance data. If a good proportion of known users were to submit data on, say, 5 development or enhancement projects, we should, easily have data on several hundred projects by the year end. This would enable ISBSG to achieve a massive improvement in the quality, extent and value of the COSMIC-based benchmarks.

By this letter, we invite your organization to contribute to this ‘COSMIC/ISBSG Global Benchmarking 2009’ initiative.

¹ For those unfamiliar with the ISBSG, it is the largest independent, i.e. user-driven and funded, benchmarking organization in the world. Based in Australia, ISBSG maintains a repository of data from around the world on over 4,800 software development and enhancement projects, and produces a range of benchmark analysis reports. The data and reports are available for purposes such as performance comparisons and estimating. For more see www.isbsg.org.

The task for your organization should be really simple, namely to enter data on as many projects as you can on the 'COSMIC/ISBSG Concise Data Collection Questionnaire (CDCQ)' (attached), ideally before May 1st, to ensure to be included in the next release of the ISBSG database. Assuming the data for, say, 5 projects are readily available, it should require just a few hours to enter the data via this concise questionnaire. Please note that there is no limit to the number of projects whose data you can submit – the more data you can submit, the more value your organisation will add and receive.

Each organization participating in this initiative will gain significant benefits, namely:

- A free report analysing all COSMIC-measured projects in the ISBSG database, giving a much more refined set of benchmarks than is currently available. The new benchmark data will also be valuable for future project estimating purposes
- A free, private report for each of your projects submitted comparing its performance against similar projects in the ISBSG database. These reports and the analysis will help you identify opportunities for performance improvement.

We would also ask you to consider that your organization has already profited from the free availability of the 'open' COSMIC method which was developed as a non-commercial effort for the general benefit of the software community. By participating in this initiative, you will also be contributing to this common good by helping to increase the value of the method, which should aid its increasing adoption.

The COSMIC and ISBSG organizations guarantee that any project data you submit will be anonymized so that no-one will be able to link that data to your organization. There is no risk of you losing any competitive advantage you may have gained by using the COSMIC method as a result of submitting data to the ISBSG.

Please note this is a global initiative. This letter is being sent out to known COSMIC users around the world and participation will also be invited via COSMIC publications, etc. If you know of other users potentially interested by this initiative, please feel free to share this invitation with them.

We hope this proposal appeals to you and that your organization will agree to participate in this exercise. We will call you shortly to discuss the idea with you. Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us as below.

Yours sincerely,

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