



THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT STANDARD

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

by Robert (Robb) Gries, P.E., CCM, PMP, Chair

Rules of Engagement

The vitality of any professional organization is dependent upon its members volunteering to further the goals of the organization. Moreover, the new volunteers bring fresh ideas and new perspectives, which we need today more than ever. To communicate this need, our outstanding Administrator, Paula Anderson, has included a request for volunteers in our monthly *Online Bulletin* for the past year and a half. After each *Bulletin*, she receives about three to four responses, which she forwards to our Vice Chair Membership, Judy Wilks, and to me. It is our goal to reply to every response within two weeks and find out how individuals would like to contribute and what they want to get out of their volunteer experience. The objective is to find the right match for everyone and provide opportunities to grow professionally and personally.

We are currently facing a multitude of challenges—both within the construction industry and within our own professional organization. In previous *Message from the Chair* columns, I have briefly discussed some of the challenges within our industry, along with the actions the DPC SIG Board is taking to address them. We will continue our efforts to tackle these challenges in order to give you, our respected members, the tools, techniques, and insights to better equip you in completing your projects successfully.

I mentioned that we are facing challenges within our own organization. In 2005, the PMI® Board of Directors “endorsed an effort to provide consistent value and to make it simpler for PMI members and other stakeholders to form communities.” The first step was the Communities Transformation Project (CTP) in 2006, followed by the Virtual Communities Project (VCP) in 2007.

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DPC SIG 2008 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*by Andrew E. Powers P.E., PMP,
First Vice Chair*

As you may be aware, the SIG Board of Directors includes eight elected positions:

- Chair – Robb Gries
- First Vice Chair – Andy Powers
- Vice Chair Administration – Eric Johnson
- Vice Chair Communications - Valerie O'Keeffe-Short
- Vice Chair Finance - Marcie Ramsey
- Vice Chair Marketing - Ari Arivazhagan
- Vice Chair Membership – Judy Wilks
- Vice Chair Projects - Clay Myers

These are volunteer positions that require leadership, communication skills and an investment of time to provide value enhancing services for our membership. The term for each elected position is two years. In order to maintain continuity of projects, initiatives and the DPC SIG, we hold elections each year to select new officers for four of these positions, with the remaining four officers elected in the following year. This rotation provides a balanced approach to develop our incumbent officers as well as on-board our new officers

In 2007, we elected our new Vice Chair Administration, Eric Johnson, new Vice Chair Finance, Marcie Ramsey, returning Vice Chair Marketing, Ari Arivazhagan, and returning Vice Chair Membership, Judy Wilks. Please join me in congratulating them and welcoming them to the board.

As we continually improve our processes, we will be moving our 2008 elections to occur in July as we target the attendance at the October 2008 PMI® Leadership Institute in Denver, Colorado for new board members as part of their joining the leadership team. The positions that will be up for election in 2008 are: Chair, First Vice Chair, Vice Chair Communications and Vice Chair Projects. Please watch this space in the next few months for the call for nominations and think about how you may want to contribute to this rewarding

HAVE A PM QUESTION?

**WE JUST MAY
HAVE THE
ANSWER!**



The DPC SIG has enlisted the support of Subject Matter Experts from around the world to address your project management-related questions. Questions and answers will appear in upcoming issues of the DPC SIG newsletter and monthly bulletin.

Submit Your Question

email your question to VCMarketing@dpcsig.org. Be sure to include your name and contact information in the email.

MEMBERSHIP DUES INCREASE IN 2008

DPC SIG membership dues have increased to \$20.00/year effective 1 January 2008.

GRRREAT PROJECTS! SEVEN THINGS TO GET RIGHT

by Jerry Manas, PMP, President, The Marengo Group

Jerry Manas is the author of *Managing the Gray Areas* (RMC Publications, January 2008) and *Napoleon on Project Management* (Nelson Business, April 2006). Through his consulting company, *The Marengo Group*, Jerry works with partners and clients to facilitate the implementation of the ideas and principles outlined in his books. Jerry is also co-founder of *PMThink!*, a popular project management blog site. Visit his website at www.manasbooks.com

I was having breakfast the other day with my six-year old daughter, and for some reason my mind went back to the old television commercials for Frosted Flakes, where Tony the Tiger would shout, "They're Grrreat!" (courtesy of Thurl Ravenscroft, whose unmistakable deep voice also gave life to the song, "You're a Mean One, Mr. Grinch") And, in my own unmistakable sickness for equating everything to project management, I began to think of GRRREAT as an acronym for the seven things that I felt make the difference between good projects and great (oops, grrreat!) projects.

Here they are... the seven things that project managers need to get right (and usually get wrong):

1) Get the GOALS right

Albert Einstein once said, "Confusion of goals and perfection of means seems, in my opinion, to characterize our age." It also seems, in my opinion, to characterize the way most projects are managed.

We can do all the planning in the world, but if our intended outcomes are not in line with the goals our key stakeholders are hoping to achieve, it is all for naught. Often, inadequate time, if any, is spent on ensuring that the primary stakeholders are aligned in what they are hoping to achieve from

the project. In contrast, far too much time is spent on items that can usually wait for future releases, or that aren't very important to the stakeholders. It is the project manager's responsibility to determine the prioritized goals of the project, and to clarify it for the team.

2) Get the ROLES right

Much like two baseball outfielders arguing, "I thought you had it!" "No, I thought you had it!" just after the ball dropped between them, I've seen way too many projects where people are confused as to who has the ball. This can all be avoided by clarifying the roles up front.

Not only is it important to clarify who's assuming which roles, it's equally important to make sure you have the right roles on the project to begin with. Often, the project manager spends too much time attempting to be a business analyst or a technician, which takes valuable time away from what a project manager should really be focusing on... relationships.

3) Get the RELATIONSHIPS right

When good projects go bad, as many do, a project manager must rely on relationships with others to make it successful. This is true whether calling in a favor from a key department, trying to get extra attention from a vendor, or helping the customer understand why a change of course is needed.

Great project managers know that good relationships are more important than how well you can calculate the critical path (forwards or backwards) or whether or not you used Earned Value. In the end, it is our relationships that will most often declare whether the project was viewed as successful or not. And it is our relationships that will make a bumpy road seem smooth.

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GRRREAT PROJECTS CONTINUED

4) Get the REQUIREMENTS right

With an understanding of the key stakeholders' prioritized goals, the right supporting team who understands their roles, and some solid relationships, we'll have a good foundation for success. Then, ideally with the help of the customer and a good business analyst, we'll need to translate the goals into specific requirements where appropriate. "Where appropriate" is the operative phrase.

For projects with great uncertainty, or those that can benefit from creativity, it may suffice to know the goals and any specific requirements the customer may have. In that sense, the requirements can become the exception. Still, we need to use caution, and where feasible, or where accuracy is needed, we should document requirements and begin with the end in mind. As Yogi Berra says, "You've got to be careful if you don't know where you're going, because you might not get there."

What I typically find is either of two extremes: requirements are documented arbitrarily--to the detriment of creativity and customer engagement, or requirements are completely bypassed and developers miss the mark.

5) Get the ESTIMATES right

If goals and requirements address the question, "What do we need to do?" estimates address the question, "When can we do what it takes?" In nearly every service industry, customers want a sense of when they're going to receive the value they paid for. The more we know about what it needed, the better we can answer the question.

For projects with great uncertainty, it is not a bad idea to create two projects (or at least two independent phases): one to do the assessment and the other to implement the identified solution. Many project managers overlook this and commit to a date for which they have no idea if it can be met. For projects that are more predictable, we

need to make every effort to build expertise at developing sound estimates. This may mean examining past projects, soliciting expert opinion, using bottom-up estimates, or basing our estimates on measurable parameters (for example, using function point analysis).

Truth be told, more projects are late because the project manager agreed to an arbitrary deadline than because of bad estimates, but paradoxically, sound estimates make the best defense against arbitrary deadlines.

6) Get the AVAILABILITY right

OK, so far we know what we want to accomplish, who we need to accomplish it, who's on our side, what our specific constraints are, and how long it should take us. One would think that it should be smooth sailing from here on. But one would be wrong. Even with the best of intentions, many projects go wrong because of availability problems. Either the project manager is spread so thin that he or she doesn't have the availability to manage the project correctly, or the resources that are assumed to be part of the project are pulled off onto other work. This happens more frequently than most project managers care to admit.

Project managers need to assure commitment, not only from their resources, but from their resources' bosses and their own boss. Project managers must be acutely aware of the time they'll need to manage the project successfully, and request help if needed. Likewise, they must make management aware that if they, or their resources, are pulled into other work, the project delivery date will suffer. This should ideally be part of any risk management plan, with appropriate contingencies.

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GRRREAT PROJECTS CONTINUED

If the worst does happen and key resources are unavailable, and if alternate resources or scheduling tricks aren't an option, then management needs to be made aware so that priorities can be rearranged. Never underestimate the probability and impact of availability (or lack thereof) on your project.

7) Get the TOOLS right

Our last key item to get right is the set of tools we use to manage the project. This includes software, methodologies, forms, spreadsheets, and anything else project managers use during the project lifecycle. Overly complex or misapplied tools can slow down the greatest of project managers and completely overwhelm the mediocre ones.

Just as we must focus on goals when managing a project, we must focus on goals when selecting tools to use. We need to stop and ask, "What are we trying to achieve, and is this the simplest way to accomplish it?" Organizations would be wise to observe project managers in action, and see which areas are in most urgent need of tools.

Often, a project is in need of some sort of collaboration tool (including a document repository). I'm also partial to mind-mapping software, which is versatile enough to allow for collaborative brainstorming, WBS development, creating presentations, and a host of other functions. I call it "the project manager's Swiss Army Knife."

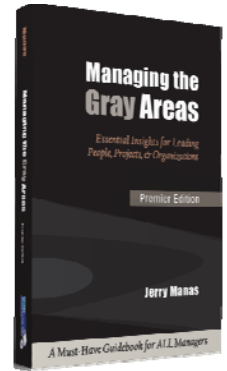
Summary

After years of observing projects, these five areas--Goals, Roles, Relationships, Requirements, Estimates, Availability, and Tools---stand out as things we simply need to get right. Projects that get these five elements right are nearly always successful.

Did I say successful? What I meant to say was...They're Grrreat!

Stop Managing in Black and White

Managing The Gray Areas by Jerry Manas



A Must for Leaders of People, Projects and Organizations

[Download the Executive Summary](#)

Watch for a Review of this Book in the Next Issue of The Project Management Standard

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THE POWER OF ONE

Michelle LaBrosse, PMP, Chief Cheetah, Cheetah Learning



Cheetah Learning Michelle LaBrosse, PMP, is the founder of Cheetah Learning, and author of *Cheetah Negotiation* and *Cheetah Project Management*. PMI selected Michelle as one of the 25 Most Influential Women in Project Management in the world, and only one of two women selected from the training and education industry.

How about trying something different this year? Instead of a long list of resolutions that get tucked away in a filing cabinet or eaten by the dog, how about focusing on just one? The one resolution that can make the biggest difference in your life and have the most impact.

What is that resolution for you? Think about the one thing that gnaws at you most. Maybe it's a dream or a goal that you catch yourself thinking about, but then you put off because it would take too much time or effort to complete. Or maybe you don't know where to begin? Whether it's going back to school or starting a business, there is no singular goal that you can't accomplish this year.

I like to look at New Year's resolutions with my Project Management hat on. Think of your one resolution as a project, and treat it like one throughout the year. Here are a few tips to get you started:

Make your resolution actionable

Many people make their goals and resolutions too broad. Every good project manager knows that plans need milestones, and they need to be measurable. Break your resolution down into the 12 months of the year, and develop a milestone for each month. When you can see your goal on a monthly basis, it's much less overwhelming than just looking at the ending.

"The best thing about the future is that it only comes one day at a time."

- Abraham Lincoln

Inspire yourself

What inspires you? Some people like motivational quotes and others like photos or images that remind them of their goal. Use whatever inspires you, and make sure that you can tap into that inspiration every day.

"The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams."

- Eleanor Roosevelt

Aim High

I'm a believer in the "big, hairy, audacious goal." Little goals can be accomplished in a day. It's the big ones that take not only our perseverance, but also our passion. The power of one gives you the room and permission to choose a large goal that's going to have a lot of impact.

"In the long run, men hit only what they aim at. Therefore, they had better aim at something high."

- Henry David Thoreau

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THE POWER OF ONE

CONTINUED

Cultivate an attitude of success

In any biography that you read of someone successful, you will always find that one consistent thread: They believed in themselves and had an attitude of success. It sounds simple, but it's true that many people secretly don't believe they can accomplish something -- which is why they never attempt it. If you cultivate an attitude of success, success will follow.

"If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude."

- Maya Angelou

Practice Random Acts of Kindness

It's easy in a high-tech world to feel disconnected and to feel like everything is too big for one person to have an impact. If there's ever a moment when your goal feels too big or you feel too small, just do one simple act of kindness, and you will quickly be reminded of the power of one.

"If you can't feed a hundred people, then feed just one."

- Mother Teresa

Use My PMP to Propel My Career

Don't forget the power of your PMP. Make this the year you use your PMP to take you to new places in your organization. Once you've achieved your goal, reward yourself with something that matters to you. Whether it's the trip of a lifetime to see The Great Wall of China or working on a Habitat for Humanity build in New Orleans, make the reward as exciting as the journey.

The best to you in 2008. May all your projects shine with the realization of your achievements!

Donald S. Barrie Award Revisited

***By Sherrill McDonald, PMP,
Deputy Administration***

The DPC SIG is proud that the Donald S. Barrie Award is the only PMI award of any kind initiated and sponsored by a SIG. The award, along with a \$500 check, is given to the best paper for advancing the project management body of knowledge in the field of design, procurement and construction. With the assistance of the PMI® Education Foundation (PMIEF), a panel of distinguished judges from industry and academia chose the first winning paper in 1998 as part of the Construction Track at the Annual Seminar/Symposium.

A few years ago, PMI eliminated the industry tracks at the now Global Congresses, and the papers submitted for the award have decreased in both quantity and quality. The net effect is that the award has not been given out in the past two years. Representatives from the DPC SIG have met with the PMIEF and PMI Global Operations Center (GOC) in an attempt to reverse the trend, but the efforts to date have not achieved the results that we had expected. With support from PMIEF, the DPC SIG has contacted several external professional organizations and requested them to promote the award within their respective organizations. We are hopeful that broadening the audience will give us the result we are looking for, that is, recognizing the best practices that extend the body of knowledge so that our members and the DPC industry as a whole can successfully complete challenging construction projects.

BOOK REVIEW



Broken Buildings, Busted Budgets: How to Fix America's Trillion-Dollar Construction Industry

By Barry B. LePatner

**The University of
Chicago Press**

Reviewed by Robert Gries, PMP, Chair

Construction is a \$1.23 trillion industry in the United States, and each year about \$120 billion is wasted due to “cost overruns, project delays, and perpetual waste.” The industry’s shortcomings are coming under closer scrutiny as the result of the nation’s aging infrastructure and high profile failures.

Barry B. LePatner is a lawyer with extensive experience with construction litigation. In his book *Broken Buildings, Busted Budgets*, he outlines his case for aggressively transforming the construction industry. Mr. LePatner opines that market conditions as well as more regulatory requirements will force the industry to change. Thus, he advocates five proactive “reforms” to changing the industry from the bottom up, some of which, I believe have merit and others are debatable:

1. Adopt fixed-price agreements;
2. Foster the rise of intermediaries;
3. Consolidate and integrate;
4. Increase the use of promising new technologies; and
5. Institute a national impetus for increasing the number of engineers and construction experts.

First, I would agree that firm, fixed-price contracts based upon a complete construction documents package is ideal, but not every project will use the design-bid-build project delivery method.

Second, in an ideal world, the owner’s representative would be organic and have extensive experience in the industry. However, this isn’t very practical for owner’s that have infrequent and/or dissimilar projects. In these situations, the owner—and the industry as a whole—would be better served if the owner’s representative had an equal fund of knowledge to the construction team.

The third recommendation, in my opinion, is not likely to occur—at least not the way Mr. LePatner describes it. Some truly unique innovations have been developed by smaller, more nimble companies. Moreover, smaller companies can provide more responsive, “personal” service, which some owner’s value highly. On the other hand, large companies will continue to have an advantage at “growing” their employees and can provide more consistent project delivery.

Fourth, the use of innovative strategies/tools such as BIM is something the industry needs to embrace with zeal. Although it’s still in its infancy, and many groups are working to make this worthwhile goal a reality, I believe that it’s simply a matter of time before its implemented.

Lastly, the need to increase the number of experts in the construction industry is one of the most compelling recommendations I believe Mr. LePatner makes. The infrastructure in the U.S., as well as most of world, is nearing the end of its useful life. Moreover, the world population is getting older, with many experienced project managers nearing retirement. This need to address the infrastructure, coupled with a shrinking resource pool, will create a significant crisis. The industry needs experienced, project managers with extensive construction experience to address this need, and we need to lay the foundation today to ensure that we are adequately resolving this crisis.

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DPC SIG IN LATIN AMERICA CONTINUED

By Fabio Teixeira de Melo, PMP,
Chair Latin America Commission



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Specific Interest Group

Get Up, Stand Up!

The DPC SIG is moving in Latin America. A call for volunteers was issued back in 2006 looking for active members who would like to join our effort to serve the Construction Industry in their region, and during 2007 the Latin America Leadership Team has grown significantly.

On the date this news is brought to you, our volunteer leaders for each region are:

- Costa Rica: Federico Vargas, MPM, MBF, PMP
- Panama: Luis Fasano
- Brazil – MG: Ítalo Coutinho
- Brazil – PR: Gustavo Ribas
- Brazil – SP: Alberto Alerigi, PMP

As you can see, there are many opportunities to volunteer, as our target is to have a volunteer leader in each region where there is an active PMI Chapter. In the regions where that role is fulfilled, opportunities for volunteering will be created as projects and programs are launched. If you are interested in joining us, send us an e-mail to Fabio Teixeira de Melo, at lacommission@dpcsig.org or Peter Santillana at santillanap@aafes.com, or access the DPC SIG web page and browse for volunteer opportunities.

What We Did This Year

Although our focus in 2007 was to find volunteers, other good results were achieved. In July 17 Gustavo Ribas made a presentation about the DPC SIG during an event in association with IEP – Instituto de Engenharia do Paraná (Paraná Engineering Institute) and ABENC-PR – Associação Brasileira dos Engenheiros Civis do Paraná (Brazilian Association of Civil Engineers at Paraná) (see figure). The presentation brought the DPC SIG to light in a region where construction is booming.

Venha saber mais sobre Gerenciamento de Empreendimentos na Construção Civil.

Compareça à palestra gratuita promovida pelo IEP, ABENC-PR e o SIG de Construção do PMI® no próximo dia 17 de Julho, com início às 19:00 horas.

In October the Chapter PMI Minas Gerais launched the GET E&C – Grupo de Estudos Técnicos de Engenharia e Construção (Engineering and Construction Technical Studies Group), which is a group focused in discussing the current state of project management practice in the region. Italo Coutinho, who is leading that effort, was invited to join the DPC SIG and receive all the support we can give to this great initiative. We are confident that the synergic work between Chapter and SIG will produce best results.

Early in November our volunteer for Costa Rica, Federico Vargas, MPM, MBF, PMP, participated as the DPC SIG representative in a meeting at Colegio de Ingenieros Civiles (College of Civil Engineers), where a commission called Comisión de Administración de Proyectos (Project Management Commission) was launched with the objective of setting professional standards for the profession in the College and then in the Country. The first meeting of the commission was held on November 29 (see figure).



La COMISION DE ADMINISTRACION DE PROYECTOS del
Colegio de Ingenieros Civiles

extienden cordial invitación a la Mesa Redonda:

*“La Administración de Proyectos de Infraestructura en Costa Rica:
Experiencias y Perspectivas”*

Invitado especial:
Ing. Yamal Chamoun

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DPC SIG IN LATIN AMERICA CONTINUED

As you can see, we will have much fun in 2008. You are invited to join!

Heavy News

November was a month for celebration in Mexico. A record in heavy lifting was reached at the Lázaro Cárdenas Refinery in Minatitlán Ver., during the Refinery Reconfiguration Project.

The Owner, the Mexican State Oil Company PEMEX Refinación, contracted a Consortium formed by TÉCNICAS REUNIDAS (Spain), ODEBRECHT INGENIERÍA Y CONSTRUCCIÓN (Brazil) and RÍO SAN JUAN (Mexico) to perform one of the five blocks in which the project is divided. The scope includes engineering, procurement, construction and start-up of a Hydrogen Plant, a Sulfur Recuperation Plant and a Kerosene Hydrodesulfuring Plant. The latter is designed to produce 50,000 bpd of clean kerosene and the process requires a reactor weighing 1,199 ton.



The lifting was executed by ALE-LASTRA de México, using a 45 m tall, 1,260 ton capacity gantry as main lifting device and a 1,000 ton crane from Mexican lifting company ESE-ASA to support the operation. The operation was successfully completed on November 18th, establishing a new Latin American record for the rigging of onshore vessels/towers/reactors in refineries. A movie with the rigging operation will shortly be available.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR CONTINUED

Although the CTP addressed the geographic components and the VCP Team subsequently addressed the specific interest groups and colleges, both project teams had the goal of addressing the “perceived ‘valueless’ component models and value equalization for members across components.” This is an admirable goal, however, the DPC SIG believes we should pursue a goal of maximizing member value.

PMI’s component leaders are passionate, dedicated individuals who volunteer their personal time, energy, and funds to expand project management knowledge and to offer learning and member networking opportunities to their respective organizations. This results in creativity and innovation, which we believe addresses the unique and specific needs of our members and is the hallmark of a vibrant, successful community. However, we need to establish standards of service and be accountable to our members as well as PMI.

During several recent DPC SIG Leadership Team teleconferences, we discussed the challenges and how the DPC SIG will address them. First, the DPC SIG Board will align its strategic plan with the PMI® Strategic Plan. Second, we will develop a detailed annual business plan based upon our strategic plan and ensure that we meet the minimum standards of service as defined by the upcoming Performance Management Framework (PMF). Lastly, at the end of the year, we will objectively evaluate our efforts, using the balance score card approach, and adjust the following year’s business plan accordingly.

The DPC SIG Board firmly believes that we need to continue to improve our services and value proposition to all of our members. What this means, however, is that member participation is needed now more than ever before. Thus, we strongly encourage you to become more *engaged* and volunteer your much needed talents and energy to help shape the future of our organization and our industry. There is plenty of challenging, meaningful, and rewarding work ahead of us, and with everyone pitching in; the DPC SIG will continue to be recognized as one of the truly great organizations preparing future leaders for our industry.

BOOK REVIEW CONTINUED

Although I don't agree with everything Mr. LePatner recommends, he does provide thought-provoking content with several stretches of remarkable insight. His observations and analysis "challenges the status quo," forcing the reader to re-assess the merits of the current way of doing business. The industry needs to continue to adapt and improve, and thus, I personally welcome this type of critique. I gained some additional perspectives, and I am confident those who pick up a copy of Mr. LePatner's book will do so, too.

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Standard***

**Contact the
VC Communications
Valerie O'Keeffe-Short**

We're Looking for Book Reviewers and Books to Review



Is there a new project management book you would like to read or do you have a project-management related book you would like reviewed? The DPC SIG is offering a book review program. We will be receiving single review copies of books from publishers. Members will be given the opportunity to volunteer to read a book and write a review for *The Project Management Standard*. In exchange for the review, you'll get to keep the book you reviewed.

If you would like to volunteer to review books, or have a book you would like members to review, please send an e-mail to administrator@dpcsig.org and we will notify you of titles as they become available.

DPC SIG Members Worldwide

North American Members - 1645

EMEA Members – 373

Latin American Members - 177

Asia Pacific Members - 194



Upcoming Events



PMI Global Congress EMEA
May 19-21, 2008

PMI Global Congress Latin
America
August 11-13, 2008

PMI Global Congress North
America
October 18-21, 2008

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