

REQUIREMENTS SCRUBBING

Requirements scrubbing is a practice in which a product specification is carefully examined for unnecessary or overly complex requirements, which are then removed.

Main Benefits	Since product size is the largest contributor to a project's cost and duration, reducing the size of the product results in a commensurately less expensive project and shorter schedule.
Keys to Success	Eliminating all non-essential requirements, making each requirement as simple as possible, and substituting cheaper options whenever possible.
When to Use	Requirements scrubbing can be used on virtually any project.
Main Risks	The main risk of requirements scrubbing is that eliminated requirements will be later reinstated.

Overview

Entirely removing a feature from a product is one of the most powerful ways to shorten a software schedule because you remove every ounce of effort associated with that feature: specification, design, testing, documentation—everything. The earlier in the project you remove a feature, the more time you save.

The idea behind requirements scrubbing is simple: After you create a product specification, go over the specification with a fine-tooth comb and the following aims:

- Eliminate all requirements that are not absolutely necessary.
- Simplify all requirements that are more complicated than necessary.
- Substitute cheaper options for all requirements that have cheaper options.

Interactions with other Best Practices

Requirements scrubbing can be combined freely with other best practices.

Further Reading

McConnell, Steve. *Rapid Development*. Redmond WA: Microsoft Press. 1996.