

## REGIONAL REPORT – UNITED KINGDOM



### UK Project Management Round Up

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#### Hard times ahead for Project Managers



As the economic downturn starts to bite, there is concern over pay rates for project managers. An alarming report indicates that top rates for project managers are coming down – sharply. A recent salary survey by PM3 Consulting reveals that top project management consultants have dropped fees by as much as £300 per day, or an average of 35 per cent.

According to **Steve Pragnell**, chief executive of PM3 Consulting, there are two main reasons for the rate cut. “New management consultants are pouring into the market, which is in turn becoming flooded with first rate people looking for contracts”. He also claimed that “New project managers often under value themselves when new to market, therefore under cutting experienced contractors. However, those we would class as experts – the very best consultants - are having to accept sizeable rate cuts to compete with those with a lower skill set, who can charge less. Secondly, the current economic climate has made it a buyers market.”

The data compiled by PM3, an IT project management agency, indicate that firms are concentrating on cost cutting rather than revenue generation. Contractor UK reports that the data shows more than two-thirds of respondents had more than seven years’ experience, while over half have been project managers for a decade or longer. This confirms demographics published last year by the Association for Project Management which also shows that the PM work force has a well developed experience base. The data also shows that clients are still looking for experienced delivery specialists with strong track records so the more experienced contract PM’s future is far from gloomy.

The report from PM3 comes just a week before Gartner's latest warning on skills shortages that threaten business growth. Gartner vice president and Fellow **Diane Morello** claims that the hybrid professional is in short supply. This rare beast needs to combine varied experience, professional versatility, multidiscipline knowledge and technology understanding because of the demands from "the intersection of business models and IT". For the old hand, this sounds suspiciously like the hybrid IT professional who needed to bridge the gap between the IT techie and the Suit back in the 1980's. Gartner' claim that the focus is on understanding and managing business processes and technology, skills which take time to mature. So the experienced PM professional should be well placed to exploit the opportunity.

## **NEC PM Conference Extravaganza**

Late news comes from monthly magazine *Project Manager Today* that they are organising two conferences this month:

- 2nd Earned Value Management Conference on 12 March 2008
- 10th Risk Management Conference on 13 March 2008

The conferences are co-located at The NEC, Birmingham along side the Spring Project Challenge Exhibition that also runs over 12-13 March 2008. Project Challenge has expanded over the years and is now one of the leading commercial PM conferences in UK with free entry to the exhibition. This has around 80 of the leading project management training and consulting companies as well as software providers. The unique feature of Project Challenge is its free seminar programme. This features two zones presenting a range of topics on personal development, methodologies and case studies. A new feature for 2008 is the process performance zone which features process modelling and motivation aspects.

Further details from

[www.pmtoday.co.uk](http://www.pmtoday.co.uk) for the conferences  
[www.projchallenge.com](http://www.projchallenge.com) for the exhibition.

## **Governance of Change - 'What to do and how to do it' Institute of Directors, 1st April 2008**

The Association for Project Management has continued to set the pace in thought leadership on the governance of projects by announcing the first major conference to give directors guidance on how to apply governance requirements to project-driven change and development - across all types of project: internal, external and jointly owned; from conception to realisation of results.

This follows publication of APM's influential 'Co-Directing Change: A guide to the governance of multi-owned projects'. The prestigious event will be at the Institute of Directors, London. This event will feature key note appearances by Dr. **Neville Bain**, Chairman of the Institute of Directors, **Mike Nichols** Chairman of APM, **Tim Banfield** from the National Audit Office and a host of high profile speakers all concerned with the governance of projects.

The conference addresses the need of organisations of all sizes are faced with delivering larger and more complex projects. Experience shows that a particular set of governance arrangements is needed for projects to be successful.

For more information visit [www.apm.org.uk/governanceconf.asp](http://www.apm.org.uk/governanceconf.asp) and to book, email [gopmsig@apm.org.uk](mailto:gopmsig@apm.org.uk)



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