

# Study analyzes emotions in software engineering

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Emotions are an important factor that must be taken into account when designing any type of software. This is the conclusion reached through a research project coordinated by the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid that analyzes the role played by feelings in the users and developers of computer systems. Credit: UC3M

Emotions are an important factor that must be taken into account when designing any type of software. This is the conclusion reached through a research project coordinated by the Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (Spain) that analyzes the role played by feelings in the users and developers of computer systems.

Starting with the premise that emotions are key elements in [human](#)

[behavior](#), this study investigates their importance in [software engineering](#). Specifically, the study focuses on the engineering of requirements, a crucial phase in software development that includes tasks related to determining the needs and conditions that the system must satisfy. Good requirements must be measurable, testable and they must have no ambiguities or contradictions... but things aren't always that way. "In the world of computer system development consultants, I have often met disappointed users whose [unhappiness](#) was produced by a deficient collection of requirements", states one of the authors of the research study, Ricardo Colomo, of UC3M's Computer Science Department. With this study, the researchers are attempting, among other things, to find a rigorous explanation of this problem.

In order to do this, these scientists applied a tool of [social psychology](#) to the field of requirement engineering: the affect grid created by J. A. Russell. "This instrument provides [emotional](#) outlines for different versions of the requirements, in addition to facilitating an analysis of the emotions of those involved in the development of the system", explains Ricardo Colomo. The results that were obtained show that emotions are a factor that must be taken into account when negotiating and establishing requirements. "We have discovered – he points out – that the most evolved versions of requirements incline the user toward emotions that are closer to relaxation". Another conclusion that the researchers have reached involves the different ways that the main participants in this context, the users and the development team, face different situations. "The developers suffer greater stress than the users, although with the final versions of the requirements the scores tend to even out", the professor sums up.

**More information:** Using the Affect Grid to Measure Emotions in Software Requirements Engineering. Authors: Ricardo Colomo Palacios, Cristina Casado Lumbreras, Pedro Soto Acosta and Ángel García Crespo. *Journal of Universal Computer Science*, volume 17. Number: 9

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