

Monuments to Failure

The cadavers of dead IT projects are buried under mounds of cash

The final lesson to take away from our 10-year look back is how little has changed since *IEEE Spectrum's* [2005 special issue on software failure \(/computing/software/why-software-fails\)](/computing/software/why-software-fails). The project risk factors that can quickly lead to project death haven't changed. This graveyard is a testament to unrealistic and unarticulated project goals, badly defined system requirements, unbounded project complexity, poorly designed human interfaces, sloppy development practices, poor project management, vicious stakeholder politics, and unbridled commercial pressures, to name but a few.

If you're an IT executive, programmer, or project manager, you might find yourself whistling past this graveyard of some of the most expensive IT project failures of the last decade. There's about \$70 billion worth of project deaths commemorated here, just a small subset of all the dearly departed projects we have covered in the [Risk Factor blog \(/blog/riskfactor\)](/blog/riskfactor). We haven't even tried to compute the costs involving those projects which may be, like Frankenstein's monster, technically alive, but would be better off dead for the all the negative value they create.

Explore the graveyard by hovering over tombstones to bring up basic info about the failed system or project. You can take a deeper dive by clicking on the headline to follow the link to the original post.

Projects that spent more than...

- US \$10 billion
- US \$1 billion
- US \$100 million
- US \$10 million
- US \$1 million

before cancellation

<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>Dec 2010</div><div>Here lies £469 million of wasted spending</div></div>	<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>Jan 2011</div><div>Here lies \$1 billion of wasted spending</div></div>	<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>Jun 2008</div><div>£8 million wasted</div></div>	<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>Jan 2009</div><div>\$58.9 million wasted</div></div>
<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>Feb 2013</div><div>\$50 million wasted</div></div>	<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>May 2013</div><div>Here lies £98.4 million of wasted spending</div></div>	<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>May 2010</div><div>Here lies £257 million of wasted spending</div></div>	<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>Oct 2010</div><div>Here lies \$466 million of wasted spending</div></div>
<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>Aug 2013</div><div>Here lies</div></div>	<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>May 2012</div><div>Here lies AU \$566 million of wasted spending</div></div>	<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>Oct 2013</div><div>\$27.9 million</div></div>	<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>Nov 2012</div><div>Here lies \$1.03 billion of wasted spending</div></div>
			<div><div>R.I.P.</div><div>May 2014</div></div>

There lies

\$167
million
of wasted
spending

wasted

Mar 2014

\$52
million
wasted

R.I.P.
Sep 2014

€44
million
wasted

Jan 2015

\$6.2
million