

Scope creep

Scope creep (also called **requirement creep**, or **kitchen sink syndrome**) in project management refers to changes, continuous or uncontrolled growth in a project's scope, at any point after the project begins.^[1] This can occur when the scope of a project is not properly defined, documented, or controlled. It is generally considered harmful.^[2] It is related to but distinct from feature creep, because feature creep refers to features and scope creep refers to the whole project.

Scope creep can be a result of:

- poor change control
- lack of proper initial identification of what is required to bring about the project objectives
- weak project manager or executive sponsor
- poor communication between parties
- lack of initial product versatility

These aspects can affect the operational efficiencies of companies, especially when involved in long-term relationships.^[3] Scope creep is a risk in most projects. Most megaprojects fall victim to scope creep (see *Megaprojects and Risk*). Scope creep often results in cost overrun. A "value for free" strategy is difficult to counteract and remains a difficult challenge for even the most experienced project managers.

See also

- Anti-pattern
- Cost overrun
- Escalation of commitment
- Instruction creep
- Mission creep
- *The Mythical Man-Month*
- Second-system effect
- Software bloat

References

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2. Kendrick, Tom (2015). "Chapter 3. Identifying Project Scope Risk" (<https://books.google.com/books?id=BnuZBgAAQBAJ&pg=PA52>). *Identifying and Managing Project Risk: Essential Tools for Failure-Proofing Your Project* (3rd ed.). AMACOM. pp. 50–52. ISBN 978-0-8144-3609-7.
3. Invernizzi, Diletta Colette; Locatelli, Giorgio; Brookes, Naomi J. (2018-07-04). "The need to improve communication about scope changes: frustration as an indicator of operational inefficiencies" (<http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/129889/1/The%20need%20to%20improve%20communication%20Invernizzi%20Locatelli%20Brookes%202018.pdf>) (PDF). *Production Planning & Control*. **29** (9): 729–742. doi:10.1080/09537287.2018.1461949 (<https://doi.org/10.1080/09537287.2018.1461949>). ISSN 0953-7287 (<https://www.worldcat.org/issn/0953-7287>).

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This page was last edited on 23 June 2020, at 10:44 (UTC).

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