École des sciences de la gestion
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Report on the Survey
"The Reality on Project Management Offices"

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Why this survey?

To paint a true picture of the reality of PMOs today

On-going research

This survey is part of an ongoing research project on PMOs at the Business School of the University of Quebec at Montreal. The project is funded in part by PMI.

The PMOs investigated by this survey

This survey does not assume any particular role or function for PMOs. Its objective is to describe organizational entities that fill several roles or functions with respect to a group of projects. These entities may not necessarily be called PMOs.

Exclusion : A Project Office whose mission is to manage a single large project was excluded from this study.

One PMO or more?

Many organizations have more than one PMO. In responding to this survey, respondents were asked to **choose one specific PMO to describe.**

Data was collected on 500 PMOs between March and November 2005

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Thank you to the following for their collaboration and support:

Monique Aubry, Senior Project Manager at Desjardins Financial Group and adjunct professor PMP-UQAM

Jean-Sebastien Neveu, representative of PMI-Montreal Community of Practice on PMOs and President of Koserto Inc.

The invitation to participate was available on the PMI Research Department website. Invitations to participate were also distributed through several project management networks including, PMI-Montreal's Community of Practice on PMOs, the Southern Ontario Chapter of PMI, PMForum, ASAPM, the firms Human Systems and Valence and with the collaboration of colleagues from University of Limerick, Athabaska University, University of Technology Sydney, and ESC-Lille. Thank you to all of those whose collaboration made this project possible.

SUMMARY OF MAIN CONCLUSIONS

The most significant overall findings are:

1. The great variety and lack of consensus on:

    - The value of PMOs
    - The structures of PMOs
    - The functions included in their mandates

2. The failure to explain the variations and to identify consistent relations between PMOs and their context:

    - No significant or systematic variation was found across geographic regions or economic sectors. There is more variation within regions and economic sectors than across them. Geographic region and economic sector are, therefore, not effective ways of identifying populations of similar PMOs.
    - The size of the organization and whether it is in the private or public sector also failed to discriminate PMOs into consistent types.

3. Although the original survey measured several characteristics of the organizational context, these have been insufficient to develop an adequate understanding of the variability of PMOs.

The Search for a Better Explanation

A team of researchers at the University of Quebec at Montreal has undertaken a research program funded in part by PMI to further investigate PMOs. As part of this ongoing investigation, a follow-up survey has been developed to gather additional information on the organizational context of the same PMOs described in the original survey.

If you participated in the original survey and would be willing to spend five minutes answering a few additional questions to provide data that will be added to that you have already provided, please contact Brian Hobbs at hobbs.brian@uqam.ca.

THE DETAILED SURVEY RESULTS

The detailed survey results are presented in two parts: first the respondents, followed by the PMO's. Globally, the respondents and the PMOs described by the data are from a wide variety of contexts.

The Respondents

The respondents are distributed among organizational roles as follows:

- Project managers 38%
- Managers of PMOs 23%
- Professionals in PMOs 11%
- Executives and other managers 10%
- Consultants 8%
- Others 10%

The geographical distribution is as follows:

- Canada 43%
- United States 26%
- Europe 16%
- Other 15%

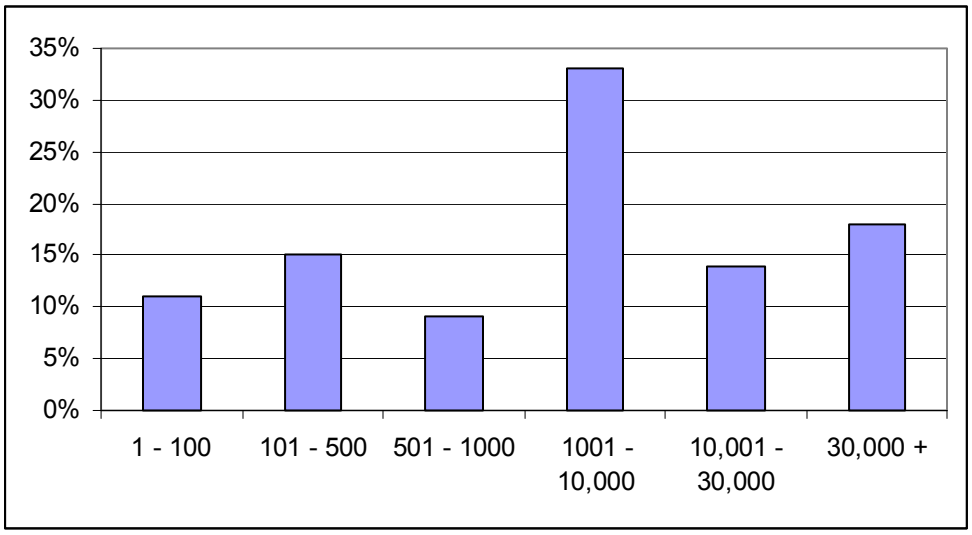
The organizations are from a very wide variety of industries. The survey instrument identified twenty-two industries that have been combined into the following groups:

- Tangible products 29%
- IT/IS 14%
- Telecommunications 10%
- Financial Services 14%
- Other intangible products or services 24%
- Other 10%

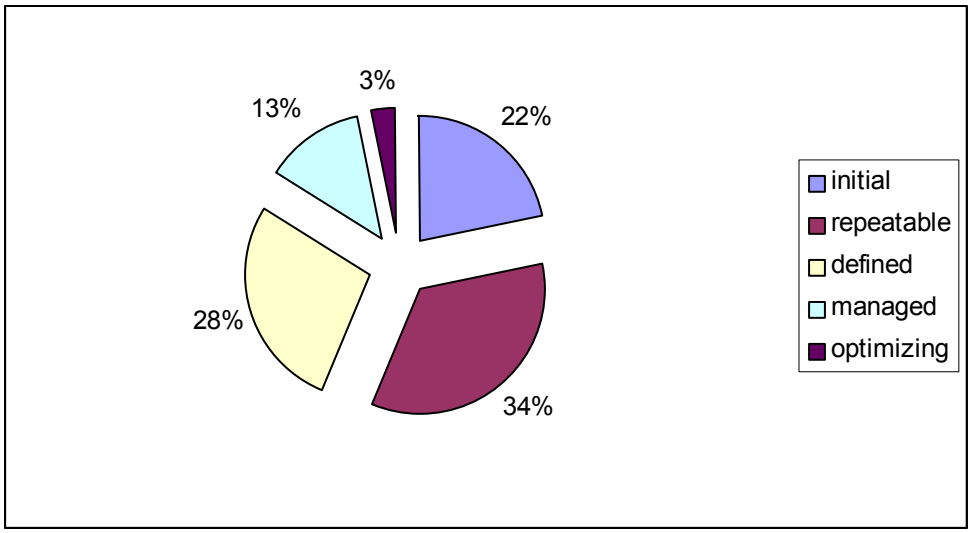
The organizations are split between the public and private sectors as follows:

- Private sector 61%
- Public sector 36%
- Not-for profit 3%

Organization Size: The organizations in this investigation varied considerably in size. The distribution is as follows:



The **organizational PM maturity** of the organizations participating in the survey was evaluated using the well-know five-point scale. Participants rated the PM maturity of their organizations as shown in the figure below. This distribution is not out of line with expectations.



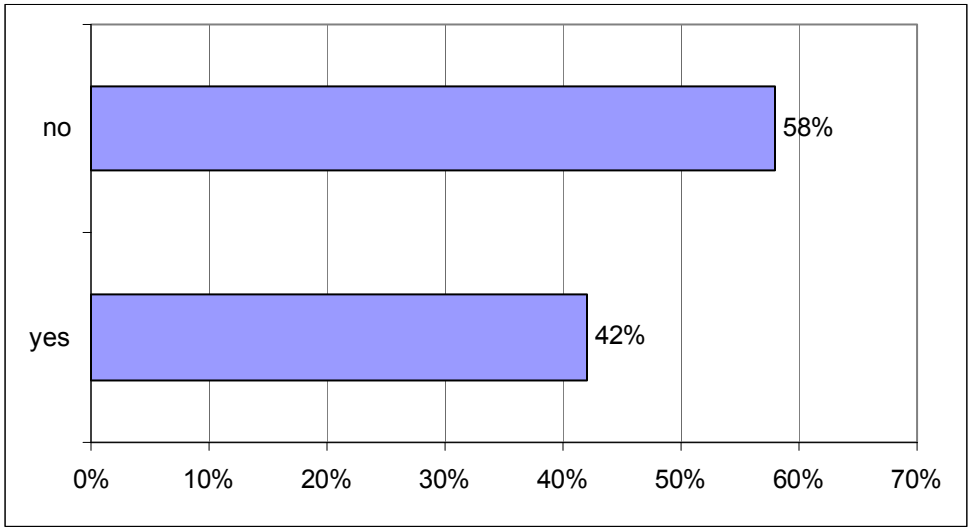
Customers: Some PMOs serve only one customer, while most have many customers. Their customers can be primarily internal or external to the organization. The distributions within the sample are shown in the table below.

	Internal	External	Total
One	10%	6%	16%
Several	45%%	39%	84%
Total	55%	45%	100%

Data Describing PMOs

The figures and tables that are presented here show the results describing PMOs.

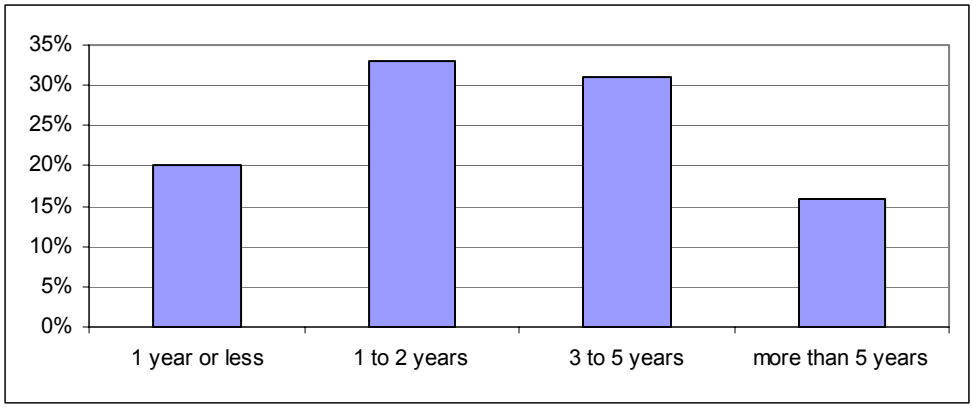
The relevance and legitimacy of PMOs are often questioned.



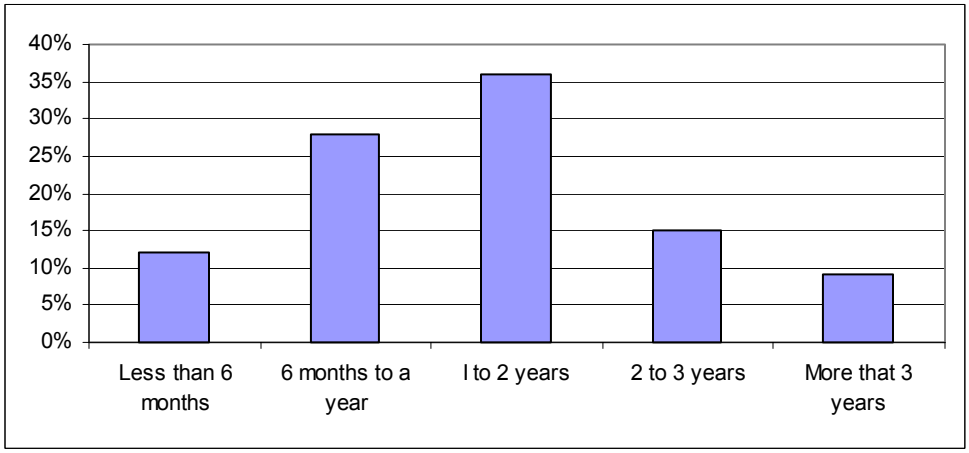
"Has the relevance or even the existence of the PMO been seriously questioned in recent years?"

Name	Percentage
Project Management Office	59%
Name containing the term “project” and somewhat similar to project management office, e.g. project department	4%
Project Support Office	7%
Project Office	2%
Program Management Office	12%
Center of Excellence	2%
No name	2%
Other (a great variety with none greater than 1%)	12%

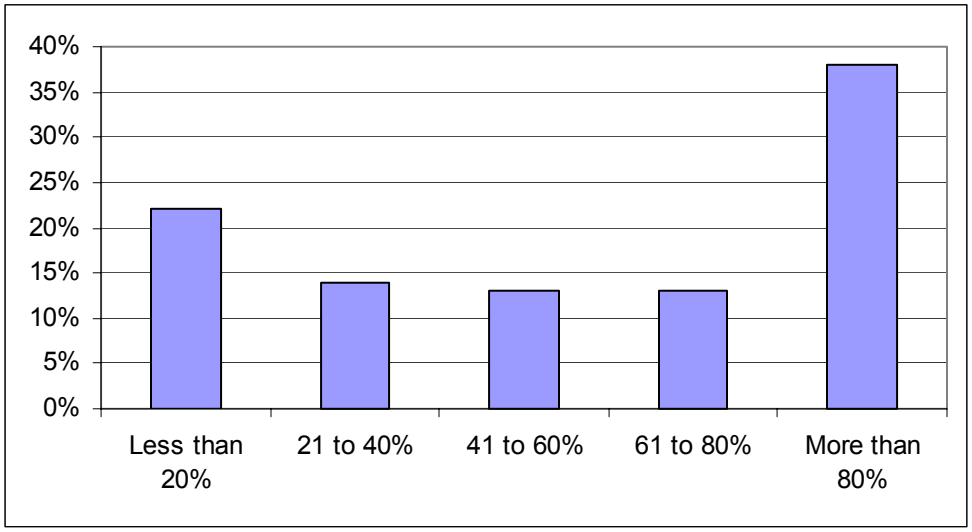
The Name of the Entity



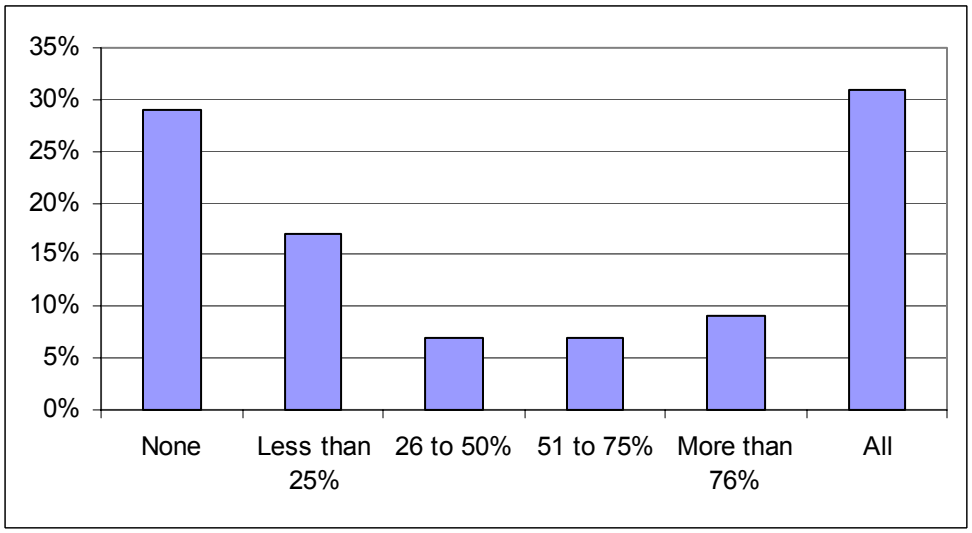
The PMOs’ Age Distribution



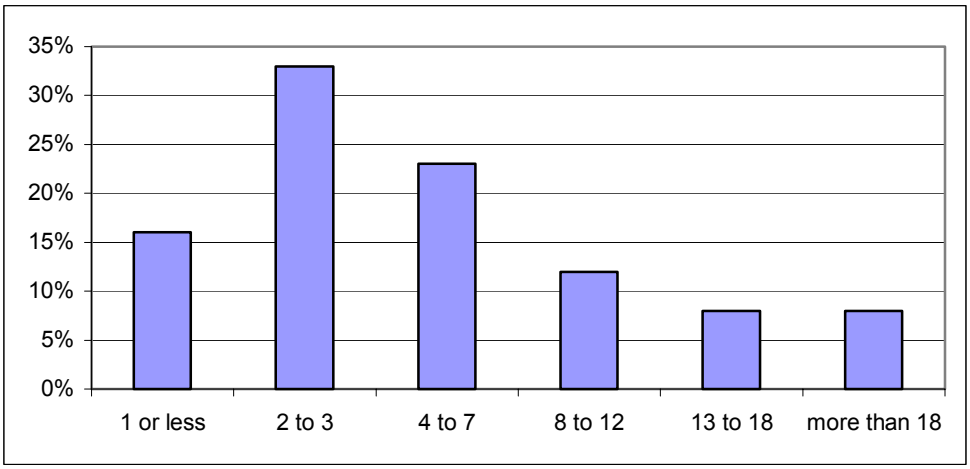
Time to Implement



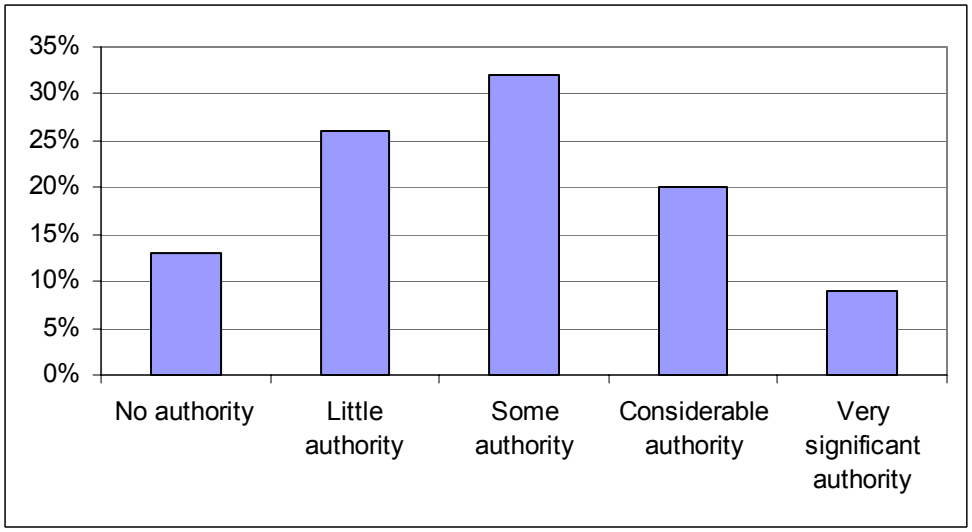
Percentage of projects within the mandate of the PMO



Percentage of Project Managers within PMO



PMO staff excluding Project Managers (fulltime equivalents)



Decision-making Authority of PMOs

PMO Function	% of PMOs where important
Report project status to upper management	83%
Develop and implement a standard methodology	76%
Monitor and control of project performance	65%
Develop competency of personnel, including training	65%
Implement and operate a project information system	60%
Provide advise to upper management	60%
Coordinate between projects	59%
Develop and maintain a project scoreboard	58%
Promote project management with organization	55%
Monitor and control performance of PMO	50%
Participate in strategic planning	49%
Provide mentoring for project managers	49%
Manage one or more portfolios	49%
Identify, select and prioritize new projects	48%
Manage archives of project documentation	48%
Manage one or more programs	48%
Conduct project audits	45%
Management customer interfaces	45%
Provide a set of tools without an effort to standardize	42%
Execute specialized tasks for project managers	42%
Allocate resources between projects	40%
Conduct post-project reviews	38%
Implement and manage database of lessons learned	34%
Implement and manage risk database	29%
Benefits management	28%
Networking and environmental scanning	25%
Recruit, select, evaluate and determine salaries for PMs	22%

PMO Functions in Decreasing Order of Importance

Where to Find more Complete Analysis and Discussion

- Analysis and discussion of the results from the first 255 respondents were presented at the PMI North America Global Congress in Toronto in September 2005. (see proceedings)
- Analysis and discussion of the results for the entire sample of 500 that are presented here will be presented at the PMI Research Conference in Montreal in July 2006. (see proceedings)
- A paper will be submitted in the near future to the Project Management Journal. It is not possible to say if or when this paper will be published.