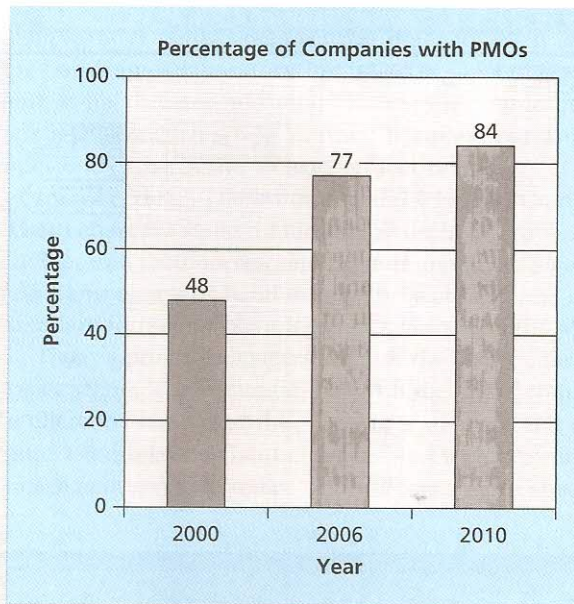


As computer hardware became smaller and more affordable and software companies developed graphical, easy-to-use interfaces, project management software became less expensive and more widely used. This made it possible—and affordable—for many industries worldwide to use project management software on all types and sizes of projects. New software makes basic tools such as Gantt charts and network diagrams inexpensive, easy to create, and available for anyone to update. See the section later in this chapter on project management software for more information.

In the 1990s, many companies began creating Project Management Offices to help them handle the increasing number and complexity of projects. A **Project Management Office (PMO)** is an organizational group responsible for coordinating the project management function throughout an organization. A 2010 study found that 84 percent of U.S. companies have PMOs, growing significantly from percentages in prior surveys, as shown in Figure 1-8. For large organizations, 91 percent have PMOs, while only 48 percent of small organizations do.



Source: PM Solutions, "The State of the PMO 2010" (2010)

FIGURE 1-8 Growth in the number of Project Management Offices

There are different ways to structure a PMO, and they can have various roles and responsibilities. PM Solutions identified three key factors that are playing major roles in the growth of PMOs:

1. The growing strategic value of the PMO
2. The increased role of the PMO in training
3. The ever-present challenge of resource management³¹

Below are possible goals of a PMO:

- Collect, organize, and integrate project data for the entire organization.
- Ensure that the organization's approaches for project management include accepted and validated best practices.
- Audit the project documentation and offer feedback to the project manager's approaches and compliance with standards.
- Develop and maintain templates, tools, and standards for project documents and project methodologies to be used.
- Develop or coordinate training in various project management topics.
- Develop and provide a formal career path for project managers.
- Provide project management consulting services.
- Provide a structure to house project managers while they are acting in those roles or are between projects.

By the end of the 20th century, people in virtually every industry around the globe began to investigate and apply different aspects of project management to their projects. The sophistication and effectiveness with which project management tools are being applied and used today is influencing the way companies do business, use resources, and respond to market requirements with speed and accuracy. As you saw earlier in this chapter, many organizations are now using enterprise or project portfolio management software to help manage portfolios of projects.

Many colleges, universities, and companies around the world now offer courses related to various aspects of project management. You can even earn bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in project management. In early 2012, a *gradschools.com* search for "project management" found 310 campus and online accredited graduate, certificate, and doctoral programs from all types of institutions. PMI reported in 2008 that of the 280 institutions it had identified that offered degrees in project management, 103 were in mainland China. "When Western companies come into China they are more likely to hire individuals who have PMP certification as an additional verification of their skills. In our salary survey, the salary difference in IT, for example, was dramatic. A person with certification could make five to six times as much salary, so there is terrific incentive to get certified and work for these Western companies."³²



GLOBAL ISSUES

Based on a survey of more than 1,000 project management leaders across a variety of experience levels and industries, several global dynamics are forcing organizations to rethink their practices:

- Talent development for project and program managers is a top concern. Seventy percent of organizations have a career path for project and program management, but most are still informal and not documented.

continued

- Good project portfolio management is crucial in tight economic conditions. Financial and budget management is the second most important aspect of portfolio management, after providing a big-picture view to executives.
- Basic project management techniques are core competencies. Seventy percent of organizations said that they always or often use basic practices like change management and risk management on their projects.
- Organizations want to use more agile approaches to project management. One-quarter of survey respondents said they now use agile techniques, and agile project management was the most requested article topic.
- Benefits realization of projects is a key metric. Organizations know that they need to align projects and programs with the organization's business strategy.³³

The problems in managing projects, the publicity about project management, and the belief that it can make a difference continue to contribute to the growth of this field.

The Project Management Institute

Although many professional societies suffer from declining membership, the **Project Management Institute (PMI)**, an international professional society for project managers founded in 1969, has continued to attract and retain members, reporting more than 380,000 members worldwide by early 2012. Because so many people work on projects in various industries, PMI has created communities of practice that enable members to share ideas about project management in their particular application areas, such as information systems. PMI also has communities for aerospace/defense, financial services, government, healthcare, and agile techniques, to name a few. Note that there are other project management professional societies. See the companion Web site for more information.

PMI STUDENT MEMBERSHIP

As a student, you can join PMI for a reduced fee (\$40 versus \$129 in 2012). Consult PMI's Web site (www.pmi.org) for more information. You can network with other project management students by joining the New Practitioners Community of Practice. Also check to see whether a local chapter exists. Many welcome students to attend free events, including talks and job networking. You can volunteer your services to help develop your skills and serve your community. You can also qualify for the Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) certification with just a bachelor's degree and a course in project management. See Appendix B for more information.

Project Management Certification

Professional certification is an important factor in recognizing and ensuring quality in a profession. PMI provides certification as a **Project Management Professional (PMP)**—someone who has documented sufficient project experience and education, agreed to follow the PMI

