

The logo for CASTELL Consulting, featuring the word "CASTELL" in a bold, sans-serif font with a 3D effect, set against a yellow background with overlapping squares.

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## Dr Stephen Castell - Professional Details

Dr Stephen Castell, Chartered Information Systems Professional and Member of the Expert Witness Institute, is Chairman of CASTELL Consulting. He is a Medallist, *IT CONSULTANT OF THE YEAR* (BCS Professional Awards) and an internationally acknowledged independent computer expert who has been involved in a wide range of computer litigation over many years.

After receiving a First Class Honours Degree in Mathematics, Physics and Psychology from London University, Dr Castell carried out research in Mathematics (Computer Science and Fluid Mechanics) at Nottingham University, where he was awarded an MSc (1969) and PhD (1972). He was a senior applied mathematician and research manager in industry before joining Touche Ross & Co as a Management Consultant, working on a variety of commercial computer systems projects, particularly in the banking and finance sectors. Prior to forming his own IT management and financial consultancy, CASTELL Consulting, in 1978, he was for three years Group Management Services Manager for Bremar Holdings Limited, international merchant bankers, involved also in corporate finance and venture capital.

With over thirty-five years of experience, CASTELL Consulting provides independent professional consultancy and expert services in computer systems, software, management, strategy, and contract disputes, to a wide variety of international clients and companies. As an Expert Witness in computer litigation Dr Castell has acted in many cases including the largest and longest computer action to have come to trial in the English High Court. He is the author of the best-selling *Computer Bluff* (1983), and of *The APPEAL Report* (1990) on the admissibility of computer evidence in court and the 'legal reliability' of information systems and technologies (with the CCTA).

Disputes over failed software construction projects raise interlinked technical and legal issues which are complex, costly, and time-consuming to unravel - whatever the financial size of the claims and counterclaims, the facts and circumstances of the contract between the parties, or the conduct of the software development. CASTELL Consulting has been involved as Expert in a wide variety of such disputes. The practice is regularly instructed (in the UK, Europe, the Arabian Gulf, Australasia, and the USA) in substantial legal actions over contracts which are terminated, with the software rejected amidst allegations of incomplete or inadequate delivery, software errors, faulty design, deficient systems performance, shifting user specifications, poor project management, delays and cost overruns. This Expert work is routinely for Claimants and Defendants; software customers and suppliers; in the High Court, or in Arbitration, Mediation or other forms of ADR. Dr Castell is also himself a (CEDR-trained) Mediator and (ICC) Arbitrator.

One of the most important issues on which a party's Expert, or, say, a court-appointed Single Joint Expert, is asked to give an expert opinion in software development or implementation cases is: what was the quality of the delivered software and was it fit for purpose? To answer this, and other equally crucial technical questions posed in software contract cases, CASTELL Consulting has over the years developed a range of rigorous analytical techniques, Forensic Systems Analysis, for assessing failed, stalled, delayed or generally troublesome software development projects. These techniques, founded on sound software engineering principles, are objective and impartial, favouring neither customer nor supplier, software user nor software developer. This objectively justifiable and properly unbiased approach is particularly important where software projects involve a mixture of 'customised' software packages and 'bespoke' software construction. The methodology also brings sound principles of project management to the conduct of the litigation, arbitration or other ADR process itself, and Dr Castell is now often involved in assisting lawyers handling such matters on behalf of their clients with the introduction of rigorous, timely and cost-effective 'dispute project management' techniques, checks and deliverables.