Systems development methods are common in the software industry. They aim to help the development processes by giving support in the form of suggested actions and steps to take. The prescriptive nature of systems development methods tells us that they represent an idea of a desired target state or goal and as such they represent rationality. Methods carry a knowledge dimension referred to as Method Rationale and this dimension is the primary reason for the methods’ existence. This dissertation takes a starting point in the concept of method rationale and proposes a Method Component concept capable of carrying and expressing the method rationale dimension. A literature review of existing research on systems development methods results in a synthesis where two polarised fields of research are merged into the field of Extended Method Engineering. The synthesised field aims to serve as a common ground for systems development method research where new knowledge about the practice of systems development can be explored. The Method Component concept and the Method Rationale definition are applied and tested in three empirical settings in order to ascertain their viability and allow them to evolve in a design science fashion.