



The independent software testing specialists

Welcome to IV&V Australia Testing Newsletter

This e-newsletter provides a practitioner's view of how to manage and perform SOFTWARE TESTING in today's world.

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Strategic Test Planning

When it comes to testing, we usually find ourselves needing to determine the best way forward for our test approach. For some projects this is quite straight forward, but for others it isn't so simple. So what things can you do to plan testing strategically prior to any software being delivered?

Firstly a documented strategy should be developed. This does not necessarily mean the actual test plan but a document that outlines the reasons for writing tests and the detail needed to be testing effectively from which a more formal test plan can be constructed. This will help assist establishing an understanding of the application under development and capture the basics ideas around what, how and why you are testing. This information should be gathered from Business Analysts, Developers, Project Managers and the business itself. Additionally any early documentation that is available such as requirements documents, scope of project, wire frames etc should be used to gain an understanding of the application to be tested. This will also assist the development and project teams get an insight into the test approach as early as possible within the development lifecycle.

Whilst determining the detail required for testing, consideration should be given to the amount of risk inherent in each item being tested. Where there is considerable business, functional or performance areas of high risk, these should be provided more detail for testing than modules that carry significantly less risk. The rationale for this should also be documented to ensure all project teams plus the business come to a consensus on any risk based testing strategy.

Lastly, any deviations from this strategy should be formally discussed with various stake-holders and team leads and documented. Once all these factors are taken into account and the test strategy has been decided, formal creation of test plans and cases can be conducted. Taking these items into account will ensure testing becomes focused strategically.

Upcoming Courses @ IV&V

End to End Software Testing Course

Our next End to End Software Testing course in Sydney is scheduled for June 1st and 2nd.

Who should attend? Software testers and test managers, project managers, business analysts, developers and development managers. It is suitable for all experience levels.

Introduction to Scripting Course

The dates for our new ***Introduction to Scripting*** course are:

- Tuesday, May 25th
- Tuesday, June 29th

Who should attend? Anyone who needs to access, modify and create scripts – for creating utilities and general task and test automation, or manage the process. It is suitable for beginner to intermediate levels.

Test Governance Course

We have developed a new one day Test Governance course which is scheduled for 27th July.

Who should attend? Test Managers, CIO's, Application Managers, Project Managers, System Owners / Business Managers, Compliance and Governance people.

The aim of the Test Governance course is to derive a common understanding and language around testing and its role / consequences in corporate environments.

Additional Information

If you know of anyone who could benefit from any of these specialist testing courses please pass the word.

What is included? All catering (arrival tea/coffee, lunch, morning/afternoon tea), course notes and interactive examples.

Where is it held? All of these courses will be held at IV&V's office in Sydney.

Alice's Adventures

In Search of Requirements

After their kick-off meeting, Alice went back to her desk for morning tea and to plan her next steps. She was having some of her Grandmother's delicious cookies and this got her to thinking... there are some interesting ingredients in the cookies and Granny always followed a special recipe. Her recipes always included a specific time and temperature for the cookies to be in the oven, and so likewise a plan or a schedule for Alice's project would also surely be necessary.

Alice sighed. This could be a slight problem. The development manager Max had told her that they didn't know what the requirements were and that they would be writing them as they went. Tsk, tsk, Alice remonstrated to herself, as she thought of Granny lining up whatever she had in the cupboard, throwing all the components together in any old way, adding some milk, mixing it up and then baking it for an indeterminate time. Granny would have a HEART ATTACK if she was forced to cook like that!

How would Alice cope with that one? Alice thought it best to read up and see what other clever people had done under the circumstances. She found an interesting article outlining that over half the defects were already in the software at requirements time and that over 80% of the effort to fix bugs would be spent fixing defects introduced during the requirements phase. WOW! Does my team know this, Alice wondered? She didn't want to lecture them (preferring to take a softly-softly approach), and so she decided to simply inform Max of these statistics and let him connect the dots. Just think what a BIG party they might have with the money they could save from taking out many requirements defects and reducing the number of fix cycles.

Max took a look at the article, and, being a fairly switched on guy, he knew that this could well be true. He thought back to the frustrations his team has had trying to get requirements sorted in the past; the time lost reworking the software and felt that these statistics seemed to make sense. He nodded at Alice and asked her to help him devise a work plan that included requirements gathering and a reduced rework period and then take it to Ursula. Alice thought this to be a great way to get to know the team a bit better by working with them on something they could call their own.

Alice and Max quickly realised they should raise this topic with their Project Manager Ursula. Alice focused on the need for good requirements and extensive requirement reviews to raise the quality of the requirements and verify their content. She knew Ursula was keen for the project to be successful and on time, and would need some convincing that a requirement definition task would greatly assist in achieving this outcome. After some further persuasive discussion, Ursula agreed to give it a trial, but placed strict milestones and weekly progress reviews on the teams. Alice was thrilled and a little anxious as well, for she had never participated in a requirements solicitation and verification task. This could be FUN! Alice's team could be involved early on in the project now, and they'd have a clearer picture to work with. But, she realised, they needed to get it right. Ursula would have to visibly support this move to the Management team, so both Max and Alice knew that they needed to deliver the goods! If they could do that, then they could propose a big team party at the end of the project if they realised the savings too! With lots of delicious cookies!

Thought of the day

Recently IV&V staff attended a Real World Problem Solving event hosted by the Australian Computer Society (ACS). Some interesting logic problems were presented for participants to attempt to solve. We thought we might share one with you to test your brain today.

The problem:

A census taker approaches a house and asks the woman who answers the door; "How many children do you have, and what are their ages?"

Woman: "I have three children, the product of their ages is 36 and the sum of their ages is equal to the address of the house next door."

The census taker walks next door, comes back and says, "I need more information."

The woman replies, "Sorry, I have to go, my oldest child is sleeping upstairs."

Census taker: "Thank you, I now have everything I need."

What are the ages of each of the three children?

If you'd like to see the answer, [click here](#) where you'll be able to download the puzzle and the answer.

FEEDBACK

Have you found this issue useful? We want to hear your comments and suggestions. Email us at info@ivvaust.com.au.

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