COVER STORY

Aiming for bigger industry agenda

Q-Portal Gets First VIP Member

YB Datuk Haji Fadillah Haji Yusof (seated) becomes a registered member of teh Q-Portal, an online commun-ciation platform for Malaysia's software testing fraternity created under the Malaysia Sofwtare testing Hub (MSTH) initiative.

The Deputy Minister went through the on-line registera-tion process at the Q-Portal booth during his tour of exhibition at SOFTEC2011.

Datuk Haji Fadillah later proceeded to officially open the three-day conference on software testing .

The global software testing market has tremendous growth potential and Malaysia's software testing fraternity should strive to be at the forefront of the industry.

Deputy Minister of Science, Tech-nology and Innovation YB Datuk Haji Fadillah Haji Yusof said that s More significantly is that the industry is diverse and many areas are yet to be defined or explored thus, raising potential for new areas of growth.

Apart from prospecting for commer-cial returns, one should also seek to contribute to the development and future growth of the industry on the global basis.

To be able to do this, however, Malaysia must quickly develop suffi-cient supply of skilled resources, acquire specialised and in-demand skills as well as increase the desire to seek new knowledge.

"Among others, we must intensify our R&D efforts, particularly in the applied areas of area of software testing," he said.

This way, he explained, one could gain new knowledge and make discoveries such as new and more effective ways techniques to deploy software testing.

"We must move quickly in enhancing our capability and market-readiness to be at the forefront of the industry," Datuk Haji Fadillah said at the official opening of SOFTEC2011.

SOFTEC2011 is the 4th edition of the annual Software Testing Con-ference organised by the Malay-sian Software Testing Board (MSTB). The event was held from July 6 to 8 in Kuala Lumpur.

ACADEMIC OUTREACH

Six in ISTQB syllabus adoption pilot

testing subjects based on the International Software Testing Qualifications Board (ISTQB) as part of their software course offering under a pilot project scheduled to start in September.

The pilot project, formulated under the Academic Outreach programme of the Malaysia Software Testing Hub (MSTH), involves cooperation between the Malaysian Software Testing Board (MSTB), the German Testing Board (GTB) and the Department of Higher Education.

Under the pilot, participating will be adopting an ISTQB-based university syllabus that has been developed by the GTB and adoption by universities across Germany.

Universities participating in the pilot run are Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM), Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP) and Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN).

Towards smooth implementation: MSTB Director Amiruddin Jaafar Sidek explaining finer points of the ISTQB syllabus at the workshop held for representatives from the particiapting universities

Representatives from these universities were briefed on the roll-out plan for pilot project by MSTB President Mastura Abu Samah and Director Amiruddin Jaafar Sidek at a one-day workshop held in Kuala Lumpur on July 13.

Also present at the workshop were representatives from Department of Higher Education and the Economic Planning Unit (EPU).

Adoption of ISTQB syllabus by Malaysian universities is crucial to the intent to produce 10,000 certified software test professionals under the 10th Malaysia Plan, as outlined in the MSTH initiative

Q-LAB

Visit by MOH

The Q-LAB hosted a visit by a delegation from the Ministry of Health (MOH) on July 19, 2011. The group comprising 33 officers from the various units of the Ministry.

The delegation were briefed on various subjects including software testing industry, MSTB and MSTH. They were also given the pverviews on Q-LAB and fundamental test processes. The visitors were also given a tour of the facility and shown demostrations of some of the testing tools.

Testing tool: Members of the delegation from MOH taking a closer look some of the testing tools available at the Q-LAB during their visit.

The advantage of being new

Discussion in progress: SOFTEC2011 Expert Panel Session on the topic of Test It Right. From left are Gary Gack, Chandy Littlejohn, Capers Jones, Geoff Thompson, Chris Rupp and session chair Mike Cornelius.

Malaysia is developing its software testing industry from a clean slate and this could work to the advantage of the country. With a strong development plan formulated under the Malaysia Software Testing Hub (MSTH) initiative, Malaysia has the potential to play lead role in the globbal development of the industry. Such is the view from Chairman of the United Kingdom Testing Board Geoff Thompson.

Speaking at a panel discussion at SOFTEC2011 on July 7, Thompson said being a new player in the software testing industry, Malaysia is free from historical 'hurdles' to move forward. Coupled with its own capability, Malaysia is in a good position to play a lead role in the global development of the software testing industry.

He explained that said countries with more advanced software testing industries such as the UK and USA have the additional challenge which is to overcome social resistance against changing to new and better ways, primarily because of the 'historical' reason.

The society, he said, has the tendency to hold on to their comfort zone and resist changes.

"Although the new ways have been proven to work much better, it will take some time for people to change," he said.

The Panel also commended Malaysia for putting in place a comprehensive development programme under the MSTH, describing it as an innovative move to help accelerate the growth of country's software testing industry.

Chaired by MSTB Director Mike Cornelius, the Expert Panel comprised SOFTEC2011 keynote speakers Gary Gack, Chandy Littlejohn, Chris Rupp, Capers Jones and Geoff Thompson.

Active participation: A delegate posing a question to members of the SOFTEC2011 Expert panel:Test It Right

Ice-breaker: SOFTEC2011 speakers were officially greeted at a Welcome Dinner, hosted by the MSTB President Mastura Abu Samah on July 5.

Software testing fair to remember

From July 6th to 8th, Kuala Lumpur practically turned into a knowledge hub for software testing as world's leading experts, practitioners and thought leaders converged for SOFTEC2011 event.

Over the three days of event duration, 15 speakers shared experience and imparted invaluable knowledge in various areas of software testing and software quality assurance through keynote addresses as well as tutorial and workshop sessions.

Fourteen of the speakers were brought in from Europe, the United States and Australia. They included often-quoted software testing guru Capers Jones, President of the International Requirements Engineering Board (IREB) Chris Rupp and the Convener ISO 29119 Software Testing standard Dr Stuart Reid.

Indeed SOFTEC2011, as were the earlier editions of the annual conference, provided the best platform for one to keep abreast with the latest developments and emerging trends in software testing and software quality assurance.

It is not every day that these experts come to town and to have so many of them under one roof, right here in KL, is indeed a rare occasion. It was an event that should not been missed by Malaysia's software professionals as well as those and who have interest in software either as vendor or users of software products.
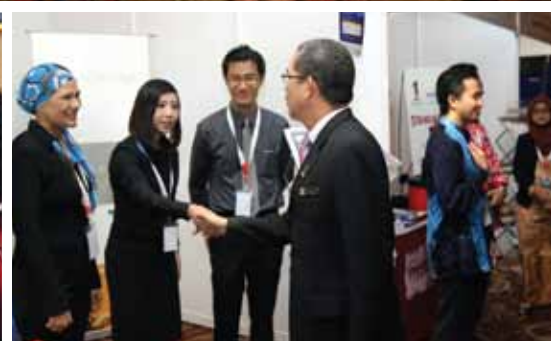
Unfortunately, many did miss SOFTEC2011 for one reason or another. With the kind of knowledge that could be learnt from the speakers, it was a big loss for them. Some 300 people had taken the advantage of the opportunity to learn.

Here are some of the moments captured through the lenses of our Photography team.

For the album : SOFTEC2011's Guest-of-Honour YB Datuk Haji Fadillah (seated centre) poses for a group photo with the official welcoming party led by MSTB President Mastura Abu Samah (seated leftmost) and speakers after a brief introduction session on Thursday.

SOFTEC2011
SOFTWARE TESTING CONFERENCE

Software Testing Guru shares knowledge at SOFTEC2011

Full attention: *Capers Jones explaining a point during his workshop session during SOFETC2011. His workshop session was particularly well attended by delegates eager to learn more about softwar quality*

Within the realm of software testing, Capers Jones is one name that is often referred to or quoted by others in the field. This should not be surprising considering the fact that Jones has been in the industry for more than 40 years. Currently, he is the President of Capers Jones & Associates LLC.

Jones was in town recently to take part in SOFTEC2011 conference. He presented a Keynote Address at the main conference on July 7 and held a one-day workshop on the following day.

Delivering a talk on Software Quality in 2011: A Survey of the State of The Art, Jones shared his rich knowledge and solid understanding on pertinent issues and critical success factors in software quality.

His findings and arguments are based on vast amount of data collated from 1984 to 2011. The data was collected from some 675 companies as well as 35 government and military groups, involving about some 13,500 projects in 24 countries .

Jones also highlighted that there are several factors that have bearings on software quality. However the extend of the possible impact has yet to be known. He suggested research be carried out in these 'unknown' areas which include errors in software test plans and test cases, errors in web content such as graphics and sound, correlations between security flaws and quality flaws, Causes of bad-fix injection rates, impact of complexity on quality and defect removal, and impact of creeping requirements on quality.

At the workshop, meanwhile, Jones delved into the details of the key issues he raised in his Keynote presentation. He covered six inter-related topics starting from Software Defect Removal: The State of The Art In 2011 and culminated with Achieving Excellence in Software Engineering.

SOFTEC to go regional

Malaysia's annual Software Testing Conference (SOFTEC) is set to be upgraded to a regional level in 2013 co-branding with well-established Software Testing Analysis and Review (STAR) conference series held in Europe and the US.

This was announced by Malaysian Software Testing Board (MSTB) President Mastura Abu Samah at the recent SOFTEC2011.

According to Mastura, based on current understanding, MSTB will be the organiser of the event for the Asia-Pacific market, in collaboration with Asian Software Testing Alliance (ASTA).

"This will be good for the Malaysian software professionals and other stakeholders of the software testing and software quality assurance industry as a regional platform will bring event more opportunities for knowledge acquisition and business networking.

"It also reflects recognition for our capability and commitment to the development of software testing industry at an international level," said Mastura.

The other the topics were Measuring Software Quality and Customer Satisfaction, Software Process Assessments: History and Usage Software, Sizing and Cost Estimating in 2011, and Using Function Point Metrics for Software Economic Studies.

These are the key areas which, along with software testing, hold the key success factors for companies to achieve top level Software Quality Excellence.

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Leveraging on international connections

At the recent SOFTEC2011 conference, I made a key announcement on the move establish an International Promoter and Advisory Council (IPAC), which shall comprise leading individuals from the global software testing field.

We are fortunate enough that these esteemed figures of the industry are within our extensive international network. Approaching them with the idea, which was first mooted in discussions SOFTEC2010, has not been an issue.

In fact, the proposal has received very warm response from those we have approached to become a member of the council. Indeed they are keen to contribute to our efforts.

The formation of IPAC is a strategic move to facilitate our entry into the key foreign markets. The council will also take on an advisory role for the Malaysia Software Testing Hub (MSTH) initiative.

In spreading our wings abroad, we are taken a collaborative approach – to work with strategic partners in selected markets. We are not overly ambitious to go into every market and go after every single outsourced job. From the start, it has been out intent to focus is on high value-add projects.

I foresee that the vast collective knowledge of IPAC members will help us understand the dynamics of the international market better and through them, we would be able to make entry into the targeted markets more effectively.

While through the IPAC's advisory, we would be able to keep our programmes under the MSTH initiative well aligned with the trends and directions of the global software testing industry. After all, software testing is a global industry and we must take that into account in drawing up plans for domestic industry growth.

Q-Industry

ISO GUIDE 65 workshop for MSTB team

Learning the standards: MSTB President Mastura Abu Samah nd Director Amiruddin Jaafar Sidek, togetehr with MSTB's product certification team paying full attention to the lecture delivered by Philip Shaw (picture on right) during the five-day workshop

MSTB's initiative to establish a national software product certification scheme is progressing as scheduled as the product certification team continues with the capability development efforts.

In the latest programme, the team attended a workshop on the ISO GUIDE 65, and internationally accepted standards for accreditation of product certification operators. The ISO GUIDE 65 specifies general requirements for operator of a product certification system to be recognised as competent and reliable.

The five-day workshop, held at MSTB's newly-opened training facility in Puchong, was conducted by Philip Shaw, the accreditation and Technical Manager from the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS).

UKAS is the sole national accreditation body recognised by the UK government to assess, against internationally agreed standards, organisations that provide certification, testing, inspection, and calibration services.

The Product Certification project fills another piece of puzzle in the fabric of the MSTH initiative. Having a sound product certification scheme would greatly benefit the country's software industry. Such a scheme would not only promote quality excellence among the players but also add value to the products.

MSTB is also collaborating with the Korea Testing Laboratory, the Korea Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (KOLAS) and Standards Malaysia for this project.

Conference

Q-Merit Award for Scope International

Industry recognition: Q-Merit 2011 Award finalists recieved their Certificates of Recognition prior to the announcement of the recipient of the award during SOFTEC 2011 Dinner on Wednesday. From left are Mohamed Redzuan Abdullah, MSTB President Mastura Abu Samah, Scope International's Rodrigo Magdamit, Rafaiq Bakri Zakaria, Assoc. Professor Kamal Zuhairi Zamli and Alsys MSC's Amalan Gnanasegaran

Scope International (M) Sdn Bhd is the recipient of the Q-Merit Award 2011. Standards Malaysia's Director of Strategy Rafaiq Bakri Zakaria presented the award to the company at the SOFTEC2011 Dinner and Q-Merit Award 2011 on July 6, 2011.

An independent software testing outfit of Standard Charted Bank, Scope International was selected over three other finalists due to its commitment to achieving quality excellence through institutionalisation of industry best practices in software testing, backed by strong leadership within the company.

Other finalists for the Q-Merit Awards 2011 are Alsys MSC Sdn Bhd, a software development and testing services provider; Associate Professor Dr Kamal Zuhairi Zamli, the Deputy Dean (Industry and Community Network) at Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM); and Mohamed Redzuan Abdullah, the Director of the Product Quality and Reliability Engineering.

Q-MERIT 2011 is the second edition of the annual award given out by the Malaysian Software Testing Board (MSTB) in recognition of individuals or organisations that make significant contribution towards in the development of software testing industry in Malaysia. The Award hopes to drive the momentum of leadership, diligence and application of software testing in Malaysia and among the ASEAN and Asian Software Testing Alliance (ASTA) members.