BUGFree

MSTB Malaysian Software Testing Board

COVER STORY

Flashback: Discussions, sharing of experiences and exchnage of ideas during SOFTEC 2010 have led to the creation of a platform for national-level discussion on Software Testing - the Software Testing Straight Talk 2010.

MSTB, EPU to Hold Forum for Public Consultation on Software Testing

The Malaysian Software Testing Board (MSTB), in collaboration with the Economic Planning Unit (EPU), will be hosting the inaugural Software Testing Straight Talk (STST) event this 18 and 19 October.

To be held at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre, the two-day event was planned as a direct follow-up action to the Board's flagship event, the Software Testing Conference (SOFTEC) last July.

The STST is intended to be a platform for public consultation on Software Testing. Sessions of the Forum will comprise a combination of briefing, presentations and group discussions. The primary objective of the Forum is to collate feedback and input to help shape the development of Malaysia's Software Testing industry.

Some 300 people from the Government, Academia and Industry sectors are expected to take part in the forum which will feature foreign and local keynote speakers. A key component of the congregation will be facilitated group discussions with the objective of gathering feedback and suggestions from stakeholders on pertinent issues related to Software Testing industry.

Outcomes from STST 2010 will be taken into consideration in charting programmes to develop Malaysia's Software Testing Industry.

"We plan to make STST an annual event and it will be a crucial platform for participative engagement of stakeholders of the Software Testing industry. Findings from the discussions will help hasten the growth and shape our industry," says MSTB President Mastura Abu Samah.

The market for Software Testing services is a growing market globally and it has been identified as a new source economic growth under the 10th Malaysia Plan (10MP). The Government, in collaboration with the private sector via the MSTB, has already embarked on the Malaysia Software Testing Hub (MSTH) initiative aimed at capitalising on the potentials.

The MSTH is a stimulus programme designed to create awareness and elevate the software testing industry in the country and the region through capability building and demand generation. Ultimately, the goal is to establish a sustainable ecosystem for nation's Software Testing industry that would transform Malaysia into a regional hub and preferred destination for outsourced Software Testing services.

Mastura explains that in drawing up programmes to develop the industry under the MSTH initiative, MSTB is taking a holistic approach in the sense that all core components, namely the people, capability and the market, are being looked at in parellel. It is important that all the crucial components of the ecosystem move in tandem so that one component would not drag down the other. Only then sustainability can be achieved.

"This ties us back to the rationale behind the creation of Software Testing Straight Talk event as the platform for all relevant parties to gather and keep abreast with the latest developments and trends in Software Testing and at the same time, give input to help us chart future programmes," says Mastura.

TALKING POINTS

Oversight or poor testing?: Regardless of the reasons, customers today expect perfection.

Consumers Pay for Quality, Makers Pay for Lack of It

Time and again, it has been said that it would be a costly affair to contain the damage caused by faulty products after they hit the market. Just read up reports on products recalls or class-action suits that have been filed (and won) against manufacturers because of design flaws. You'll get the idea.

Currently, Apple is definitely learning the lesson with its iPhone 4 debacle.

For the uninitiated, Apple was forced to offer a free fix after consumers complained and numerous media outlets reported a problem with dropped calls on the iPhone 4.

Perhaps, Apple's popularity and the 'coolness' of its products will help cushion the full wrath of its customers - they are still queuing up for it, at least at the Malaysian launch in Kuala Lumpur recently. But not all companies are that lucky. Customers may just turn away and go with other suppliers.

The point is, the end quality of a product is really dependent on consistent quality assurance throughout the entire development cycle of the product - right from design specification stage.

As the society becomes more and more sophisticated, expectation of quality will only get higher. It follows that product designers and manufacturers will have no choice but to improve on quality assurance policy and processes.

In this information era, Software Testing is the key to achieving that quality, consistently. Software Testing is not restricted to only software systems and applications. Neither it is applicable only to ICT industry. With software codes being embedded in all sorts of machines, gadgets and devices, Software Testing is very relevant across industries and product categories.

ZOOM-IN

High Value-add Software Testing Services from Q-Laboratory

The official opening of the Q-Laboratory (Q-Lab) marked a major milestone for the Malaysian Software Testing Board (MSTB). With the Lab being fully operational, the Board is able to shift into the full gear in its efforts to lead the development of the country's Software testing Industry.

The Q-Lab is an advance testing facilities, equipped with the latest tools, methodologies and infrastructure that support high-end testing works and activities. In addition to providing training and certification of professional software testers. Occupying a total of 6,500 sq-ft floor space, the Q-Lab can accommodate up to 100 professional testers at any one time.

Q-Lab uses various tool-supported test automations for test projects execution including Test Script Generator, Test Management Tool, Static Analysis Tool and Automated Test Execution Tool. However, implementations of various leading test workbenches for in-house implementation are technology-independent.

With the latest testing tools, methodologies and infrastructure support high-end testing works and activities, Q-Lab is able to offer a wide range of quality testing and related professional services.

These include Laboratory Software Testing; Field Site Software Testing; and, in the not distant future, Product Certification. We also offer Consultancy and Facilities services.

In addition to playing central role in efforts to develop Malaysia's Software Testing capability, the Q-Lab offers a wide range of quality testing and related professional services including Laboratory Software Testing; Field Site Software Testing and Product Certification. It also offers customised testing including tools, facilities and professional services.

It also undertakes high-end and strategic outsourced product testing and certification jobs from local and overseas customers.

Departing from the norm in a typical outsourcing business model, Q-Lab does not offer mere 'warm bodies' of professional software testers in its endeavours. Instead, the Lab goes for high value-add model which include certfied professionals with solid knowledge and high competency in what they do, backed by proven processes and methodologies.

The Q-Lab is one of the four key elements identified as the enablers for the creation of a sustainable

State-of-the-art facility: The Q-Lab is equipped with the latest tools and methodologies that support high-end testing.

ecosystem of Malaysia's software testing industry.

Apart from the Q-Lab, the other key components are Q-Capability (Q-CAP), a programme designed to produce internationally recognised professionals and experts; Q-Industry, a programme to create awareness about the MSTH; and Q-Portal, an online gateway to information on software testing, development and advances in the industry.

LOCAL FRONT

Software Testing Industry to Help Fuel Economic Growth Under the 10th Malaysia Plan

Active Interaction: YB Dato' Devamany (left), who represented YB Tan Sri Mohamed Nor, having a coversation with a partcipant (right) during his tour of exhibition booths at SOFTEC 2010 last July.

The 10th Malaysia Plan (10MP) identifies a number of National Key Economic Areas (NKEAs) including Business and IT Services where software testing fits in perfectly.

The fact that Software Testing is a high value proposition industry makes it even more relevant to the 10MP and New Economic Model (NEM) core strategy of moving towards a high-income nation.

As such, it is should not be hard to understand why Software Testing has been identified as a new source for economic growth under the 10MP, as encompassed under the Malaysia Software Testing Hub (MSTH) initiative.

As articulated by Minister in the Prime Minister's Department YB Tan Sri Mohamed Nor Yakcop in his keynote address at SOFTEC 2010:

"*The MSTH initiative is indeed of strategic importance to Malaysia. It is a working model of the success of public-private partnership, envisioned as imperative to drive the economy in our quest to create a stronger and more resilient Malaysia, capable of achieving our Vision 2020.*

The ultimate goal is to establish a sustainable ecosystem for nation's Software Testing industry which will propel the

industry to become a thrust of our economy, contributing significantly to the national GDP."

Indeed the Software Testing market is growing around the globe.
Based on TechNavio, a report produced by United Kingdom-based Infiniti Research Limited, the market for Software Testing Services is forecasted to be worth USD18.3 billion (about RM58.5 billion) in 2013, compared to USD12.6 billion in 2009; thus, growing at a CAGR of 9.8 per cent over the period.

And the growth is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Like it or not, software-driven gadgets and devices are dominating our lives now, and more so in years to come.

An IDC report estimates that there are over 10 billion non-PC devices that connect to the Internet today and the number is expected to grow to almost 20 billion by 2014. It is crucial to have robust and credible software that controls these technologies and hardware. Software Testing is the only way to ensure that all these high-tech systems, appliances and gadgets do not go wild and function as they should. After all, these inventions are meant to enhance our life and not make it miserable.

EVENT CALENDAR

MSTB Dialogue & Recruitment

The MSTB will embark on a nationwide roadshow to promote awareness on Software Testing under its Q-Talk indsutry dialogue series. The dialogue will be followed by recruitment of candiadtes for the Professional Apprenticeship and Q-Industry Development certification programmes.

Scheduled stops:
Penang/Kulim: Oct 8-10, 2010
Kota Kinabalu: Oct 21 - 23, 2010
Miri : Nov 5 - 7, 2010
Terengganu: Nov 20, 2010 (Q-Talk only)
Pahang: Nov 26-28, 2010
Johor Baru: Dec 10 - 12, 2010
Kuala Lumpur: Dec 17 - 19, 2010

For more information, please contact:
E-mail: jobs@mstb.org / dialogue@mstb.org
Ph: 03-8996 4768 / Fax: 03-8996 5405

Certification Exams

The MSTB will be conducting several sessions of training and certification examinations for the ISTQB CTFL and ISTQB CTAL under the Q-Industry Development programme.

Minimum requirements:
1. Malaysian citizen
2. Relevant diploma/degree in any IT, engineering, technical or science disciplines
3. Two years working experience in the related field of studies
4. Awareness of Quality Assurance/Software Engineering activities in any industry

For more information:
Email: secretariat@mstb.org
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PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Paving for Growth of Malaysia's Software Testing Industry

Welcome to the very first Edition of BugsFree, a newsletter for our software testing fraternity. Our intention is to make it a platform to disseminate information relevant to our industry; on a regular basis. BugsFree will be available in both electronic and printed forms.

On a broader note, I would like to highlight the fact that Software testing hold a strategic importance not just to our industry but also to the national economy. The potential is great but we must work hard to earn rewards. And we are just at the beginning.

Indeed it was challenging to get the ball rolling and I can assure you that things are not getting any easier as we move forward.

It is our quest to establish a sustainable software testing ecosystem and subsequently transform Malaysia into a regional hub for outsourced software testing services. In terms of hard infrastructure, our Q-Lab, a world class facility capable of conducting advance software testing, is already fully operational.

We are making progress in our efforts to generate a sufficient pool of skilled resources but we still have a long way to go to reach our target of 10,000 certified professional software testers in five years.

However, I believe that a bigger challenge is to correct the market perception on software testing. Software testing may be technical in nature but let me assure you that its implications go far beyond the technical boundaries.

With software being prevalent in almost all machines, devices and gadgets, Software Testing is relevant across all industries and to individuals like you and I.

AROUND THE GLOBE

New Release of Application Testing Suite from Oracle

Oracle Corporation has announced the release of its Application Testing Suite 9.2 which incorporates testing capabilities for rich Internet applications at the Oracle Open World in San Francisco, USA, on September 21, 2010.

The company says the suite extends support for automated functional testing and load testing for Oracle Database, Oracle Application Development Framework and Adobe Flex-based applications and expands integration with Oracle Enterprise Manager's Real User Experience Insight, Oracle Real Application Testing, and Oracle Database Diagnostics Pack.

The new release also integrates key templates from Capgemini Group's TMap (Test Management Approach), a business-driven, risk-based approach for structured software testing that helps organisations more effectively manage and standardise test processes.

Oracle Application Testing 9.2 also allows users to create test scripts by importing real database transactions from Database Replay capture files to provide faster, cost effective, and more realistic testing. It also allows domain knowledge of Oracle Applications to be automatically applied to test scripts.

QAGuild Presents Innovation Award to Grid-Tools

QAGuild, an information exchange organisation, has recently selected Grid-Tools as the "Most Innovative Testing Tool Choice for 2011."

The award was given to UK-based Grid-Tools after a successful year in research and development. QAGuild noted they were impressed with the added features and functionality of the Datamaker™ solution. They also commented on the advancements Grid-Tools has made in the last couple of years.

In 2007 QAGuild conducted an independent review of the Grid-Tools test data management, data masking and data creation solution, GT Datamaker™, and Grid-Tools was selected for their first QAGuild award.

The Managing Director of Grid-Tools, Huw Price, attended the awards ceremony in Reading. The "Most Innovative Testing Tool Choice for 2011" award will be Grid-Tools second award from QAGuild.

Keshava Moorthy, Director and Founder of QAGuild stated that company was happy to announce the award for such a brilliant solution offered by Grid-Tools. GT Datamaker solves painful problems for customers in testing and development.

IIMs, Prometric Gears Up for Glitch-free CAT 2010

Having burnt their fingers with the computer-based Common Admission Test (CAT) in 2009, the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) and Prometric — the US-based firm which has been assigned the task of conducting the exam — have proposed a few changes to ensure this year's exam is conducted without any technical glitches.

These include a longer testing window to provide candidates with more choices, a longer test-site preparation period, an improved technology for both registration and delivery, and fewer sites (online centres) to ensure a better test experience for the candidates.

According to them, the reduction in sites will not compromise the nationwide reach and availability of the test.

"We are taking every possible step to ensure a successful administration for CAT 2010 candidates. To avert potential overlaps in schedule with college exams, Prometric has recommended an earlier testing period. The final dates and details on registration and scheduling will be announced officially by the IIMs," Prometric India MD Soumitra Roy said in a statement.

CAT, mandatory for those who wish to study at IIMs and over 150 other B-schools, faced flak from various quarters last year after its new computer-based version was marred by a series of technical glitches, followed by a retest and delayed results.

To avoid a similar 'failure' this year, Prometric has reviewed all the processes and technology employed during CAT 2009, including the protocols that ensured a successful administration during the final days of testing. The US software firm has also reviewed the performance of the sites used during the CAT 2009, partners and, most importantly, feedback from the candidates.

The CAT 2010 programme claims to incorporate information from the comprehensive audit that was conducted after the CAT 2009. "We are currently finalising the list of local technology partners who will work with us in the areas of site readiness, test administration and on-site technical support," said Roy.

This year, the computer-based CAT will be conducted by IIM Lucknow and IIM Calcutta. In 2009, it was conducted by IIM Ahmedabad and IIM Bangalore. Himanshu Rai, chairperson (admissions) of IIM Lucknow, will take over as the CAT convener from Satish Deodhar, who was convener last year.

The Hindu, meanwhile, quoted Roy as saying that the use of unlicensed software by the test centres was the primary reason for several "technical issues" they had the last time.

"This year, we're not only making sure that all the software is licensed and anti-viruses are up-to-date, a new, improved testing window and a better graphic." ~ Sify Finance, The Hindu.

Glitch Prevents Astronauts' Return to Earth

The normally reliable Russian Soyuz spacecraft had troubles on September 23, 2010, when three members of the International Space Station tried to undock for a trip back to Earth.

ISS commander and Russian cosmonaut Alexander Skvortsov, ISS flight engineer and Russian cosmonaut Mikhail Kornienko and ISS flight engineer and U.S. astronaut Tracy Caldwell-Dyson are spending some more time onboard the orbiting science laboratory due to this problem.

Flight controllers at the Russian mission control centre have been performing troubleshooting measures to find the problem and solve it. The problem seems to reside partially in hooks and latches within the docking interface that are suppose to release when commanded to do so by mission controllers.

In addition, hermetic seals seem not to be sealing properly within the undocking sequence. A computer indicates that the seals were not properly in place even though an inspection indicates they are fine.

However, according to a CBC Space News report, ISS flight engineer Fyodor Yurchikhin observed a small "gear" floating from the docking-system mechanism when he removed a cover in order to inspect the device.

Yurchikhin states, "Right under the cover, I could see... there is a small thing, it looked like a gear. It was under the cover of the panel so I could actually see it for a second."

He adds, "But there was some small object that was floating there. That I can confirm. ... It's very small. It was looking very much like a spiral, like a gear with teeth." The gear was retrieved by Yurchikhin and a picture of it downlinked to Russian flight controllers for further inspection.

As of Friday, September 24, 2010, the three travellers are remaining inside the Soyuz TMA-18 spacecraft while flight controllers back on Earth figure out the problem. ~ iTWire
(Note: The space craft was back on Earth on September 25, 2010)

MSTB
Malaysian
Software Testing Board

THE WORLD OF SOFTWARE TESTING

ISTQB Leads in Professional Certification for Software Testers

Going by numbers, the International Software Testing Qualifications Board (ISTQB) is indeed the leader in Professional Certification for Software Testers. Globally, there are some 145.000 people who are certified according to the ISTQB scheme to date. This makes ISTQB the most popular certification for Software Testers in the world.

The ISTQB was officially founded as an International Testing Qualifications Board in Edinburgh in November 2002 with the purpose of supporting a single, universally accepted, international qualification scheme for software and system testing professionals through the "ISTQB Certified Tester",

which is an international qualification scheme and the qualifications in the scheme are based on a syllabus that is subject to strict governance by the Board.

ISTQB carries missions to promote common language for testers globally; establish strong quality focused syllabi; and establish challenging exam questions and exams. It also strives to ensure all accredited training providers meet stringent criteria; ensure common adoption of process within ISTQB and its Member Boards around the globe; and operate within an agreed code of ethics, and code of conduct.

Under the "ISTQB Certified Tester", ISTQB provides

the core syllabi and by setting guidelines for the exams which are set by the regional and national boards. The content of each syllabus are taught as courses by training providers, which have been similarly accredited.

The Malaysian Software Testing Board (MSTB) is the Malaysian member of ISTQB. As such, MSTB leads the accreditation process and certification regulations for the Malaysian software testing industry aligned to ISTQB programmes that are internationally recognised. MSTB is the only body in Malaysia qualified to certify test engineers and requirements engineers, and provide accreditation for training providers on behalf of ISTQB.

IN THE NEWS

NKEA Labs Output Showcase at the Economic Transformation Programme Open Day

Output of the National Key Economic Area (NKEA) laboratories was displayed to the public at the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP) Open Day at Putra World Trade Centre on Sept 21.

A total of 131 Entry Point Projects (EPPs) and 60 business opportunities under the ETP, which will kick-start Malaysia's drive towards high-income nation status by 2020, were unveiled at the event.

Bernama reported that over RM1.4 trillion (US$444 billion) of funding is required for the duration of the economic transformation, with the bulk of it expected to come from the private sector (60 per cent or US$266 billion) while government-linked companies will contribute US$144 billion or 32 per cent and the public sector eight per cent or US$34 billion.

The ETP is also expected to create 3.3 million jobs over the next 10 years, of which 63 per cent would be in the middle and high income segments compared to 43 per cent now.

The ETP is part of the comprehensive government economic agenda built on the 10th Malaysia Plan, New Economic Model (NEM) while the NKEA is the driver of economic activity that has the potential to directly and materially contribute to a quantifiable amount of economic growth.

The 12 NKEAs were announced earlier this year in the 10th Malaysia Plan. They are oil, gas and energy, palm oil, financial services, tourism, business services, electrical and electronics, wholesale and retail, education, healthcare, communications content and infrastructure, agriculture and greater Kuala Lumpur.

More than 500 individuals from 210 companies, 13 non-government organisations and 32 Government agencies were involved in the NKEA labs activites leading to the drawing up of the ETP grand plan.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Idris Jala was quoted as saying that the ETP was essentially the economic roadmap for Malaysia, one that is co-created by the private sector and the government. It marked a fundamental departure in the approach towards economic planning.

Under the ETP projections, the gross national income is expected to increase to close to RM1.7 trillion (US$523 billion) in 2020, raising Malaysia's per capita income to at least RM48,000 (US$15,000) in 2020 to meet the World Bank's definition of a high-income nation.

This will require the country to grow six per cent annually between 2011 and 2020.

NOT TO BE MISSED …

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