Q-Lab Chronicles

Trustmark Council Takes Closer Look at Q-Lab

Warm welcome: MSTB President Mastura Abu Samah (backing camera) making the introduction to the delegation headed by Hj. Amran Hj. Sameon (2nd from left)

The Q-Lab continues to receive visitors from various organisations as awareness and interest on software testing increase. On Januray 26, 2011, the Q-Lab played host to a delegation from the Malaysian Trustmark Council. The delegation was headed by Haji Amran Haji Sameon, Director of Trade Facilitation & Technology, Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI).

The delegation, comprising 15 officers from various ministries and agencies, were briefed on elements of software testing and various programmes ran by MSTB. They were also taken on a tour of the Q-Lab to get a glimpse of activities and the kinds of equipement available at the Q-Lab.

The Malaysian Trustmark Council was established fairly recently to lead the efforts to establish a national-level trusthworthy e-payment system for e-commerce and other types of online transactions.

Academia Outreach

MSTB in Varsity Talks

Students at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) and Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN) had the opportunity to learn more about software testing in two separate occasions recently.

On January 13, 2011, MSTB Director, Amiruddin Jaafar Sidek, was at UNIMAS to deliver a talk on "Software Testing as a Career", giving participants a clearer picture on what software testing is all about.

Amiruddin was in action again on February 11 to meet students at UNITEN. In his presentation, Amiruddin explained the significance and relevance of professional certification in software testing, particularly those issued under the International Software Testing Qualifications Board (ISTQB) and the Internation Requirments Engeering Board (IREB) schemes.

The sessions at UNIMAS and UNITEN were part of Q-Industry outreach programme. More of such talks are being planned for the rest of year.

Universities, being the source of supply for the national pool of skilled professionals, are one of the focus areas of development under the Malaysia Software Testing Hub (MSTH) initiative.

High concertration: UNITEN students giving full attention to Amiruddin (above) presentation on professional certification

COVER STORY

Sealing the pact: MSTB's President Mastura Abu Samah (seated right) and KTL's Director-General Dr Lee Soo-Yeon signing the agreement. The occasion was witnessed by (from left) KTL's researcher Park Ho-Jun, Standards Malaysia's Director of Strategic Management Rafaiq Bakri Zakaria and EPU's Deputy Director of K-Econmy Section Mary George.

Towards a National Software Certification Scheme

The Malaysian Software Testing Board (MSTB) and Korea Testing Laboratory (KTL) have entered into an agreement for collaboration that leads towards establishment of a national certification scheme for software products under the Malaysia Software Testing Hub (MSTH) initiative.

The agreement was signed on February 17, 2011 by MSTB President Mastura Abu Samah and KTL Director-General Dr Lee Soo-Yeon. Under the pact, KTL will facilitate MSTB to develop its capability in assessing and certifying software products.

This will be achieved through consultations, trainings and transfer of knowledge from KTL via the Q-Lab, the advanced software testing laboratory operated by MSTB. With 40 years of experience in providing such services related to product certifications, Korea has put in place a well-developed certification system and KTL is widely regarded as the global leader in software product certification.

The collaboration also includes involvement of the Korea Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (KOLAS) – Korean governmental accreditation body and the Department of Standards Malaysia (Standards Malaysia), which will work closely on the aspects of accreditation framework and processes.

The MSTB-KTL Product Certification project fills another piece of puzzle in the fabric of the MSTH initiative, which aims to create awareness and elevate the software testing industry as a new source of economic growth for the country.

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.

With an offical 'seal' which stands for verified quality, the products would be able to compete in the international market more effectively.

EVENTS

Promotion at CeBIT 2011

The MSTB team is out to promote Q-Lab services as well as SOFTEC2011 in CeBIT, digital industry's biggest international event. Held in Hannover, Germany, the trade show will run from 1st to 5th March 2011. The event features 5,100 exhibitors and is expected to attract some 500,000 attendees from 100 countries over the five-day period.

Certification Exams

The MSTB will be conductingl sessions of trainings and examinations for ISTQB and IREB professional certifcations under the Q-Capability cheme.Terms and conditions applied.

For more information:
Email: secretariat@mstb.org
Tel: 03-8996 4768 Fax: 03-8996 5405

Career Talk at UNIKL

Students at Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UNIKL) will have the opportunity to learn more about software testing jobs. MSTB will be holding a career talk at the university's main campus in Kuala Lumpur on March 16, 2011. The session is part the Q-Industry programme to promote software testing as a professiona and an excellent career option.

EDITORIAL BOARD

softec 2011
SOFTWARE TESTING CONFERENCE
CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL, KUALA LUMPUR
6th - 8th JULY 2011

Test iT RiGHT

SOFTEC 2011

July Dates for SOFTEC2011

The PTP is intended primarily for international partners. The progThe Malaysia Software Testing Conference 2011 (SOFTEC2011) will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Kuala Lumpur from July 6 to July 8 this year.

With a theme of Test It Right, the fourth edition annual conference will once again bring together some of the world's top software testing practitioners and thought-leaders into town. Members of the Malaysia's software testing fraternity should not miss this golden opportunity to hear and interact with them.

Confirmed speakers at SOFTEC2011 include Founder and President of Process-Fusion.net Gary Gack, President of Capers Jones & Associates LLC Capers Jones, President of Project Management Institute (PMI) Memphis Chapter Chandy Littlejohn, Merck and Co Inc IT Director Jeff Brittain; and Pekka Klärck, a tester-developer and Agile consultant focusing on test automation.

Other speakers are Robin Suzanne Poston, Associate Professor of Management Information Systems, University of Memphis; Anne

Mette Jonassen Hass, Principal Consultant at DELTA Axiom; Dr. Tafline Murnane, Senior Test Consultant for K. J. Ross & Associates in Melbourne; Stuart Reid, Senior Lecturer at Cranfield University, UK; Dr. James H. Hill, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer and Information Science, Indiana University-Purdue University, USA.

Making a comeback to the SOFTEC are Prof. Dr. Ina Schiefer-decker, Head, Competence Center for Modelling & Testing for System & Service Solution Fraunhofer Institute on Open Communication Systems (FOKUS), Germany; Prof. Dr. Jasbir Dhaliwal, Head, Software Testing Excellence Program(STEP) University of Memphis, USA; and Chris Rupp, President, International Requirement Engineering Board and CEO of SOPHIST Ltd, Germany.

Meet SOFTEC2011 speakers

Capers Jones
President of Capers Jones & Associates

Jones mostly works with large software-producing organizations.
His interests include embedded software, systems software, IT software, commercial software, outsource software and defense software.

Gary Gack
Founder and President of Process-Fusion.net.

Gack has more than 40 years of diverse experience in the software and IT industry, including more than 20 years focused on process improvement. He has extensive experience in problem project assessment and recovery.

Robin Suzanne Poston
Associate Professor, MIS, University of Memphis, USA.

Dr. Poston is a Systems Testing Research Fellow. She is also the Associate Director of the System Testing Excellence Program for the FedEx Institute of Technology at Memphis University .

Q-INDUSTRY

Excellent Response to Recruitment Drive

It was a hectic week-end at the recent Recruitment Drive held at the Le Meridien Hotel in Kuala Lumpur Sentral.

The administrative and interviewing teams had their hands full as more than 70 candidates turned up over the two days. Interview sessions went past 9pm on Sunday (13th Feb, 2011).

The hiring exercise was the first for 2011 and it was to fill up multiple positions in the Q-Lab. This is to cater for increasing activities and planned expansion programmes.

Positions available were vertical industry practices, professional software testers,

business development, resource management and trainee software testers.

Under the new structure, the MSTH Professional Scholarship Scheme, which was run last year. has been repllaced with he trainee software testers scheme.

This scheme is intended to cater for suitably qualified fresh graduates and working degree holders who have limited experience in software testing but are interested to pursue career in the field.

"It was taxing but worth the effort. I see the good turnout as an indication that job seekers are now more aware about the career opportunities in software testing disciplines," said MSTB President Mastura Abu Samah.

Learning the industry: Candidates who came for the Recuitment Drive going through Q-Capability briefing prior to the interview sessions

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Boosting Software Industry Through Certification

It has been highlighted many times before that quality of products and services is a crucial success factor in an open market.

Demands for quality will only get higher as market globalisation continues to hit all countries. and Malaysia is not exempted.

It is important to note that the market will not wait for anyone. If we can't deliver the required quality, customers will just go elswhere. This is the reason that we have taken pro-active move to establish a national software certification scheme. Such as scheme will provide the means for our software players to obtain a documented proof of quality of their products and go to the market with greater confidence.

Our 'Product Certification' partnership with the Korea Testing Laboratory (KTL) is not an after-thought or accidental.

Our search for potential partners in product certification started soon after the Malaysia Software Testing Hub (MSTH) started in 2009 and we have been in discussion with KTL over almost a year.

We believe that KTL has the the most successful model for software product certification that complies to International Standards Oganisation (ISO) specifications and is recognised worldwide. We hope to learn from their experience and emulate the Korean success in this area.

NEWS

Costly Move to Hide Software Glitches

Financial services giant AXA will be forced to pay millions to clients after it emerged that errors in trading software were hidden by three of its subsidiaries, prompting bad performance in investment portfolios.

The Wall Street Journal reported that the company will have to pay a USD 25 million (RM75 million) fine to the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). This is on top of the USD 217m (RM 651 million) to backers who had been told that market volatility and other factors - but not the software failures - were the reason for losses across their investments.

The error - which was introduced into the quantitative investment model they use to manage client assets in April 2007 - has since been fixed.

Robert Khuzami, director of the SEC's division of enforcement, said in a statement that to protect trade secrets, quantitative investment managers often isolate their complex computer models from the firm's compliance and risk management functions.

"The secretive structure and lack of oversight of quantitative investment models, as this case demonstrates, cannot be used to conceal errors and betray investors." ~ CW

Computer Fault Sends Wrong Offers to Students

STUDENTS were sent the wrong university offers this week after Curtin University (in Perth, Australia) suffered a computer glitch. The university has launched an investigation into the error, which meant students were sent the wrong course offer via email on Januray 19, 2011.

Curtin University Administration Associate Director Jim Mitchell was quoted as saying that it was still unclear how many students had been sent the wrong offer.

"It appears to have been a significant number, but not everyone. This is the first time we have experienced an error of this sort and we are investigating to ensure it is not repeated," he said, explaining that it was only the email offer that was incorrect, with the two online systems TISC and Curtin's Student One showing the correct course offers.

He said most students immediately used the student ID provided and logged into the Curtin computer system. The correct offer was shown when they logged in. By morning more than 1700 students, of the 5,000 course placement offers made, had enrolled.

AROUND THE GLOBE

Sony Fixes Bug on PS3

Sony has said that the company has resolved the millennium-style bug which prevented a number of its PlayStation 3 owners from using online games network. This company confirmed that the fault has been caused by such machines which had recognized the year 2010 as a leap year. And according to Sony, this problem did not have any serious effect on the newer "slim" models of the PS3.

Bug Gives False Hopes

Two women have been diagnosed with breast cancer 3 months after a computer error wrongly cleared them of the disease. This incident happened at the BreastScreen Victoria, following the mix up of patient details officials had to re-examine about 5,000 mammograms of various women.

Mass Dismissal by Glitch

Aberystwyth University (in the UK) blamed systems error for email that falsely informed staff their contracts were up. Nearly 2,000 workers at Aberystwyth University received an email on Christmas Eve telling them their contracts were about to end. The university says the erroneous message was the result of a technical fault.

The university told BBC that a software glitch which occurred on Friday, 24 December 2010 resulted in 1,991 members of staff receiving an automatically generated email informing them that their contracts were coming to an end and that access to email would cease on 31 December 2010.