



FastTrack Test Strategy Review

A Software Development company's success is driven by the sale of an innovative or niche solution to a business problem. The reliability of the first release of the product will generally be high due to tenacious testing by the core team of developers, manual writers and sales and marketers. However this success will bring with it customer demands for changes to the product covering improvements to functionality, security, scalability and diversity of operating environment to name but a few.

The Challenge

The challenge is to continue to respond to market demands in order to retain and grow market share whilst not compromising the reliability of the existing function in the software sold to existing customers. Any change can have unforeseen effects, users may put up with a problem or two with new function but they tend not to forgive you for breaking existing function or performance. To reduce the risk of this happening and to increase confidence that all is OK with a new release of the product the existing function must be retested. This activity puts a strain on the limited resources forcing some often unpleasant decisions.

The Solution

A solution may be to add further testing resource either as permanent or contract staff, or even outsource the peaks and troughs of testing to a specialist testing company. Each solution will require an explanation of what to test, how to test, where to test and with what priority. It is often the case that processes and tests have not been documented resulting in delays in deployment of new resource. It is therefore important, during that first or subsequent release of the product, to understand the testing challenges and develop a realistic strategy and plan for how to deal with them. It may be necessary to defer some of the solutions due to cost and time constraints, however being aware of what you don't know can allow you to put in place key strategic testing processes as a foundation for the future. For example if the strategy is to use automation to retest the general user interface then it would make sense to build the initial tests with this in mind thereby preventing significant rework in the future. Perhaps the development standards need to be improved to enable "testability". Should harnesses and stubs be built such that they can be reused by a future test resource? The list goes on and on.

How can we help?

nFocus has a tried and tested methodology for quickly getting you to a position of understanding what improvements are required to meet your testing objectives. This enables you to quickly make informed decisions on the most effective and efficient ways of developing and testing your product whilst being realistic about the constraints under which you work. We achieve this by performing a workshop with your team. Our fixed price offering covers preparation, facilitation and documentation of a strategy workshop(s) by one of our experienced consultants at either your or our premises. The workshop will be constructed using our own intellectual property and experience augmented with any material you may have together with any areas of particular concern.

Benefits

- ▶ Saves research time and money by enabling you to understand your testing issues in a few days
- ▶ Establishes a common understanding of the objectives of testing
- ▶ Shows the key project management and development disciplines to enable an efficient, effective, scalable testing process
- ▶ Shows what is required to make your test process scalable enabling continued growth by reducing dependence on key, skilled developers
- ▶ Lays the foundation for employing the latest testing processes, tools and techniques
- ▶ Highlights the strengths and weaknesses of your testing and how to improve where necessary
- ▶ Demonstrates the key issues that have to be addressed now to enable efficient and effective testing in the future
- ▶ Demonstrates how test automation can be used to efficiently rerun tests on multiple target environments
- ▶ Demonstrates how to gather valuable information from testing

Our clients have also found that there are other side benefits from this approach to test strategy and planning:

- ▶ Better understanding of the team roles which reduces conflict and improves teamwork
- ▶ Better project discipline leading to less risk of missing deadlines
- ▶ Ability to make substantiated marketing claims about quality
- ▶ Demonstrate compliance with standards of testing
- ▶ Improvement of the quality of the product and the process by which it is developed
- ▶ Lays the foundation to enable testing of any future re-engineering of the product

Client Feedback

"In the space of a week nFocus have taken us to a position of understanding the strengths and weaknesses of testing within our organisation. We are now able to formalise our testing strategy which will allow us to develop and implement robust, practical test plans within our operational constraints. This will improve our ability to deliver high quality solutions to our customers."

Maria Baxter, Director - Cyclone Technology Ltd

To arrange for one of our consultants to call you at no charge to discuss your project and how we may help please call 0870 242 6235 quoting "FastTrack Test Strategy".