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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Improving Testing on Projects

In our newsletter last November we discussed the Test Lifecycle. This month we'll drill down a little to discuss improving test processes within a project. One of the biggest problems when it comes to testing is the notion that testing should commence after an application is developed. This is not the case and will generally result in either testing being pushed for time and resources or the project missing release dates due to earlier tasks having potentially already exceeded allocated timeframes. We'll briefly discuss some points that will greatly improve testing of a project and should increase the likelihood of on-time delivery.

Ideally testing should commence at the planning stages of a project. The test team should be reviewing the requirements as early as possible and start planning testing as development is occurring. The Test Plan and test cases/scripts should all be developed early to ensure that when either a release or a build is deployed, testing can commence immediately. This will also assist in early coverage analysis to ensure the entire project has tests in place prior to software being released into the test phase. Additionally, risk analysis can be applied at this stage to ensure adequate coverage and to ensure that the depth of testing applies to those areas deemed as either technically or business process critical.

Far too often the effectiveness of testing is hindered by allowing it to become the last task on a project rather than being integrated into every stage of the project from initial planning to post-release analysis.

In order to facilitate integration into the project, the Test Team should ideally have a point person who attends all project meetings and is aware of all scheduling requirements throughout the entire project and has full insight into any changes that may occur during the project. This information should then be communicated back to the test team at regular internal Test Team meetings to ensure no nasty surprises surface that will impact upon the effectiveness of the test process.

Once testing moves into full swing analysis of defects and trends should be reported back to the project stakeholders. As the test team has the first real visibility of overall quality of the project, feedback from the test team and thier suggested changes or improvements should be documented and given careful consideration. This should allow for isolating issues not considered during the requirement phase and mitigate the need for costly rework post release. Additionally during testing the process should be closely monitored and adjusted to ensure test coverage and the test process is truly effective.

Ensuring testing is fully integrated into your projects from planning to final release will result in more efficient testing practices and reduce any confusion in regards to what is expected from the project deliverables. Over further time and projects this will result in a far more effective overall testing methodology.

IV&V Canberra End-to-End Software Testing Course

We are announcing our first End to End Software Testing course in Canberra for 2010 – on April 13th and 14th.

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

What is included? All catering (arrival tea/coffee, lunch, morning/afternoon tea), course notes, handouts, and lots of stories.

If you know of anyone who could benefit from an intensive 2-day software testing lifecycle course, please pass the word.

Do you have a testing issue?

Is there a test related topic that you'd like to see covered in upcoming newsletters? Perhaps there are some hurdles in your own test processes and would like to hear our own take on it? Feel free to send us an email and we can look at providing some advice that might not only help you but others who may be experiencing similar difficulties with testing.

Thought of the day

Testing leads to failure, and failure leads to understanding. - Burt Rutan – Designer SpaceShipOne (winner of Ansari X Prize)

Editors Note: Testing might not be rocket science, but it is for this guy!

FEEDBACK

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