

Test Managers Summit 30 January 2008

Output from the workshop attendees discussion on the concept of IT Change Assurance and the challenges and limitations of applying the associated automated iterative testing approach in your organisation.

<u>Discussion Area</u>	<u>Plus point</u>	<u>Minus point</u>	<u>Interesting fact</u>
Value to Business	Cheaper to run than equivalent manual testing	Could be more expensive in the short term	It is key to understand the impact of a change to the regression test set and act accordingly
	Allows choice of which regression tests to run	Start up costs may be high	Need to understand the balance point between the cost of creation and maintenance of the tests versus the frequency of execution
	Increases confidence of reliability being maintained Should lead to fewer production problems	Changes to the application could cause a high cost in upgrading the tests	
	Should lead to fewer project overruns		
People	This is a way of getting more rigorous testing with less effort	Will need different skill sets in the test organisation	The test organisation will require a skill set ranging from technical to non technical to achieve success.
	Using harnesses for repetitive testing is more effective - harnesses and automation tools don't get bored.	Varying skills and division of labour can have a negative effect	Having test analysts to do in depth test analysis and design is a key success factor
	Test personnel have more time to write tests	More time will be required to develop the harnesses and frameworks	
	Likely to influence positive behaviour from test and development.	Potential to over engineer the solution	
	Defining skills and division of labour can have a positive effect	Execution cost may be too high to gain benefit	
Process	Predictable process	May be seen as "more red tape"	Testers will need visibility of the status and content of a build. Probably wont work without a defined agreed process
	Releases time for testers to conduct experience based techniques such as exploratory testing, error guessing etc. Defined process enables outsourcing		Experience based testing such as exploratory test still has a place in the test process
Technology	Frameworks decouple the testers from the harnesses	Harnesses may have bugs - but testers make mistakes as well!	Harness testware needs to be developed and controlled with the same discipline as the application.
	You can do things that you couldn't do manually	Testers may put to much faith in the technique and technology A technology change may invalidate the whole test set.	Need development skills to develop test harnesses
Delivery	Allows overlap of testing with the development of tests	Testers may not trust the test executors	Outsourcing of automated testing has the same principles as outsourcing of manual testing.
	Allows overlap of testing with development	Testers tend to know the 'quirks' of the system under test.	
	Execution is independent of test development Reduced dependency on subject matter experts for test execution		