

WORLD QUALITY REPORT

2016-17

EIGHTH EDITION

United Kingdom

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IMPORTANT TRENDS

- The percentage of the IT budget spent on QA and Testing in the UK has risen from 23% in 2013 to 34% today.
- When asked about the objectives of their IT strategy, UK respondents give the highest rating to enhancing security, with 42% of them naming it as an important aspect of their IT strategy.
- An average 35% of all test cases in the UK are automated, as opposed to the global average of 30%.

The QA and Testing function in the UK has been going through a period of transition. While there is still a lot of emphasis on cost cutting within the legacy stack, we are also seeing a number of big players moving towards more fluid IT practices. This change is being driven by trends like digitalization and the increasing alignment between IT and business taking place across sectors. In addition, driven by business objectives, an increasing number of organizations have been trying to embrace agile and DevOps methodologies over the last few years.

A year-on-year increase in the percentage of the IT budget allocated to QA and Testing is a key trend. This spend has risen from 23% of the IT budget in 2013 to an average of 34% in the UK today. This is a full three percentage points above the global average. One explanation for this steady rise is that, with increasing maturity, testing spends are being recognized and captured better. Previously, some testing activities were included as part of other budgets, whereas now the costs are more accurately reflected as testing efforts. Further, and most importantly, the rise in QA and Testing spend is a direct result of the increase in the number of digital and transformational programs being initiated. These transformational programs, and the associated adoption of technology, increase the complexity of the applications architecture and drive up QA and Testing spends.

Such initiatives are a natural outcome of the move towards digital, which by exposing more services directly to customers is forcing IT to step up and deliver in terms of quality, security and performance. Thus IT (including the QA and Testing function) is increasingly contributing directly to business goals, rather than just being a support function. This increased alignment of IT to business outcomes is clearly reflected in the World Quality Report 2016 survey results. For instance, when asked about the specific objectives for QA and Testing, UK IT leaders give the maximum weighting to business objectives, such as improving time-to-market by implementing quality checks early in the lifecycle, protecting the corporate image and brand, increasing the quality of software or product, and contributing to business growth and business outcomes.

This move towards Digital Transformation also comes with increasing concerns around security, which is reflected in this year's survey results. When asked about the objectives of their IT strategy, UK respondents give the highest rating to enhancing security, with 42% of them naming it as an important aspect of their IT strategy. This is a full ten percentage points above the world average. The increased importance given to security in the UK is driven both by tough regulations and the desire to protect the brand from the adverse impact of high-profile security breaches.



However, while digitalization is an opportunity, it has also thrown up a number of challenges for QA and Testing. UK respondents to this year's survey cite a lack of an in-house testing environment, a lack of the right tools to test, and no mobile testing experts as some of their biggest challenges with multichannel testing.

Another big trend evident this year is the increased adoption of agile and DevOps. Typically, organizations are adapting a mix of methodologies and customizing them to best meet their business requirements. Agile methodologies like Scaled Agile Framework (SAFE) and Scrum are especially popular. According to this year's survey respondents, SAFE is used for an average 36% of projects in the UK, against the global average of 24%, while Scrum is used for an average 35% of projects in the UK, against the global average of 24%.

In contrast, agile methodologies like Kanban, Lean software development and Extreme programming are less popular in the UK than elsewhere. UK also trails the world in terms of DevOps adoption. According to our survey, just 19% of IT leaders from the UK, as opposed to the global average of 39%, are using DevOps for more than half of their projects.

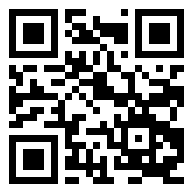
The challenges of moving to agile and DevOps are two-fold. First, most traditional test methodologies, as well as the centralized TCOE structure, are waterfall oriented and do not work that well with agile and DevOps. Second, agile and DevOps also require newer types of skills on the part of the QA and Testing professionals.

Thus, as organizations move towards agile and DevOps, a number of trends are being driven both in terms of TCOEs and in the skill sets of testers. For instance, as per this year's survey, the de-centralized agile TCOE is the most popular setup for TCOEs in the UK. After this model, the two most popular options when it

comes to the organization of testing activities are the central agile TCOE and outsourcing of testing activities to software vendors. Similarly, we also see the rise of the T-shaped tester, a QA and Testing professional with business and development skills over and above their core testing skills. All of these point to the increasing adoption of agile across sectors.

Automation is another big trend in the UK's QA and Testing function. According to the World Quality Report 2016 survey, an average 35% of all test cases in the UK are automated, as opposed to the global average of 30%. However, there is a sense that a number of organizations underestimated the time and the investment required to fully realize the benefits of automation. Many of them are also struggling with the fact that automation tools often don't work well together, and a number of different tools can be required to work throughout a testing organization's entire lifecycle and across different technologies. This is also reflected in our survey results. When QA professionals from the UK were asked about the challenges in achieving their desired level of automation, they gave the highest ranking to challenges with test data and environment availability, followed by not having the right test automation method or process.

Summing up, IT in the UK has been going through a period of transition and it is clear that we are moving towards a period of faster, more flexible and secure QA and Testing practices. The current trends such as adoption of agile and DevOps, hybridization of TCOEs, testing automation and Digital Transformation are likely to intensify, while new trends related to the rise of the Internet of Things and use of predictive analytics in testing are likely to assume greater importance.



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