

WORLD QUALITY REPORT

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EIGHTH EDITION

Benelux

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IMPORTANT TRENDS

- Organizations across the region are increasingly interested in setting up joint Centers of Excellence, where they can outsource the technical aspects of testing while maintaining direct control over the business and management aspects.
- 58% of survey respondents from Benelux, as opposed to 39% worldwide, use DevOps for more than half of their projects.
- 27% of all test cases in Benelux, as opposed to 29% worldwide, are automated.

In Benelux, the very concept of Quality Assurance and Testing is changing. The scope of the function has grown beyond simple functional testing and there is an increased emphasis on aspects like quality and sophistication. QA and Testing projects are being evaluated more on the basis of their contribution to business goals than on their cost. This is a fundamental shift in mindset that is driving most of the region's QA and Testing trends.

This emphasis on quality can be clearly seen in the World Quality Report 2016 survey results. Benelux IT leaders see increasing quality awareness across disciplines as the most important objective of their QA and Testing programs. Quality is no longer seen as the exclusive preserve of testers or quality professionals, but is considered relevant to the entire enterprise. This is also indicative of the widespread implementation of methodologies such as agile and DevOps.

In keeping with the focus on value, IT leaders from Benelux see 'protecting the corporate image and branding' as the second most important objective of their QA and Testing programs. This insistence on business outcomes is also reflected in the increasing popularity of the pay-per-use delivery model and the demand for specialized testing services. Whether it is security testing, automation testing, performance testing, or any other project,

organizations want to pay only for what they consume, or for the results achieved; rather than just for the capacity delivered to them.

The level of alignment between IT and business in the region can also be seen from the value put on security. When IT leaders from Benelux were asked about the objectives of their IT strategy, they put 'enhance security' at the very top. This again, has to do with concerns around protecting the brand image. The importance of security can also be seen from the popularity of testing activities such as penetration testing. According to this year's survey findings, 47% of IT executives in Benelux are carrying out penetration testing in their organizations, as opposed to the worldwide average of 43%. However, a few challenges related to both tooling and adequate knowledge still remain. One response to this is the increased demand for a pay-per-use model.

The changing requirements have also brought about a change in the skills expected from QA and Testing professionals in the region. The era of the purely functional tester is over as testing professionals are not only expected to have functional knowledge but also to possess a certain amount of expertise in scripting, tooling and programming. This is most apparent in the trends around testing automation. According to the World Quality Report 2016 only about 27% of all test cases in Benelux are automated. However, this rate is bound to grow as test automation is booming



and the demand for specialized resources is growing in tandem. As a result, a working knowledge of test automation is a must for every professional tester in Benelux today.

In keeping with the changing mindset, organizations are no longer jumping into automation projects purely to save costs. Instead, they expect testing professionals and service providers to provide a clear-cut automation strategy and roadmap before beginning any project. This trend, which is an indicator of maturity, is also an additional driver for offshoring, as it is extremely difficult to build a positive business case around many such projects if everything is done locally.

Another consequence of the focus on business value is the increased importance given to 'time-to-market'. This is reflected in the adoption rates of agile and DevOps, which have not only gone up over the last year but are expected to increase still further in the future. 58% of survey respondents in this region use DevOps for more than half of their projects. The corresponding worldwide average stands at just 39%. Similarly, Scrum is used for an average of 27% of all projects in Benelux, while the Dynamic Systems Development Method (DSDM) is used for an average of 25%. This adoption of agile and DevOps methodologies is having an impact on almost every other aspect of QA and Testing in the region.

In the niche field of mobile and multi-channel testing, the key trend is a focus on customer lifecycle testing. Going beyond pure usability testing, this involves assessing customer perceptions of their digital interactions with an organization. This kind of testing can be fairly complex and respondents cite a lack of trained resources and testing devices as two of the biggest challenges

in this area. Organizations are trying to meet these challenges largely by hiring very niche players or by trying to develop the capability in-house. However, the results clearly indicate that the practice of customer lifecycle testing needs to mature further.

The changing mindset with regard to quality is also impacting trends related to Testing Centers of Excellence (TCOEs). Organizations across the region are increasingly interested in setting up joint Centers of Excellence, where they can outsource the technical aspects of testing while maintaining direct control over the business and management aspects. Typically, the business knowledge, test co-ordination and test management is kept in-house, while all technical best practices and capacity creation are carried out by the vendors. Such arrangements are also expected to involve a certain amount of knowledge transfer from the vendor to the client organization.

As in the rest of the world, there are two different trends in evidence when it comes to centralization. On the one hand, we see companies, which, under the influence of the DevOps movement have completely done away with the TCOE concept. On the other hand, a number of organizations, especially in the Public Sector, are opting to set up centralized TCOEs.

Looking to the future, the QA and Testing function in Benelux will need to re-invent itself both in terms of the offering as well as the skill sets required from a QA and Testing professional. As the function evolves to meet the changing demands being placed on it, there is likely to be a move towards increased usage of pay-per-use models, service-based deliverables and a blurring of the lines between business and IT.



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