

Agile Test Strategy - Responding to change

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Abstract

How is agile impacting our testing strategies? How do you combine checking and testing in such a fast paced environment? How do you handle continuous change and the ever increasing use of tools? In this workshop Richard and Huib will challenge the hype around agile testing. We will explore the need to balance human exploration with automation in this context. How you can get the two working harmoniously and reap the benefits. Attendees will leave this workshop armed with many visual strategies for tackling testing in an agile context. With new perspectives on the importance of skilled human exploration when it comes to creating automation truly capable of supporting testing.

Workshop

- Participants work in groups of 4 or 5.
- Huib & Richard are available for questions.
- Each round/session has following stages:
 - Show/tell scenario
 - Ask what attendees would do in such a situation.
What to test, what would they automate, how would they visualise/share it.
They should be be very specific in actions and in deliverables.
Share strategy, tactics, heuristics, deliverables, documents, etc, etc.
 - Share results on flipcharts.
 - Debrief
- During the sessions we use “context cards”. These cards change the context: such as broken build, deadline moves, tester is sick, requirements change.

Scenario 1 - Your company is moving from Waterfall to Agile

- You work as a tester in a medium-sized organisation (approx. 250 people of which 75 in the IT department). Your company “Cold Green” is an online department store and mostly sells books, CD/DVDs, games and other gadgets via a web shop. Recently Cold Green has introduced “same day delivery” which means the goods are delivered within 4 hours after the order has been placed. Ever since the customer base is growing and the shop gets more popular very quickly. This requires more and more of the IT department. The CIO has recently returned from a trip to a McKinsey conference in Barcelona and the IT-department will move to agile immediately!
- Your company has only ever known waterfall, but with McKinsey recently hearing of Agile, the PM has decided to move your project to Agile. You’ve been in separate teams, on separate floors, but now the new Agile team will be situated together.
- Testing was heavily documented, test cases were mandatory, however they are keen to move away from this and willing to listen to new ideas. They’ve hired an Agile coach who is really keen to see you all working together, with the whole team being involved in discussions and making the decisions.
- How would you progress?

Scenario 2 - You've been told to test some new stories, but the build is broken.

- A few months later... agile is pretty well implemented and you and your colleagues are used to work in agile teams. There is continuous integration in place and the build runs on each commit to master, and some automated checks are ran.
- One day, you've come back after being out at lunch, you have two items to on your testing queue. You sit down ready to start your testing, but out of the corner of your eye, you see that the build is broken. The build radiator shows red.
- What do you do?

Scenario 3 - Build is green, developer created new checks, stories are 'In Test'

- Couple of successful iterations later... You are in week 2 of a 3 week sprint. Two new stories have found their way into your testing queue, the build is the brightest of greens. The developer has commented on the story to inform you that they've created some new automated checks for the story and were committed with the featured.
- What do you do?

Scenario 4 - You're in the middle of a testing session and the build breaks.

- Again a couple of successful iterations later... You are in week 2 of a 3 week sprint. You're testing away, focused, in the zone, the ideas are following, information is stacking up. You're half way through a planned two hour session. Then, the red mist flows in, the build has broken.
- What do you do?

Scenario 5 - Testing isn't complete, time is short.

- The next iteration. It's November. This iteration contains very important billing functionality which is needed for the holiday season. You are in week 3 of the 3 week sprint. It's wednesday afternoon, the release is planned for Friday, but the testing queue is still full. A popup appears, it's your calendar reminding you that there is a full day of important meetings tomorrow.
- What do you do?

Scenario 6 - Bugs everywhere!

- You've been assigned a new build to test, but critical bugs from the previous build haven't been resolved, this contains only new features.
- What do you do?

References & more information

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- [What Should A Test Plan Contain?](#) by Michael Bolton
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- [Test Strategy Checklist](#) by Rikard Edgren
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- [Why was this automated check created?](#) by Richard Bradshaw
- [Who tests the checks?](#) by Richard Bradshaw
- [A Context Driven Approach to Automation in Testing](#) by James Bach and Michael Bolton
- [Flawed Approach to Regression Testing \(F.A.R.T\) Model](#) by Richard Bradshaw [On Red](#) by Michael Bolton
- [On Green](#) by Michael Bolton