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As attention, effort, and spending shift from manual to automated software testing, many in the software industry are questioning the role of the human software tester in this new landscape. While we often see increases in speed, efficiency, and cost savings from automated testing, there will always be testing functions that can only be done effectively by a skilled exploratory tester. This eGuide explains why exploratory testing still plays a critical role in the development process and how it fits in today's agile and DevOps-focused world.

In This Exploratory Testing eGuide

6 Skills Needed for Exceptional Exploratory Testing

While anyone can claim to be an exploratory tester, only those with a set of honed skills will discover hard-to-find bugs that could impact your mobile app or website. Exploratory testers must possess these six skills if they are to find the edge cases that could derail a successful software release.

Finding a Middle Ground between Exploratory Testing and Total Automation

The automator wants to get rid of human exploration—they want a robot to cut down a forest and stack the wood. The explorer, on the other hand, sees tools more like a chainsaw—they allow humans to go ten times faster, but a human is still driving the process. Finding a middle ground is the best test strategy.

Continuous Exploratory Testing: Expanding Critical Testing across the Delivery Cycle

Continuous testing entails executing automated tests to obtain rapid feedback on business risks. Where does that leave exploratory testing? Obviously, it doesn't make sense to repeat the same exploratory tests across and beyond a sprint, but exploratory testing can be a continuous part of each software delivery cycle.

Integrating Exploratory Testing into Product Design

Exploratory testing, or ET, is a good fit for agile processes, can be done by any member of the dev/test team, and helps develop applications that map to customers' needs. Kevin Dunne writes how with increased use of ET, testing becomes an intellectual pursuit driving product quality and agility.

Using Tours to Structure Your Exploratory Testing

In testing, a tour is an exploration of a product that is organized around a theme. Tours bring structure and direction to exploration sessions, so they can be used as a fundamental tool for exploratory testing. They're excellent for surfacing a collection of ideas that you can then further explore in depth one at a time, and they help you become more familiar with a product—leading to better testing.

Insight from around the Industry

Find out what experienced agile practitioners have to say about implementing agile.

Additional Exploratory Testing Resources

6 Skills Needed for Exceptional Exploratory Testing

By Nicholas Roberts

While anyone can claim to be an exploratory tester, only those with a set of honed skills will discover hard-to-find bugs that could impact your mobile app or website. It requires skills that go above and beyond.

Here are six skills needed to be an exceptional exploratory tester.

1. Lateral thinking

Lateral thinking is when you solve a problem by an indirect approach, and it usually involves seeing the issue in a new way that no one else has previously. Essentially, it's examining a problem with a creative mindset. After all, it's hard to find bugs without thinking outside the box.

With lateral thinking skills, you see the various ways users will interact with your app or website, and you can find bugs that would have otherwise been undiscovered.

2. Critical thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to use reasoning in a rational manner. This lets you discover hidden relationships between variables, which increases the possibility of finding high-risk bugs that conventional thinking would not reveal. Critical thinking gets rid of the biases associated with personal beliefs, leading you to see valid reasons with an objective perspective.

Those who possess critical thinking skills make actionable suggestions because of their ability to weigh the consequences and risks associated with the search for bugs.



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