



Refocus your view of testing

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Does your organisation look at testing as the final hurdle to be overcome before an application goes live? Limited to detecting errors, fixing bugs and checking for known weaknesses? ThoughtWorks takes a quite different view, with testing taking a central role in all of our projects.

Instead of testing at the end of development with a separate test or QA team, we integrate testing thoroughly into software development and systems management. Our own experience shows that when supported with the right processes, tools and training, integrated testing speeds up the overall delivery of software significantly.

It's much more than a matter of timing, though. Repositioning testing at the heart of your software development approach builds in quality and creates value by:

- ✦ Aligning testing priorities with business goals
- ✦ Testing business process, not just the code, at every step
- ✦ Detecting problems early, lowering risk and giving the business more options for resolution

- ✦ Defining test cases before coding, when they help prevent errors rather than just detecting them
- ✦ Making better business decisions possible by test feedback during development itself, when the cost of change is lower, and the code is most adaptable
- ✦ Radically reducing post-development testing time and costs, bringing the entire project to market sooner.

ThoughtWorks can help your IT organisation get this kind of value from testing. We help you see how a change in testing strategy can bring measurable improvements. We then work together to plan and implement these changes, tailored to your specific software delivery and testing capabilities and priorities.

Welcome to our world



We make it easy for any organisation to improve the effectiveness of its testing, and realign the function to be a fully integrated part of the IT and software development process. Everyone's situation is different, but a typical journey will follow a series of steps, from initial diagnosis to long-term adoption of Agile testing principles.

Assessment and roadmap

An engagement starts with a deep evaluation of your current approach to testing, how well it supports the business and opportunities for improvement. We pay particular attention to the contextual and cultural factors to understand what must change. Our analysis addresses people, process and technology, presenting the results in the most accessible and effective way. We report on systemic weaknesses, operational concerns and performance pain points. We highlight barriers, offer practical advice, and identify quick/easy wins for immediate impact.

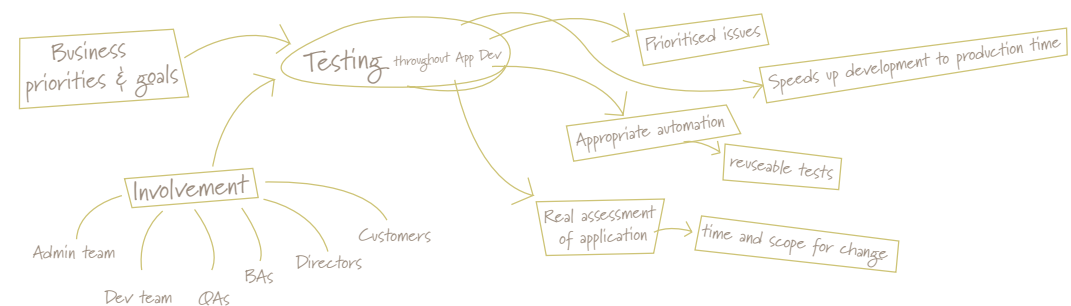
From there, we create a roadmap for change in the short, medium and long terms. The aim is always to bring testing into application development as early as possible, to establish broad team ownership and to create a process for continuous and incremental testing.

People, process, technology

We work with you, flexibly, to implement the changes. We can lead and staff the entire change process, or act as coaches to your people. Different approaches suit individual clients and so the right mix for you may include training, coaching, co-sourcing, automation and tools introduction, presentations or a combination of these.

A long-term commitment

Our aim is not to merely bring in tools, teach a few classes and call it a day. We aim to broadly and sustainably embed the new approach, working with pilot teams and projects. We bring the focus to building quality into the application, and create an understanding that testing is everyone's responsibility, leaving you with a culture of continuous improvement.



Why? →

Reap the benefits of building in quality

Changing an organisation's testing culture isn't done in a few days or a week, but the commitment is well-rewarded.

Higher quality through test-driven development

Writing tests early, before writing code, is the best way to prevent the occurrence of defects that could otherwise become embedded and more difficult to remedy at a later date. Not only does early-stage testing remove the cost and problems of fixing defects, it permits development tasks to be segmented into smaller chunks for faster go-to-market. And with acceptance tests written along with requirements, developers have more feedback to prevent defects in the first place.

Faster projects and deployments

Integrated ongoing testing can reduce post-development test time by around 75%, based on the assumption that a typical six-month project requires a further six to eight weeks of testing before go-live. We can often reduce this to less than two weeks, speeding up product release and so enabling earlier revenue generation and faster return on ROI.

Boost testing efficiency and project ROI

Connecting testing effort with relevant application features and business priorities means tests can be run in priority order. This ensures feedback comes first on key issues, so testing is more effective, removes waste, and improves the ROI of the entire project.

Improve business decision-making

Enabling instant feedback as part of an integrated testing approach encourages application strengths and weaknesses to be quickly identified during development so that business decisions can be made on whether to fix an issue or move to new functionality.

Lowers risk and gives the business more flexibility

Automating a high proportion of testing and making use of advanced software tools means tests are run on a near-continuous basis. This lowers the risk of making changes later in projects because regression testing is built-in to the process. The cost of post-release deployments is radically lowered, allowing much more flexibility for the business.



for example

Promises made and kept

60 second quick quote

The Buzz: Testing puts online car insurer in pole position

When Insurance Australia Group (IAG) wanted to launch a new online car insurance service, The Buzz, complex technical issues called for early integration and strong testing capabilities.

ThoughtWorks was engaged to ensure the launch of the new business could be achieved within seven months and delivered to the IAG value proposition. The project was distributed across multiple partners working on different horizontal components; it was critical that all test methods lined up. This required a fresh approach to testing – the launch deadline was non-negotiable.

Tests were defined upfront, and developers built automated tests along with the code. This allowed the team to continuously execute, update and redefine tests, yielding valuable information that enabled the business to make the right decisions while the project was in progress.

Specific testing responsibilities were given to all project personnel including administrators, business analysts, developers and senior management.

After five months of development less than two weeks of final testing was required before the application could go live. A variety of aspects of testing had been covered throughout the project including automation, acceptance, end-to-end and non-functional testing – everything from performance to disaster recovery. Two subsequent product releases each required less than two weeks' post-development testing. In the first nine months no severity one incidents occurred.



Furthermore, in response to an important feature identified by customers – “don’t waste my time” – the Buzz identified a unique differentiator of a “Quick Quote in under 60 seconds”. This was tested thoroughly to ensure the Buzz could meet the expectation of the customer. Integrated testing allowed the Buzz to ensure this would be delivered before they embarked on marketing messages incorporating the promise.

Outcomes in brief:

- ✦ Final testing took less than two weeks
- ✦ Two follow-up product releases successfully delivered
- ✦ No Severity one incidents in the first nine months
- ✦ Updates and changes can easily be tested and made live within a day
- ✦ A key brand unique selling point – the 60-second-quote – was delivered and validated via testing.

In October 2009 The Buzz won the prestigious Australian Banking & Finance Insurance award for Innovation. For more information see: thebuzzinsurance.com.au

“The quality of the application, rapidity of testing, as well as the ability to easily and confidently update the service once live, were major benefits. The test driven development and continuous integration approach was the most professional I’ve seen and provided very high quality and stability.”

Ian Frew, Leader IT, The Buzz at IAG

that's it →

A trusted partner

ThoughtWorks is a global IT consultancy trusted by many of the world's leading businesses with their most complex and critical systems. We deliver consulting grounded in delivery expertise, build custom applications and help organisations across all market sectors to drive IT efficiency – working to an exceptionally high standard.

Our size and global presence allow us to provide big company services without big company burdens. We are large enough to make a significant impact, but small enough to dedicate executive attention to each of our customers and craft individually tailored solutions for them. Our consultants are experienced, creative and talented specialists who split their time between advisory and delivery work to ensure they are always connected to reality and remain at the forefront of their field.

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Please get in touch for more information - details of every ThoughtWorks office are available on our website
Chicago: +1 312 373 1000 London: +44 20 7497 4500 Sydney: +61 2 9224 1700

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