

WORLD QUALITY REPORT

2017-18 NINTH EDITION

France

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IMPORTANT TRENDS

- 74% of French respondents, as against 68% worldwide said they had seen an increase in the proportion of the IT budget spent on QA and Testing over the last four years.
- The lack of required skills and expertise is a major challenge facing the QA and Testing market in France.
- Test automation is growing rapidly in France with the increasing adoption of Behaviour Driven Development (BDD) and Test Driven Development (TDD) as well as the growing usage of Model Based Testing (MBT) tools.

IT budgets are on the rise in France; QA and Testing markets are growing and a period of consolidation is at hand. The biggest trends this year relate to the interest in security testing, the search for testing competencies, adoption of test automation, and the increasing maturity of agile and DevOps practices.

In fact, there are clear signs that the practice of QA and Testing itself is maturing. This is the natural outcome of a process that started 2-3 years ago, when many companies jumped on the agile and DevOps bandwagon, without fully appreciating the role of QA and Testing practices in making these methods successful. Having learnt from experience, there is, today, a new understanding of the role of testing with regards to the lifecycle of the projects, and companies are re-thinking their overall testing strategies. According to our survey, 74% of French respondents, as against 68% worldwide, said they had seen an increase in the proportion of the IT budget spent on QA and Testing over the last four years. This is not just due to the increased adoption of new technologies and frameworks but also a result of the economic recovery mentioned earlier. All of this has led to a greater number of new developments and releases, which is also pushing up the absolute spends on QA and Testing.

France is also seeing increased activity around agile and DevOps this year. While it trails the rest of the world in terms of agile adoption (92% of all projects in France involve an agile practice

as opposed to an average of 96% worldwide), we see enhanced maturity. According to our survey, Scrum, SAFE and DSDM are the three most popular agile approaches and there are signs that an increasing number of French companies are adopting agile at the enterprise level. However, considerable challenges remain. According to our respondents, 'difficulty in slicing test activities for more than one location for distributed agile', 'lack of appropriate test environment and data' and 'difficulty in identifying the right areas on which tests should focus' are three of the biggest challenges to testing in agile.

Another big challenge, according to our experts, is the lack of required skills and expertise. The agile and DevOps frameworks place special demands on testing professionals, requiring people who are not just skilled in testing but also in programming, development, software architecture and test data management. Finding such people is proving to be difficult, thus leading to some of the issues pointed out in the survey, such as the problems with test environment and data and difficulties with identifying the right areas to test.

Similar trends are also seen with relation to DevOps, where France lags behind the rest of the world in terms of absolute adoption (84% of respondents in France said they used DevOps principles in their organization as opposed to 88% percent worldwide). Interestingly, France was leading the rest of the world in terms of

DevOps last year. This strange reversal of a trend can perhaps be explained by better maturity among French respondents this year, allowing them to better distinguish between what is, and what is not DevOps. According to our survey, the most popular DevOps practices were breaking down large efforts into smaller batches of work, use of cloud-based test environments and the use of continuous testing, and continuous integration techniques.

Test automation is also growing rapidly in France today. There is an increasing adoption of Behavior Driven Development (BDD) as well as Test Driven Development (TDD). Model Based Testing (MBT) tools are also becoming increasingly popular and are used by different organizations to generate test cases as well as automated scripts. According to our respondents an average of 16% of functional test cases are generated using test automation tools and 15% are executed using test automation tools.

One of the biggest challenges holding back the level of test automation in France is a perception among many companies that a part of the testing activities cannot be automated and must necessarily be tested manually. Typically, only the part of testing that is very close to development is being automated by such organizations. Another big challenge holding back the level of test automation is the lack of skilled and experienced test automation resources.

When it comes to testing in the cloud, the trends in France are in line with those worldwide, with security testing and functional testing being the most popular. One interesting feature of the French market, however, is its marked preference for on-premise cloud. When asked about the percentage of their applications running on different cloud platforms, respondents indicated an average of 21% for on-premise, 19% for private, 18% for public and 17% for hybrid cloud. This could be due to concerns over

data security and an unwillingness to store data in huge data centers that may be backed up in another continent. However, it is expected that many companies will move to the public cloud over time.

Another big trend is omni-channel testing, which exists at a fairly mature level in France. Nonetheless, certain issues such as not having the right testing process or method, not getting enough time to test and not having an in-house testing environment were pointed out by respondents as significant challenges. When questioned about the areas on which they focused while testing, French respondents gave the highest rating to user interface/ease of use with 52% picking it as an area of focus as opposed to 48% worldwide.

This importance associated with what is essentially a business goal, underlines the increasing alignment between business and IT in France today. At a deeper level, it is this alignment that is driving most of the trends discussed above. In our survey, when respondents were asked about the objectives of their IT strategy, enhancing security came out as the top priority followed by enhancing the customer experience. The high importance given to security can be explained by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which sets fairly stringent security standards and is set to come into force by mid-2018.

In summary, France is marked by an increasing maturity of QA and Testing practices, high importance given to security and the rising adoption of agile, DevOps and automation. In conjunction with, and as a result of this, is the growth in the demand for skilled professionals and a search for testing competencies.



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