

SOFTTEST2018

TESTING, QUALITY, AUTOMATION: CHALLENGES & TRADE OFFS

PROGRAMME

THURSDAY 25TH OCTOBER

HILTON HOTEL, CHARLEMONT PLACE, DUBLIN



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PROGRAMME

SESSION	TIME	SESSION	VENUE
	08.45 – 09.20	Registration	
	09.20 – 09.30	Conference Opening and Welcome	Charlemont Suite
	9.30 – 10.15	Keynote: James Thomas When Support Calls	Charlemont Suite
	10.15 – 10.30	COFFEE BREAK	Foyer
TRACK 1		PRESENTATIONS	
	10.30 – 11.15	Conor Fitzgerald Testing Biscuits - benefits of Exploring other Industries and disciplines	Charlemont Suite
	11.25 – 12.10	Ronan Trainor Accelerate API Development, Testing and Delivery with API Virtualisation	Charlemont Suite
	12:15 – 13:00	Marco Foley Create a high-performance test team; It's not your people it's your culture	Charlemont Suite
TRACK 2	10.30 – 12.10	Workshop: Speaker TBC Speaker TBC	Charlemont Suite
	12:15 – 13:00	Rob Meaney Tale of Testability	Charlemont Suite
	13.00 – 14.00	LUNCH – Hot buffet in main dining room. Dessert & coffee in lobby linkway	
TRACK 1		PRESENTATIONS	
	14.00 – 14.50	Gary Hicks & Neha Katoch Leveraging machine learning for API test automation	Charlemont Suite
	15:00 – 15:45	Claire Reckless Security in Security	Charlemont Suite
TRACK 2		PRESENTATIONS	
	14.00 – 14.50	Mags Dineen Quality – Time to step it up	Charlemont Suite
	15:00 – 15:45	Steven McDermott Building a Test Community when your testers are across multiple teams	Charlemont Suite
	16.00 – 16.15	COFFEE BREAK	Foyer
	16.15 – 17.00	Keynote: Julie Gardner Evolution – Not Revolution: Transforming Your Testing	Charlemont Suite
	17.05 – 17.15	Conference Close	Charlemont Suite

THE SPEAKERS



Keynote

James Thomas

Keynote Title: When Support Calls

Abstract: Testers are said to be advocates for the customer, but when do most testers come face to face with a real-life customer? I don't mean internal stakeholders, but the people at the sharp end of things, the ones actually using the software. Rarely, I find. Which is why it can be a SHOCK! to be asked to participate in a customer support call. It's an unusual situation, there's pressure, the customer is watching, something needs fixing, and there's a deadline ... of yesterday. Gulp. But don't worry! You're on the call because a colleague values your input. Perhaps you're great at analysis, or lateral thinking, or problem-solving. Maybe you have deep knowledge of your product, or the whole ecosystem, or the historical angle. You could be there for questions, or answers, or honesty when you don't have either. These kinds of tools from your testing toolbox are valuable on support calls and in this talk I'll say how and why. I'll also give an intro to customer support, talk about how to prepare for calls, what to do during and after them, and - importantly - what you can take away personally, for your product, and for your team.

Key takeaways:

- * understanding of customer support and its similarities to testing
- * actionable advice for when support calls you
- * benefits for you and others of being involved in support

Biography: James is one of the founders of Linguamatics, the world leader in innovative natural language-based text mining. Over the years he's had many roles in the company, including tech support where he built a team from scratch. He is currently the test manager, a position in which he strives to provide an environment where his testers have an opportunity to do their best work. He's on Twitter as @qahiccupps, blogs at Hiccupps and recently published his second book, When Support Calls, with the Ministry of Testing.

Track 1



Conor Fitzgerald

Talk: Testing Biscuits - benefits of Exploring other Industries and disciplines

Abstract: Could exploring diverse disciplines and industries lead to dramatic improvements in your effectiveness as a tester? The craft of testing has its origins in the social sciences. The characteristics that we seek to develop as testers include communication, creativity, critical thinking and curiosity. Typically we focus on metaphors from engineering and manufacturing and learn about the disciplines of these industries rather than psychology and design. There is so much to gain by learning about other industries such as Aviation and Health Care, and studying other disciplines, for instance, heuristics originated from behavioural economics and mind mapping was developed over centuries by philosophers and psychologists.

In this talk, I will share my journey of being transformed from a regimented confirmation tester to a context-based exploratory tester. These changes occurred by testing software in different industries and most importantly studying non-engineering disciplines.

- How studying economics improve my approach to User Acceptance Testing.
- Exploring yoga, mindfulness and cognitive behaviour therapy created awareness around cognitive biases.
- Being exposed to marketing and design principles introduced greater creativity and curiosity whilst designing tests.
- Seeking to become a better public speaker brought a range of benefits including the confidence to communicate my thoughts on testing to others.
- The unexpected benefits of performing stand up comedy.

Biography: Conor Fitzgerald is a Software Tester with over 10 years experience. He is passionate about working with teams on quality improvements and continuously developing as a tester. Currently working with Poppulo in Cork, Ireland, where he has begun to explore the role of Test Coaching. Co-founder of the Ministry of Testing Cork. Occasionally blogs at conorfi.com.

Previous test positions included Test Consultant, Test Lead and SDET. These positions were held in a wide variety of industries from embedded systems to financial systems with companies ranging from startups to large multinationals such as Intel.



Ronan Trainor

Talk: Accelerating API Development, Testing and Delivery with API Virtualisation

Abstract: In an ideal world, API development, testing, and operations teams always work together in perfect synchrony, delivering high-quality APIs on schedule, under budget and completely error-free. But as applications and micro-service architectures increase in complexity, teams often struggle to maintain velocity without tripping over functional dependencies and unwanted behaviours within their solutions. API Virtualisation is an increasingly popular approach for speeding release cycles by developing and testing in parallel. Additionally, API virtualisation enables teams to overcome 3rd party downtime, rate limits and overage fees by removing those dependencies.

Biography: Ronan's role involves understanding customer requirements, translating and explaining complex technical information to both technical and non-technical stakeholders, with a focus on demonstrating how their tools can solve specific problems, automate manual processes, reduce costs and integrate within their existing environment and SDLC. He also provides training to technical consultants in their partner channel and provides continuous in house training to the sales teams. Ronan has spoken at number of events in Europe including recent speaking appearances at DevOps Days 2017 in Berlin and JAX 2018 in Mainz, Germany.



Marco Foley

Talk: Create a high-performance test team; It's not your people it's your culture

Abstract: A lot teams will use metrics to display how efficient their team is and was previously; they will attempt increase these metrics. Have you ever asked yourself what are the models that drive these metrics? Are they truly reflective of the performance of the team? How do I increase the performance of my team? In this presentation we will discuss how management styles have transformed and have an even bigger impact on your team than previously before. Analysing the psychology of individuals/team's performance relating to motivation, coaching and feedback and how mental health affects performance. The impact social media has on your test team is something not really spoken about, I will show you the impact it has in relation to engagement, retention and progress. Management styles now increase risks to products and projects, but these seem to be risks we never have spoken about or raised. Understanding the impact of a poor culture and the relationship with the performance of your test team; in many instances simple changes will empower your people.

Takeaways:

- How you can motivate your team?
- Understand performance, it's not based on someone's ideas it's based on Biology
- Increase retention of your staff
- How to Improve performances with a simple choice
- Improve on your feedback to testers to allow in increase in performance

Biography: I'm a passionate tester who thrives on learning and exploring in the attempt to get better without a fear of failure. I studied information systems in Trinity College as a part time degree. I have worked with Deloitte, SunGard and SQS, and currently work as Test Manager for Aer Lingus Enterprise in their Analytics Centre of Excellence. My first testing experience was in 2012 not realising quite what I had embarked upon and very quickly thinking this isn't for me! Perseverance and self-development began to change that thinking. The community of testers and topics like psychology, epistemology, communications and for this talk performance dragged me in. I feel as testers we have a responsibility to keep our testing trade alive and kicking. I have attended the Ministry of Testing talks in Dublin since the beginning and have been fortunate enough to speak at a few events. In my spare time I love to play golf, it is the one place that I go to become disconnected from a seemingly over connected world!



Gary Hicks & Neha Katoch

Talk: Leveraging machine learning for API test automation

Abstract: As we move more and more towards an API driven industry, the challenge around testing has become even more focused on scale. How do we know we have written enough tests? How do we track our code coverage data? Are these new tests adding any value? Most API test suites are created by a process of “sampling”, relying on tester knowledge and context which does not scale well. Often the amount of test coverage provided is traded off against time rather than any technical limitations. However, with the arrival of machine learning (essentially leveraging the output of a program to shape future inputs), it is now worth investigating if we can leverage this technology to generate and validate the value of new test cases? Join us as we discuss the journey and the conclusions we came to as we dipped our metaphorical toes into the exciting new world of machine learning. The goal of this talk is two-fold:

1. Introduce the concepts of machine learning and its applications to test automation.
2. Leverage this ‘tool’ to solve the problem of effectively and efficiently testing APIs using a data driven approach.



Biography: Gary is a Senior Test Engineer with MasterCard Ireland, he has worked within the IT industry in a wide variety of roles since 1991. He has a wide range of IT and non-IT related interests and is keen to leverage those applicable interests into the software life cycle to enable a “work smarter rather than work harder” approach. He sees a higher level of knowledge based automation (Python, R and Machine Learning) as a potential avenue to achieve this.

Neha is a Software engineer in test at Mastercard, Ireland. She has worked in QA and software developer roles in the past. She finds passion in finding bugs, improving product quality and loves the fact that as a tester you have to view the job from multiple different perspectives.



Claire Reckless

Talk: Security in Security

Abstract: Security is one of those oft-neglected non-functional requirements. It gets left until the end, or just left out completely. But what if you are in the business of security? Suddenly everyone else’s non-functional becomes your functional, and thinking about it only at the end is not an option. This session is about how we factored security into our product development on a team I worked with, when the things we were developing were security products. I’ll talk about culture, and mindset, as well as some of the practical which helped to put security at the heart of everything we did.

Takeaways:

- creating a security-focused mindset
- security basics everyone can think about, and why it’s so important to do so
- practices we used to implement security throughout our development cycle

Biography: Claire is a Test Lead at MoneySuperMarket in Manchester, with prior experience in testing Financial and Security software. A tester for over 10 years, she is active within the testing community, contributing articles, speaking at conferences including Testbash Manchester and also co-hosting Software Testing Clinic Manchester every month. You can find her on Twitter @ClaireReckless

Track 2



Rob Meaney

Talk: A Tale of Testability

Abstract: In this session, I'll describe how a bloated, ineffective release cycle was transformed over a 12 month period using a whole team approach focused on building testability into the product. We managed to reduce the pre-release regression cycle from 7 weeks involving the entire engineering department of 35 people to a matter of days with a handful of testers. In that time we also managed to significantly improve the stability, test coverage and adoption of the product as a result of these efforts.

Takeaways:

- We need to make testability a core quality attribute of the product from the earliest stages of the SDLC. We as testers need to be able to articulate why and how testability can make the development and testing of products far more efficient and flexible.
- As testers, we need to know about intrinsic testability and how we can make influence development to appreciate a more testable product.

Biography: Rob Meaney is a tester that loves tough testing and software delivery problems. He works with teams to improve the quality of their software products and processes while also having fun. Currently, he's working as Head of Testing & Test Coach for Poppulo in Cork, Ireland. He is an active member of the online testing community and co-founder of Ministry of Test Cork. Previously he has held positions as Test Manager, Automation Architect and Test Engineer with companies of varying sizes, from large multinationals like Intel, Ericsson & EMC to early-stage startups like Trustev.



Mags Dineen

Talk: Quality – Time to step it up

Abstract: The more things change the more they stay the same. It's 2018 and software testing has come a long way but for many of us, it's getting more and more challenging particularly when we are given lots of responsibility but little or no authority, when we are "responsible" for poor quality but "irrelevant" when there's good quality. Join me as we discuss some of these challenges and some exceptionally powerful but simple steps to address them head-on using tools that we probably already have (but are unaware of).

This talk will look at what we can change, where we should be spending our effort and how we can empower ourselves and our teams to drive tangible quality improvement within our organisations. It will also look at disruption and transformation and why those approaches can fail. Attendees will learn a number of approaches to help them overcome common obstacles and to help keep them relevant in an environment that still undervalues what they do.

Biography: Mags is Co-Founder (and CTO) of Expert Software Test, an Irish testing consultancy and Founder of Encompass Testing, a successful Australian-based testing consultancy. She has over 25 years' experience in managing development, test and operations teams across Australia and Europe and has held a number of senior management positions across multiple industry verticals including telecommunications, banking, security, government and retail. She's a passionate, strategic context-driven tester who establishes inclusive environments where people can thrive and achieve exceptional outcomes. She was an active member of the software testing community in Australia, sponsoring Sydney Testers Meetup and speaking at Let's Test Oz and AsiaSTAR conferences. Her articles have been published in Agile Connections (USA) and Testing Trapeze (NZ). She blogs at Expert Software Test and occasionally tweets at @ExpertSwTest.



Steven McDermott

Talk: Building a Test Community when your testers are across multiple teams

Abstract: As a senior tester in an organisation with many different development teams I realised that while we had a lot of very skilled technical testers across those teams who were all working in Silos. Testers were finding new ways of doing things, using new tools and not sharing those new ideas or technologies across the teams. This led to a lot of duplicate work, silos and gaps in our knowledge and caused problems when people moved teams. This session will outline that issue and talk about some of the things we implemented to try and build a real testing community across the teams. We did this in a number of ways. Introduced a team meeting and after a bit of trial and error settled on a lean coffee style, introduced an "open space" where we could demo new tools, technologies and products

we were working on or request demos for things we would like to know - could be testing related or related to the industry we work in (payments in our case). We also introduced a "Monthly Testing challenge" where we got together and tried to test something completely unrelated to our day to day job; this allows us to try new approaches, work with people we don't usually get to and generally learn from each other. As well as these formal scheduled sessions we also introduced more cross team whiteboards, SBTs and release reviews. I also introduced a mentoring program making sure each of my testers had a mentor they were happy with and with who they could discuss their progress.

This session will go through each of these new ideas, how we approached them and what we learned from them and how it all ultimately led to a much more community feel amongst our testers despite the fact we all work on different teams.

Biography: I'm passionate about growing testing and believe it to be an excellent career choice. Every day I try to share my passion with those people I work with which is what led me to introducing these things across the teams. I want to share that passion with a wider audience and hopefully help some people along the way. I'm a QA manager in Visa with over 10 years experience in the industry. I started off as QA engineer and worked my way up the ranks to eventually management. I have 4 passions which I believe make me a good manager. 1) I'm passionate about testing - I enjoy it, I thrive on uncovering risk and helping the business make decisions to manage that risk 2) I'm passionate about growing testing as a career - Testing in my opinion is massively undersold as a career and I'm trying to address that by speaking at universities, meetups, employing interns etc. 3) I'm passionate about testers - we are a specific breed. I enjoy the company of testers and what I can learn from them. 4) I'm passionate about helping testers develop - I'm a massive fan of coaching and mentoring and seeing people grow and develop.

Keynote 2



Julie Gardner

Talk: Evolution— Not Revolution: Transforming Your Testing

Abstract: You may have heard the saying "The only constant on any project is change." Yet the prospect of change is rarely welcomed—either personally or professionally. How is it that we still believe that these changes apply to others but not to us? Julie Gardiner says that now is the time to re-evaluate and transform how we do testing in order to deliver more value to organizations—from a people, processes, and tools perspective. Join Julie as she shares current experiences of transformations and lessons learned within different organizations. She discusses an automation framework that ended up being thrown away, revamping processes, and tools and techniques to transform your testing. This thought-provoking session will give you the courage and ideas for how you can add even more value to your company.

Biography: Julie has more than twenty five years' experience in the IT industry, including time spent as a developer, database analyst, project and program manager, test analyst, test team leader, test consultant, and test manager. She is now director at Testing Rainmaker, providing consultancy and training in all aspects of agile and testing, specializing in risk, agile testing, test management, and people and transitioning issues. She is also a certified ScrumMaster and agile coach. An enthusiastic and motivated presenter, Julie is a regular speaker at agile and testing events and has won best presentation at STAREAST, EuroSTAR, STARWEST, ADPEast, STANZ, ANZTB, Innovative Test Management Conferences, and Czech Test.

What is SoftTest Ireland?

It is a fully independent Software Testing Special Interest Group.

What is SoftTest Ireland?

It facilitates knowledge sharing and networking and provides a discussion platform for challenges in the Software Testing industry.

Who helps make SoftTest Ireland happen?

SoftTest is fully volunteer run, independent and completely non profit.

Committee Members:

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Fran O'Hara (Inspire)

Naomi O'Callaghan (Travelport Digital)

Hugh McCamphill (ShopKeep)

Kevin Young (Deloitte)

Leslie Lockhart (Allstate)

Patrick O'Beirne (Sys Mod)

Lorraine Banks (EuroSTAR Conference)

David Jamison (Allstate)

Colm Harrington (Mastercard)

Damien Walsh (SmartBear)

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We would like to give a special mention of thanks to Naomi O'Callaghan for her work in leading the programme committee for this conference.

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