

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Confidence and determination

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THE CLOSER
YOU LOOK

THE MORE YOU SEE

As Australia and New Zealand emerge from the global pandemic, we might say that the landscape for quality engineering (QE) is pretty much the same, but the weather is different. The confidence and determination that we noted last year are still evident, but some of the imperatives have changed.

What's changing...

Organizations are adapting to new, hybrid ways of working. Whatever the case, organizations are increasingly putting more focus on strategies to best maintain both employee wellbeing and productivity and finding more avenues to improve the team's dynamic. It can be a challenge: the agile development approach depends on collaboration on the floor, and that was difficult during COVID-19 when people were working from home. Now things are returning to normal, and recent recruits are sometimes meeting their colleagues face to face for the first time, so there's some work to be done to establish a sense of kinship and trust.

We see other changes, specifically to quality engineering. In recent years, QE has been decentralizing. Quality practices were merging into teams, and centers of excellence were being dismantled. Now, organizations are recognizing that centralized command and control have their benefits and, while they aren't completely retracing their steps, they are trying to find a balance that gives them more visibility and greater governance of quality assurance (QA) in practice across the software development lifecycle.

... and what's the same

If that's the changing weather, here's the constant landscape. Agile adoption is still growing, although it's at different stages of maturity across different sectors. Organizations are pragmatically measuring their progress on their own terms, whether those terms be time to market, increased autonomy, better collaboration, or progress with digital transformation.

Digital transformation itself is another constant. The digital economy is growing, and the user experience (UX) is raising the bar.

In general, we're seeing an increased appetite to improve, innovate, and mature. Systems are moving to the cloud in almost every sector; heavy investments are being made in security and security testing to counter cyber risks. In financial services, QA is also ramping up to meet the increased regulatory requirements occasioned by the rise of digital currencies.

One of the hottest topics in Australia and New Zealand right now is site reliability engineering (SRE). The natural extension of quality engineering and DevOps pipeline engineering, SRE is an approach that is increasingly being applied to infrastructure and operations issues and, alongside test automation, it's creating a significant skills gap.

In fact, the biggest need we see right now is not for one skillset, but for skills in combination – subject matter expertise alongside tools and technical knowledge are in demand, especially in the context of automation and DevOps environments.

Drivers of change

We've already noted that UX demands and the push for digital transformation are driving forces in Australasian QE developments. Another is not time to market, but more specifically speed to value: organizations are adapting agile workflows to their business priorities, and – again pragmatically – they're looking for positive commercial outcomes rather than just fast delivery.

A further catalyst is sustainability. Environmental consciousness is increasing in Australia, not just among the public, but across all major sectors, and we're seeing major investments in technology to address climate change. Quality assurance has a significant role to play here.

Investing in value

As the digital economy grows, we're observing a continuing QE focus on cybersecurity, as well as increasing efforts in efficiency within partner ecosystems to maintain momentum on quality. Value is key, and major investments are being made in how to observe and measure it.

The confidence and determination we observed last year are still very much present – and they are maturing.

Survey watch: Agile Quality Maturity of ANZ organizations

60%

of agile teams have professional quality engineers integrated

53%

of agile teams have test automation implemented

43%

of teams achieved better reliability of systems through test automation

43%

of teams achieved faster release times through test automation



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