

For many organisations the quality of the software systems is becoming more and more important. Increasingly, all kinds of measures are taken to achieve quality. Despite encouraging results with various quality improvement approaches, the IT industry is still far from achieving zero defect software. That notion, unfortunately, will remain utopian for some time. The design process is still essentially a craft, difficult and hard to complete without making defects. The causes of defects are therefore varied and unpredictable, and, for the time being, it will still be necessary to devote a great deal of energy to tracking down these defects. Testing will remain an important activity within software development and maintenance, often taking more than 30 - 40% of the total budget.

Testing is not merely a phase which comes after system development but has become an activity comparable to system development that must be taken seriously. Computer science has gradually adopted the general idea of testing as a process of planning, preparation and measuring aimed at establishing the characteristics of an information system and demonstrating the difference between the actual and the required status. Since quality can be defined as 'meeting the requirements', testing therefore results in recommendations on quality. It consequently provides an insight into the risks that will be incurred if a lower quality is accepted and this is also the principal objective of testing.

Since time-to-market, competition, globalisation and the quality of services, including the quality of software systems, have become a serious condition to survive for many organisations, the need for an adequate test process is becoming increasingly important. Both the increasing importance of software in the society and the costs that are involved in testing, confirm the need for a well-structured and reliable test process within the development process. A structured test approach, organisation and infrastructure are necessary.

This book provides the basics to set up and carry out a well-structured test process, by describing the principles of testing, testing throughout the development life-cycle, test techniques, test management and test tools. Therefore it's relevant to anyone who's involved in the information technology: developers, testing staff, users, project- and operations managers, etc. Besides, this book is an important reference book to prepare for the ISEB certification programme. For either purpose, I am sure this comprehensive book will prove to be very useful.

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14 June 2002