Building Strategic Career in Software Testing

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Demand for professional testers is on the rise as software testing continues to be the fastest growing segment within the ICT industry globally. In Malaysia, specific efforts are being made to promote software testing as a highly encouraged specialisation among existing and future software practitioners. In fact, ensuring a continuous and consistent supply of capable software testers has become a key agenda in Malaysia's strive towards establishing itself a global player in the lucrative software testing market through the Malaysia Software Testing Hub (MSTH) initiative. MSTH is a Public-Private initiative to develop software testing industry as new source of economic growth. The initiative is under the purview of the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) of the Prime Minister's Department and the Malaysian Software Testing Board (MSTB), as representative of the industry, has been entrusted to lead the planning and implementation of programmes under the initiative.

Establishing sustainable supply of competent software testers, along with balanced development of the market - both demand and supply sides, are crucial elements in establishing a sustainable software testing ecosystem in Malaysia, thus transforming the country into a preferred destination for outsourced software testing services. MSTH Road Show hits Penang As part of MSTH communications programme, MSTB is organising a series of events in major cities to promote awareness on software testing and MSTH programmes over the next few month, and Penang is the first stop. Over the weekend (May 18 and 19), MSTB will be conducting a recruitment drive for software testers and hold a C-Level discussion with relevant Penang-based companies on software testing industry development programme. For students from universities in the northern region of the Peninsula, MSTB is providing an opportunity for them to learn more about the merits of choosing software testing and at a Career Talk on software testing. The event, to take place on Saturday (May 18), is jointly by MSTB and Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), which is hosting the talk. Puan Mastura Abu Samah, President, MSTB "The purpose of this talk is to share with students, particularly those in the software engineering field of studies, the career opportunities and prospects available in the software testing discipline," says President of MSTB, Puan Mastura Abu Samah. In addition to the talk, MSTB will also hold a Testing Tools Workshop, which will provide participants with practical demonstration and hands-on experience on industry-leading automated testing tools typically used in advanced testing projects. Professional Certification for software testers Puan Mastura explains that from the onset of MSTH roll-out in 2009, it has been acknowledged that Malaysia must have a quality pool of skilled and competent software testing professionals to support the envisioned software testing ecosystem. "MSTB has been promoting internationally-recognised professional certification for software testers under the International Software Testing Qualifications Board (ISTQB) scheme. Obtaining the certification is crucial in our global market positioning as it a documented proof that the competency of our test professionals on par with similarly-certified professionals from any parts of the world": Currently, Malaysia has more than 2,000 ISTQB certified testers and the target is to have 10,000 by the end of 10th Malaysia Plan (2015). Malaysian universities are anticipated to contribute a large portion of the number. Puan Mastura says towards achieving this, eight universities are in a pilot project aimed generating ISTQB-certified testers from among graduating software engineering students, and USM is one of the Pilot universities. Other universities are Universiti Malaya (UM), Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UNIKL), Universiti Tenaga Nasional (UNITEN), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM) and Universiti Malaysia Pahang (UMP). The Pilot Programme also involves the German Testing Board (GTB) as an international collaborator. Similar to MSTB, GTB is an industry-driven organisation, comprising representatives from Germany's big names such as Fraunhofer FOKUS research institute, T-Systems (part of Deutsche Telekom), Lemförder Electronic and Sogeti Deutschland. For its part, GTB provided lecture materials for use in
the MSTH Pilot Programme. The materials, based on ISTQB foundation level syllabus, are currently being used in 40 universities across Germany. Experts from GTB also regularly participated in seminars and workshops for the Pilot universities, sharing Germany’s experiences developing the country’s software testing industry. Germany had more than 25,000 certified testers as at end of 2012. Lessons learnt and other implementation experiences from Malaysia’s Pilot programme are being collated and will be used as input to improve the lecture materials and formulation of a roll-out programme to all universities.