



a global vision for software testing

CASE STUDY

MET OFFICE - uTEST PROOF OF VALUE

Client description:	Specialist government agency
Locations:	Multiple
Customers:	61 million +
Testing team size:	10
Testing delivered:	Primarily functional testing
Testing structure:	Specialist teams

Client situation

The Met Office are a Trading Fund of the Ministry of Defence (MOD) monitoring and predicting weather systems across the globe. They are a commercial organisation focused on scientific research and providing one of the best weather services in the world.

The Met Office was exploring the possibility of outsourcing part of their testing and potentially using offshoring as a method for achieving this. Following a discussion with TCL it became apparent that the logistics of offshoring would not be feasible as it meant sending their development off-site and this was not something that was going to be viable.

As an alternative and cost-effective method, TCL proposed using their partner uTest.

Solution proposed

uTest provides a global network of testing experts, currently over twenty thousand, through which within a fixed time and budget the testing of your development is opened up to targeted testing specialists. These testers are graded and profiled so that it is possible to choose exactly how and where to test your application.

The Met Office was interested in the breadth and diversity of the community as well as the cost effectiveness that is offered by uTest through TCL.

TCL currently run events (www.zappers-community.com) where teams compete to find bugs within a limited time (usually an hour) using the uTest platform. These events are open to all within the testing community but to help the Met Office experience this in a real environment a closed event was hosted for them by TCL, pitching the Met Office Team against the world wide community.

This event enabled their whole development team, including testing, to evaluate the benefits that uTest could bring to the entire process. Each team had a mix of analysts, developers and testers so that there would be an opportunity for knowledge share amongst team members.



“Working with the Met Office to put this proof of value of uTest together has been great. Bob has done sterling work bringing different parts of the organisation together so they could see the benefits first hand. uTest delivers great flexibility and speed of deployment, but more than this, its cost effectiveness has been clear for all to see”

Ian Londesbrough

Consultancy Partner

TCL Global



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Success achieved

The event focus was on testing the final stages of one of the Met Office's new web applications. The release was opened to the wider uTest community as well as the Met Office event attendees, this enabled them to see the speed of bug finding across the globe and the quality of the bugs found. The Met Office were impressed when the uTest community found more bugs than they had expected in just two hours. In addition, many of the bugs found by the uTest community had not been found by the Met Office team, they found different things, which shows the benefit of a "fresh set of eyes" in testing.

The Met Office described the value of uTest in terms of; speed of defect detection and the ability to find different defects which may otherwise have gone undetected. 65 defects were detected in two hours for the equivalent cost of three full time testers working for one day, or one full time tester working for three days.

“ Because you created a small team of people from different working groups and different teams and put them together in a competitive environment that, as a model, worked well. ”

Bob Doubell, Senior Tester, Met Office

Each team was given the Zappers rules and the current bug list so that no duplicates were raised.

The event highlighted some very interesting and unforeseen benefits about the rejection process and relating the uncovered bugs to the specifications and testing requirements. This is a key factor and highlighted the importance of testing requirements.

Dave Underwood, Deputy Director of IT Services at the Met Office commented on the importance of a joined up approach to testing by saying

“ Spreading the word about what testing is about, to nail those requirements in the early stages, and be good at describing them, so that you can test against them ”

The uTest platform also enables greater scope for building relationships with testers from across the globe.



“ One of things that we like about the uTest environment is that we can build up a knowledge and experience of the people participating, so I am pretty certain that over a short number of repeats of the process we will 1) start to identify people who recognise us as someone that they would like to test for and 2) we will have built up an experience of people who have been good at spotting things that we ourselves had not ”

Dave Underwood, Technology & Information Services Programme Manager, The Met Office