Qualify versus Quality Center

A Comparison Between the HP & Original Software AQM Solutions

An Original Insight

Original Software

Introduction

Today's business applications are increasingly complex and can provide a strategic competitive advantage to organisations. Since the cost of failure can be measured in real revenue loss, business leaders must have adequate resources focused on quality and risk reduction, while at the same time look to lower the costs of development and delivery.

With more complexity in IT projects and a need to respond faster to changing markets, development teams have had to adapt the way they work. The solutions they are using to manage application quality are just not meeting these new requirements.

A recent survey, carried out by Original Software, into the views of Application Development Managers and IT Executives revealed that the need for business agility is driving the growth in spend for Application Quality Management (AQM) solutions. However, the same study also uncovered an incredible discontent with the solutions available in the market place, with 84% of respondents claiming that they are not meeting their needs.

The Gartner Group* states: "Traditional focus in the application quality management market has been for specific testing activities (for example, load/stress and functional/regression). The market is shifting as organisations seek greater business value and agility. This involves business analysts more directly in overall quality efforts, along with a shift in focus from finding defects to validation, to ensuring business objectives are being met."

Original Software agrees with Gartner completely and believes that it is imperative to ensure that all people involved in the development process are aware of the business objectives and do not operate in their own separate silos.

To date, test management products have reinforced rather than broken down the potential dangerous isolation of QA teams. They have taken a narrow view of QA with a focus on requirements, tasks and defects when what is needed is a solution that can embrace QA across the project disciplines and integrate into essential infrastructure tools, such as change management.

Quality Center from HP is just one example of these legacy tools for AQM. This paper will compare HP's traditional approach versus the more modern non-siloed approach required for today's dynamic nature of business.
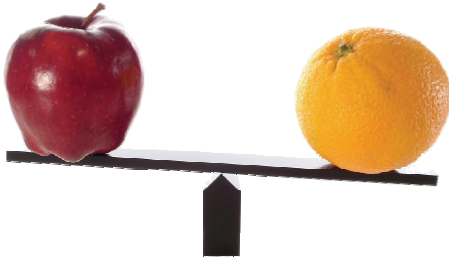
A New Breed of AQM

Qualify from Original Software is a unique solution for Application Quality Management (AQM). It is one that unites all aspects of the software quality lifecycle from requirements through to deployment, providing an integrated approach to solving your quality process and management challenges.

Qualify has been developed from the ground up having listened to market place needs and frustrations. Qualify is methodology agnostic and suitable for managing all software delivery projects, whether Agile or Waterfall or a combination of both. The solution has a zero maintenance burden and allows instant access to, and a unified view of all IT projects from the desktop, web or any smart device.

But how does this compare to the 'old school' mentality of AQM? Specifically, how is Qualify different to Quality Center?

Key Differentiators

1.   Configurability

Qualify is tailored to be a perfect fit for all business users and can be customised to exactly reflect business processes and needs. With fully configurable data definitions, there are limitless ways in which data can be viewed. Users can manage what data they want to view and have full control over how it is presented to them via their own unique dashboard.

An AppLabs report on Qualify noted that the reviewers were particularly impressed by the solution's customisation. "Qualify is very customisable and seemingly more so than the usual suspects. I really liked the fact that you could build your own view of the world and display in tabs."

One customer stated that their favourite feature of Qualify is the level to which each member of the team could have their own personalised view of the project with the elements and detail that they wanted to see – depending on what is most important to them and their role.

2.   Usability (Code free)

No programming is required to use any of the features of Qualify or configure the application. Full workflow comes out of the box with simple drag and drop functionality. In Quality Center, workflow can only be achieved by programming in VB Script.

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> **❝** With Qualify, Original Software have handed power to their users, putting the customisation ability into the hands of the people actually using it. **❞**

By keeping Qualify completely code free, Original Software is removing the need for technical skills to use the solution.

The level of customisation is a big hit at a leading electronics manufacturer customer, but what's really great, they say, is how easy it is to achieve this. "Qualify is totally customisable without IT support. All the other tools I have looked at require IT development and DBA support to achieve the same results. With Qualify, Original Software have handed power to their users, putting the customisation ability into the hands of the people actually using it!"

3.   Simplicity

Qualify has a very Intuitive, clean and simple layout and design. A reviewer at partner, AppLabs, noted that: "Qualify appears simplistic yet it outperforms the others. I was particularly impressed by the cosmetic look and feel, which is very nice and appealing to work with, together with the usability and the product's ease of learning. I think this would allow organisations to get up-to-speed VERY quickly."

4.   Interactivity

Collaborate, communicate and share knowledge. Qualify is a communication backbone and allows QA teams, developers, business analysts and management to centrally manage and monitor all projects, as well communicate and collaborate throughout the application lifecycle. The unique notifier alert function enables users to receive minute by minute updates when user defined rules are met, for example when someone logs a defect for their attention.

Full integration with Office means project information can also be delivered via email, with an attachment that previews the information in a Qualify pane, even if the user is not logged in to the application. Continuous communication and interaction throughout, has allowed one customer to eliminate time consuming status update meetings.

5.   Versatility

Agile, Waterfall, Kanban – Choose your own adventure. Unlike Quality Center, users don't have to be straight-jacketed into a particular way of working. Users can select one of the pre-existing templates based on popular methodologies or build their own models quickly and easily. HP has been working on TMap (Sogeti's best practice test methodology) plug-ins. TMap was mapped into Qualify within 48hrs.

> " By providing a single point of reference for informed decision making, Qualify allows complete visibility into every aspect of the project at any given time. "

6. Scalability

You don't need to choose just one – you can have multiple adventures. This is particularly relevant on an Enterprise level, where you have multiple teams, running multiple projects each with a different methodology. Test consultancy partners have been really impressed by this functionality. They saw huge value in having the ability to configure different test process methodologies for each of their customers, all in the one solution.

In Qualify, users need only be set up the once and can then be assigned to multiple projects. With HP Quality Center, users have to be set up over and over again for each project. All too often, although a team is assembled and ready to go, there is still a frustrating amount of work to do in setting up users, permissions and calendars etc.

7. Visibility (Finger on the pulse)

By providing a single point of reference for informed decision making, Qualify allows complete visibility into every aspect of the project at any given time. Milestones can be created to mark checkpoints and ensure that projects are running to schedule. Alerts and dashboards mean no missed deadlines or rushed processes.

Managers can look at staff resources across multiple projects, if team members are swamped, tasks can be re-assigned elsewhere. Graphical dashboards allow managers to choose the key metrics they want to monitor, with full drill down functionality for greater analysis and clarity. The planner feature gives a timeline view of activities and project status on a calendar, completely mapped with working days and holidays. Users have clear visibility of how the projects are running and can more tightly manage the application release.

One customer reported savings of 1,200 man-hours a year, simply as a result of no longer needing weekly progress meetings for its project team. With Qualify, every member of staff, including management, can see the exact project status at any given moment of time.

8. Repeatability

With Qualify, users can benefit from the re-usability of test plans or requirements that are similar from project to project. Qualify customers are seeing huge benefits in terms of re-use. One customer uses Qualify to manage the whole requirements process for its handheld mobile devices. There are numerous requirements and test processes that are the same or similar in each and every product.

> **"Users no longer need to spend hours compiling reports that are already out of date before they are finished."**

For example, the requirements for the exact decibel levels of a beeper - mundane stuff that is repeated each time, from project to project, components they've built a million times already. Re-using these assets, rather than re-visiting them time and time again, means that they can focus on innovation. The customer is now able to focus on creating requirements for new ground-breaking features that will differentiate them from the competition and allow them to bring-to-market products that can make a real difference to their customers and their employees.

9.   Reporting and Accountability (Compliance)

Users no longer need to spend hours compiling reports that are already out of date before they are finished. The full reporting engine within Qualify is easy to use and produces cosmetically pleasing and comprehensive reports with multiple output formats including html and PDF.

Full historical records are available for every project, modification and test performed, allowing for complete audit trails, full versioning and rollback. Once a test is completed, users can attach the results to the test task, providing ready access to the diagnostic data and providing a full audit trail so that the depth of coverage can be rapidly understood. These results can be viewed at any time to assist in management reviews or as part of the audit / compliance process.

"In order to get full advantage for our customers we needed to be able to provide detailed evidence of software testing for them to validate. The PDF reports provided by the Original Software's solution make brilliant documentation for test evidence – much more so than any comparative solutions on the market that we looked at." said a customer at one UK Building Society.

10.   Accessibility

Vital project information can accessed on the go. Qualify is web enabled and has been optimised for mobile smart devices. Minute by minute updates and a real-time view of project status, from the desktop or on the go is possible. A recent report by industry analyst group MWD, noted: "In supporting the various roles outside of the testing and QA process, Qualify offers a centrally connected repository backbone framework that primarily connects test artefacts with other software delivery artefacts (requirements, priorities, rules etc.) processes and workflows. In doing so it enables each role in the delivery process to have a single view of the issues and dependencies – or what is often commonly described as 'a single version of the truth'."

Original Software's Qualify v HP's Quality Centre		
Feature	**Qualify**	**Quality Center**
Application Quality Management	✓	✓
Application Lifecycle Management	✓	
Multiple projects	✓	✓
Multiple applications	✓	
Multiple entities	✓	
User defined fields	All	Additional
User defined relationships	✓	
Controllable screen layout	✓	via VB Script
Central control of select lists	✓	Templates only
User defined validation	✓	via VB Script
Full, built in workflow	✓	
Dashboards	✓	✓
Email notifications	✓	✓
Online Notifications	✓	
Integration with MS Office	✓	
Integration with corporate DBs	✓	
Import from Word & Excel	✓	✓
Resource Management		
• **Permissions**	✓	✓
• **Per project**	✓	✓
• **Cross project**	✓	
• **Working days & holidays**	✓	
• **Milestones**	✓	
Audit trail	✓	✓
Versioning		✓
APIs		
• **Outbound**	✓ (xml based)	✓
• **Inbound**	✓	
Rendered	Desktop, Browser or handheld device	Browser
Databases		
• **Oracle**	✓	✓
• **MS SQL Server**	✓	✓
• **IBM Systemi DB2**	✓	
Desktop Operating Systems		
• **MS Windows**	✓	✓
• **Linux**		✓
• **Solaris**		✓

About Original Software

With a world class record of innovation, Original Software offers a solution focused completely on the goal of effective quality management. By embracing the full spectrum of Application Quality Management across a wide range of applications and environments, the company partners with customers and helps to make quality a business imperative. The solution encompasses a quality management platform, manual testing, full test automation and test data management, all delivered with the control of business risk, cost, time and resources in mind.

More than 400 organisations operating in over 30 countries use Original Software solutions. Current users range from major multi-nationals to small software development shops, encompassing a wide range of industries, sectors and sizes. We are proud of our partnerships with the likes of Coca-Cola, Cargill, HSBC, Unilever, FedEx, Pfizer, DHL and many others.

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