

ADOPTING KEYWORD-DRIVEN TESTING FRAMEWORK
IN WEB-BASED PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

Web applications are abundant in the World Wide Web as well as in the private networks. Organisations resort to using Agile Scrum development to shorten their time to deliver their products rapidly. In less mature Agile organisations, testing is typically done in manual way, with lack of test automation practices at unit, integration, and acceptance levels. Lack of documentations for expected behaviours of existing features is also prevalent. These practices cause long delays in testing for new features and regression testing for existing features. Manual testing consumes a lot of time and may cause some tests to be skipped under time constraints. Undocumented existing features also require back and forth discussions among team members to determine the correct behaviour of the product. We propose to adopt the usage of Robot Framework, a Keyword-Driven Testing (KDT) tool along with Selenium2Library. The framework is to be integrated with existing Jenkins Continuous Integration tool. Leveraging Keyword-Driven Testing framework into Continuous Integration architecture provides a maintainable, reusable, understandable test assets that can be run automatically every time a new build of the product is deployed to multiple target environments. This integrated automated infrastructure allows regression testing to be executed rapidly, without sacrificing test coverage. Rapid feedback from the tests and self-documenting test assets will further improve the productivity and efficiency and ultimately, the quality of the delivered product.

ABSTRAK

Aplikasi web banyak terdapat dalam World Wide Web serta dalam rangkaian persendirian. Organisasi menggunakan pembangunan Agile Scrum untuk memendekkan masa untuk menghasilkan produk dengan cepat. Dalam organisasi Agile yang kurang berpengalaman, pengujian biasanya dilakukan secara manual, dengan kekurangan amalan automasi ujian pada tahap unit, integrasi, dan penerimaan. Kekurangan dokumentasi yang menentukan spesifikasi sedia ada untuk sesuatu aplikasi juga menjadi satu kebiasaan. Ini mengakibatkan pengujian mengalami penangguhan dan kelewatan semasa pengujian ciri-ciri baru dan juga ujian regresi ciri-ciri sedia ada. Pengujian secara manual menggunakan banyak masa, menyebabkan beberapa ujian dilangkau akibat kekangan masa. Ciri sedia ada yang tidak mempunyai dokumen spesifikasi juga memerlukan perbincangan berterusan di kalangan kumpulan pembangun untuk menentukan spesifikasi produk yang sepatutnya, sewaktu pengubahan atau penambahan ciri-ciri baru. Kami mencadangkan untuk menggunakan Robot Framework, iaitu satu perisian Keyword-Driven Testing (KDT) bersama-sama dengan Selenium2Library. Perisian ini disepadukan dengan infrastruktur integrasi berterusan Jenkins yang sedia ada dalam organisasi. Menggunakan teknik Keyword-Driven Testing untuk pengujian bersama dengan infrastruktur integrasi berterusan, aset pengujian perisian boleh digunakan semula, mudah difahami dan boleh dijalankan secara automatik untuk pelbagai situasi setiap kali produk diubah. Infrastruktur automatik bersepadu membolehkan ujian regresi dilaksanakan dengan pantas, tanpa melangkau mana-mana ujian akibat kesuntukan masa. Maklum balas yang pantas daripada ujian dan aset ujian yang mudah difahami akan meningkatkan lagi produktiviti dan kualiti produk yang dihasilkan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

API	-	Application Programming Interface
ATDD	-	Acceptance Test-Driven Development
AUT	-	Application Under Test
CI	-	Continuous Integration
DB	-	Database
CLI	-	Command Line Interface
CSS	-	Cascading Style Sheets
CSV	-	Comma-Separated Value
FF	-	Mozilla Firefox
GC	-	Google Chrome
GUI	-	Graphical User Interface
HTML	-	HyperText Markup Language
IDE	-	Integrated Development Environment / Selenium IDE
IE	-	Microsoft Internet Explorer
IP	-	Internet Protocol
KDT	-	Keyword-Driven Testing
RF	-	Robot Framework
S2L	-	Selenium2Library
SCM	-	Software Configuration Management
SDLC	-	Software Development Life Cycle
SSH	-	Secure Shell
TDD	-	Test-Driven Development
TSV	-	Tab-Separated Value
URL	-	Uniform Resource Locator
XML	-	Extensible Markup Language
XP	-	Extreme Programming

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Company Background

The iProperty Group is a business entity in real estate industry. They own a network of various property websites under the iProperty.com brand and operates in the Asia region.

Among the notable websites under the iProperty Group's portfolios are: iProperty.com (Malaysia, Singapore, India, Philippines), Rumah123.com (Indonesia), GoHome.com.hk (Hong Kong) and vproperty.mo (Macau).

Operating since 2003, the Group develop, maintain and acquire various websites to support their vision. There are a few categories of websites and products across the iProperty Group portfolio:

Consumer Portals serve as one-stop centres for mass consumers to:

- i. Search and view property listings
- ii. Subscribe to property listing alerts
- iii. Bookmark and shortlist properties
- iv. Get property exhibition and events update
- v. Contact property agents
- vi. Get loan and financing information
- vii. Read tips, guides, reviews and news regarding property sector

iRealtor is a category of websites for property agents to draft, list, and update property listings. This platform also allows the property agents to respond to enquiries made by general consumers. Access to this website is only to paying property agents. The listings uploaded from this website will be accessible to consumers via the Consumer Portal. The number of listings allowed to be uploaded per account depends on the subscription package of the property agent.

iAdmin serves as an internal portal for iProperty's staff and administrators to maintain the property agents accounts, subscription settings, and other maintenance-related tasks for both the Consumer Portal and iRealtor.

Mobile web allows mass consumers to access the core essential features of Consumer Portal via a lightweight mobile web interface. Similar functionalities are also delivered via native mobile applications for popular platforms like Android devices, iPad, iPhone, Windows Phone, Windows 8 Metro, and Nokia Symbian. To cater to the small screen estate, not all of the functions in Consumer Portal are available in the mobile web and native mobile version of the website.

1.2 Project Background

In iProperty, there are separate teams covering different country websites. For iProperty Singapore website, all of the comprising products (Consumer Portal, iRealtor, and iAdmin) are handled by a single Agile team. Although normally seen as separate products, they actually are interfacing with each other. As the author is part of this Agile team for iProperty Singapore products, the focus of this project is based on the context of this team.

For each new feature or bug fix implementation (in form of user stories), they are carefully deployed to various tests and staging environments before being deployed to production environment. In each stage, the user stories are manually tested whether they are correctly implemented, and also checked if they cause other unintended behaviours in the existing product and/or interfacing products.

Sometimes, because of different data in tests, staging and production environments, regression bugs can only be caught in later stages of deployments. When this happens, depending on the cases, the fixes will be applied in stages again and tested accordingly. This in turn increases turnaround time to deliver and deploy the stories to the customers.

Being an Agile team, the documentation is kept to minimum except for big stories or during major site revamps. There is little to no evidence that existing or new user stories are being tested regularly during the software development lifecycle, except for a few descriptions on the Project Tracker. Factoring in rapid development lifecycle, small team and little visibility to the test processes, sometimes it could not be prevented that some of the tests would be skipped due to time constraints. Normally only cursory tests are done for story and regression tests.

There were past efforts on implementing automated test tools like Selenium IDE but it had shown to be not really maintainable and had poor reusability. All test scripts had to be manually started even though the steps are automatically executed, and the operator had to be present to observe the results.

This project is not intended to cover all levels of testing (unit, integration, system tests) and all types of testing (performance, usability, security, *etc.*) but rather the implementation of a set of acceptance-level functional tests using the proposed framework.

1.3 Motivation of Project

Being the leading online advertising business group in property sector in Asia region, there are many competitors attempting to catch up and outdo each other within the business ecosystem. New features and services must be developed, tested, and deployed rapidly to either to respond to the changing market needs as well as to proactively leading the innovation within the industry. With various categories of web products multiplied by various brands and countries, the efforts needed to develop, maintain, and operate these products requires an immense amount of coordination among teams and within team members.

Current practice of using manual regression testing results in long turnaround time to know whether the newly integrated features and defect fixing are affecting the existing features of the product. This project serves as a proof-of-concept of using automated regression testing for acceptance tests using keyword driven approach for improved turnaround time of feedbacks, better visibility of tests done, minimise test script redundancy, and full regression execution.

1.4 Project Objectives

The objectives of the implementation of the automated regression testing framework for web-based product development are:

- i. To setup automated keyword-driven testing framework for better visibility of test status
- ii. To integrate the framework with existing build automation system for rapid test execution
- iii. To develop reusable keywords and/or test libraries for better test scripts maintainability
- iv. To create self-documenting test cases for easier troubleshooting and traceability to defects

1.5 Project Scopes

The scopes of the project are:

- i. Implementation of automated testing framework within iProperty Singapore IT Team
 - a. To integrate Robot Framework (RF) into current build management infrastructure (Jenkins)
- ii. Creation and execution of acceptance-level functional regression tests
 - a. To create test cases using Selenium2Library (S2L) in RF format
- iii. Writing up project's documentations
 - a. To prepare documentations for setup and integration of RF into existing SDLC processes and workflows

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