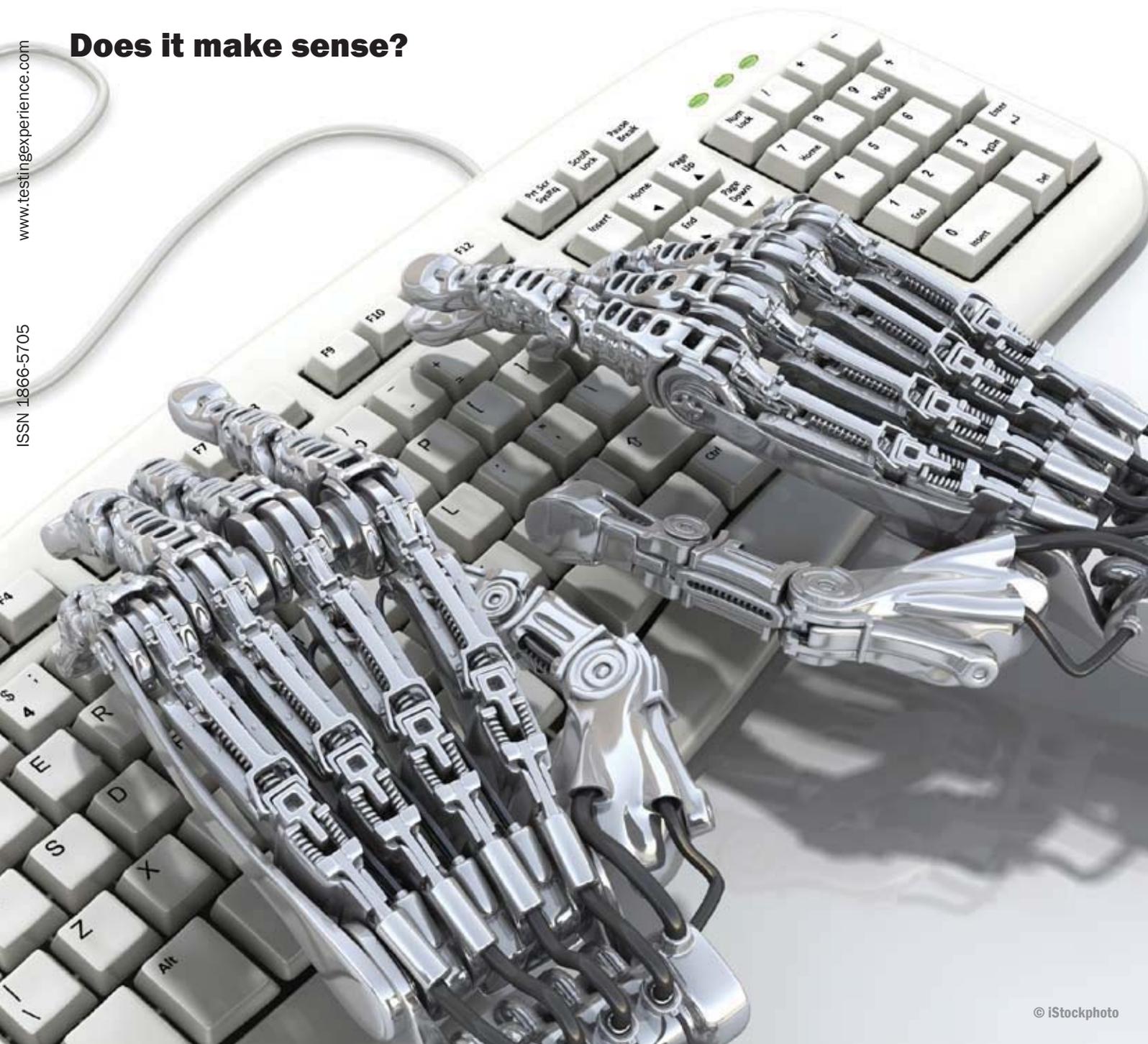


# te testing experience

The Magazine for Professional Testers

## Test Automation -

Does it make sense?





Stephan Goericke



Andreas Golze

## Interview Andreas Golze and Stephan Goericke

Andreas Golze,  
Global Practice Director Hewlett Packard GmbH

Stephan Goericke,  
Director International Software Quality Institute GmbH

**TE: Mr Golze, Hewlett-Packard has decided to invest in quality assurance through personnel qualification. What do you expect to achieve by that?**

Golze: The experience of the last 15 years has shown that we need a predictable quality in consulting services to be truly successful in the market for quality assurance and governance. When I employ software developers nowadays, I won't take someone who has been an exceptionally good hacker at school, but someone who has experienced a sound professional training.

**TE: Mr Golze, you have decided to use the ISTQB-Tester-Standard and also the IREB- Requirements Engineering-Standard. Do you deliberately opt for manufacturer independent standards?**

Golze: HP generally tries to assimilate and actively contribute to industry standards. At the end of the day this guarantees that no manufacturer can define a standard and then simply lays his hands on his employees and declares that they are competent in applying it. Therefore we have an independent controlling organisation which helps us to keep up our quality standards. We invite independent external assessors to check on us, so we can prove that we are doing it right. We have audits in all kinds of different areas. We use QAMP now, so that our staff has quality standards that can be confirmed independently.

**TE: The idea of quality assurance or respectively personnel qualification is not new to Hewlett Packard. HP is one of the initiators of the German Association for Software Quality and Further Education (ASQF), which set up the International Software Quality Institute (iSQI). Is this why you decided to choose iSQI as your strategic partner?**

Golze: On the one hand, iSQI has been there from day one and therefore possesses the required competence. It is not a niche player, but rather a proper certification body that is recognized by the market and which we can mention in connection with our name with a clear conscience. On the other hand, there are many people already working with iSQI, among them other global players like T-Systems or SAP. This means we are well advised to work with this certification provider, who has the competence and above all the capacity and capability of being available for us as certification partner on a global scale.

**TE: Mr Goericke, Hewlett Packard uses QAMP for the certification of its employees. You have developed this standard. What characterizes QAMP?**

Goericke: QAMP stands for Quality Assurance Management Professional and is a modular certification standard which is tailored according to the needs and work environment of employee and employer. On this basis it is possible to gradually gain professional skills on a very high level without having to resort to a costly second degree or lengthy professional trainings. Companies which are desperately seeking skilled personnel can now search for employees with potential. By using specific further education they then introduce them very quickly and very flexibly to precise requirements. Or they can let the present staff grow with new challenges. Mr Golze already mentioned it: There are several global players like Hewlett Packard or SQS [Software Quality Systems AG, editor's note], who have already started their internal further training on quality assurance in accordance to the QAMP scheme. But there are also smaller companies which take their chance to further educate their staff quickly, up-to-date, affordable and in accordance with the work processes, so that they stay fit for future challenges of the market. Furthermore, a lot of employees are very grateful to at last receive a certificate – and thus recognition – not only for their theoretical knowledge, but also for their long-time practical experience and lifelong learning.

**TE: Mr Goericke, you mentioned a modular certificate. What do you mean by that?**

Goericke: The QAMP scheme is based on four modules. Three of those are training modules. The fourth proves practical experience. This sys-

tem makes it possible to start your training at one place and then continue with it in another place at another time. As the relocation of employees for reasons based on company strategy or according to customers' request becomes more and more common in the IT sector, it is exactly this flexibility that many consider the key advantage of the scheme, as it enables them to adjust their further education to their work environment. After the successful completion of each module you receive a certificate.

**TE: Which certificates exactly are you talking about?**

Goericke: The basis for a QAMP applicant is standardized knowledge in the fields of Requirements Engineering and Software-Testing – QAMP modules one and two. This is why we consider it sensible to stick to internationally recognized certificates such as IREB Certified Professional for Requirements Engineering and ISTQB Certified Tester. With these qualifications, basic knowledge will be imparted and the future quality assurance manager will develop the necessary understanding of the entire software development process. Once this knowledge is established, one takes the first step towards specialization. With QAMP this should happen in the third module. Here the applicant should choose an exam on another domain, which does not only do justice to the former or future work environment of the QAMP applicant, but at the same time completes or demonstrates the knowledge he or she has acquired there.

**TE: Please name a few examples!**

Goericke: There is a wide range of opportunities for specialization. Consider for example Software Test-Management, Configuration-, Innovation- or Project-Management. A lot of people also specialize in Secure Software Engineering or Software Architecture. Domain specific certificates for the medical or financial sector are also possible. In the end this third module enables the highest possible adjustment of further education without leaving the framework of a standardized and independent qualification and certification process.

**TE: How does this model differ from other already existing modular certificates?**

Goericke: I think by looking at two factors you can clarify the difference to other certificates: First, there is experience, which is included in QAMP by means of the fourth module. You have to prove two years of practical experience in the field of software quality assurance to receive the QAMP certificate. For the certified person it is becoming more and more important these days to be able to produce a measurable equivalent value, a proof of his or her practical experience. What else can

older employees put in the balance when confronted with younger competitors? The keyword "experience" alone will not do the job; you need an internationally recognized confirmation, a stamp of quality. That's exactly what QAMP is. The second factor next to the inclusion of experience is the fact that lifelong learning is guaranteed.

**TE: But how can you guarantee someone's lifelong learning?**

Goericke: The QAMP certificate is only valid for one calendar year. To extend the validity of the certification one has to prove one's practical experience anew. I think Mr Golze agrees with me that this alone is the right direction to meet the high requirements of the fast moving IT sector.

Golze: I think it is completely reasonable that QAMP requires the proof of practical experience. We don't gain anything by employing great theoreticians who have no understanding of practice. You have to apply what you have learned, this way it will remain available to you for much longer.

**TE: Mr Golze, Mr Goericke, where do you see your business venture QAMP in 3 years time?**

Golze: I believe that if we achieve with QAMP what we have already achieved with ITIL, then QAMP will become the quasi-standard that people in quality assurance, testing and governance will be measured against. I am not saying that QAMP will be the only standard, but every new one will have to prove that it is at least as good. Because QAMP combines the three different areas to a logical basis. The beauty of it is: We will have our staff re-certified every year. This means that we will not have the same effect as with other certificates: once you are certified, you forget all about it for the rest of your life. A QAMP certificate holder continuously looks into the subject, either in his or her active professional life via seminars or any other forms of publications. It is not a theoretical certificate in the sense of "lovely to have learned that at one point". The certificate holders are always on top of things, developing themselves further. I would imagine this is great for the employees, too, for they can thereby increase their market value. And I assume that in three years time we will see in the job advertisements that QAMP certificate holders are sought-after in the areas of quality assurance and quality management.

Goericke: If it came to that, this would be pleasing. It could happen sooner than that. We can see that there is great interest in the QAMP certificate abroad, too, for example in India. I am convinced that further education in the future will follow the basic idea of QAMP – the combination of theory and practice.

