

New futures in focus

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Quality Engineering in Sweden

Striking a balance between innovation and structure

Reflecting on the existing situation of Quality Engineering in Sweden, it is evident that our country has always been known as one place pulsating with creativity in new technologies, particularly Agile and DevOps. This innovative mindset has so long been part of Sweden's IT and Quality Engineering. However, this enthusiasm for new methodologies sometimes leads to the neglect of structured processes and quality engineering, which are fundamental for sustainable growth. In addition, we have been quick to embrace Agile and DevOps, but we've also had moments where we underestimated the importance of testing and quality that seemed secondary to the excitement of implementing new technologies. This has occasionally led to a lack of emphasis on the necessary processes and methods that ensure long-term quality.

The hype and reality of AI in Swedish businesses

For some time now, AI (Artificial Intelligence), data, and cloud solutions have been popular subjects of discussion in Sweden. This has made these technologies integral to our operations, with many companies using generative AI (Gen AI) and AI to transform their work processes. However, the initial hype surrounding AI has started to be replaced by a more realistic understanding of its challenges, especially when it comes to data security and actual implementation. Consequently, there is now a greater awareness of the complexities that are involved in integrating AI into business processes, which makes it easier for companies to grasp what it truly means to use AI effectively.

Data maturity: A tale of two sectors

The Swedish companies exhibit an evident divide between those that are heavily reliant on data and others that have not matured much in this aspect. An example of such highly data-driven industries is telecommunications and finance where statistics are accurately taken and put into use. Therefore, these enterprises have the best opportunity to make maximum use of AI. However, for sectors like manufacturing, things are different as they regularly face challenges related to data management. Many of these companies do not have an elaborate strategy concerning data ownership which makes them use uncoordinated measures that limit their chances of taking full advantage of AI as well as other current technologies.

Sweden's automation ambition vs. reality

Automation is one area in which Sweden has lagged a lot. Although earlier there was an optimistic view towards automation, it has not been that way in reality. The transition to Agile and DevOps meant that fewer people were employed as testers because it was believed that developers could test their codes entirely by themselves. However, this assumption has proved inadequate especially among extremely complicated environments like ERP systems. Therefore, many Swedish companies have been found to have lower levels of automation maturity than expected. The automation journey has been marked by false starts, where initial efforts either failed or were abandoned when key personnel left, thus leading to a slow development process.

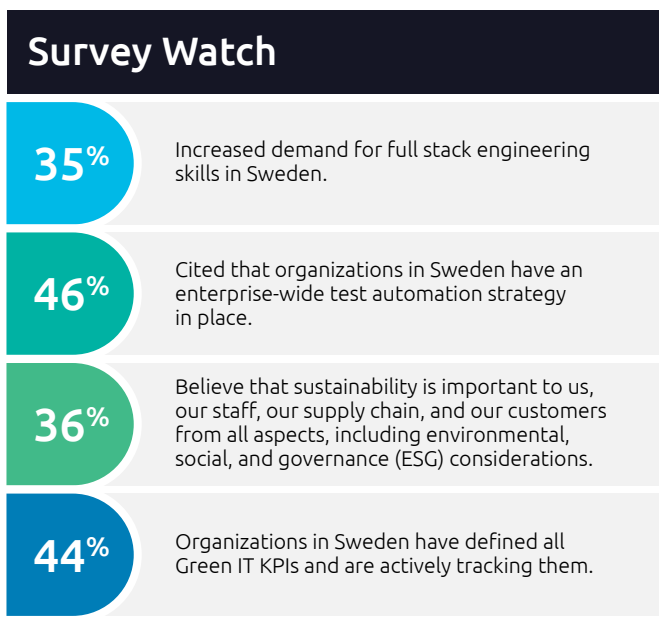
Bridging the gap between Quality Engineering and leadership

Furthermore, proving Quality Engineering worth to the top management continues to pose a major challenge. The message that testing and quality are crucial to business is still not entirely passed to the boardroom after years of trying. There exists a disconnection between strategic objectives of senior management and practical aspects of Quality Engineering. This gap is something we continue to work on, however, bridging this gap requires more effort.

The future of Quality Engineering in Sweden

Looking to the future, I believe that Quality Engineering is on the verge for a revival. The notion that we can do away with testers and quality engineering has been debunked, and there is a growing recognition that these elements are essential to maintaining high standards. Gen AI and other emerging technologies will play a key role in this revival of Quality Engineering. So, as companies continue to explore AI and its applications, there will be even more opportunities to integrate these technologies into quality processes, leading to improvements in overall Quality Engineering effectiveness.

Even though Sweden has made great strides in adopting new technologies, there are still areas where we need to enhance like communication with senior leadership regarding the value of Quality Engineering as well as automation. However, the future seems bright because AI advancements may lead us back to focusing on quality while structured processes could drive long-term success.



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