

■ Commercial Profile: Comtrade Digital Services

## QUEST FOR QUALITY IN THE PLATFORM ECONOMY

**Nikola Šopar and Evelina Emma Robas** from Comtrade Digital Services offer their quality insights and advice

The days of the single, tangible product are gone. Instead, platforms have become the building blocks of business empires. Take the largest real estate company in the world, Airbnb; it doesn't have any real estate. Or the largest store in the world, Alibaba, doesn't have a physical store. We are living in a platform economy; one that is rapidly rising in complexity as the demands of companies and customers become greater.

While creating untold opportunities for enterprises, the platform economy also presents many challenges. Businesses are now constantly in competition with one another to roll out the latest cutting-edge platforms within very short time-frames.

This is happening at a time when customer experience is everything and businesses are using it as their chief selling point. Research from Gartner has found that 89 per cent of marketers expect customer experience to be their primary differentiator this year – and with good reason. Today, if a user encounters just a few seconds of confusion when using a digital service, they will abandon it and go to a competitor. Innovative companies must therefore be sure that every millisecond of interaction that a customer

has with their platform is a rewarding one. And, they can't stop innovating once the application has been brought to market; businesses must be prepared to adapt and change as quickly and as often as customer demands and expectations change.

So, how can businesses manage this constant demand for new, innovative platforms that relentlessly satisfy? Companies need lean, productive and efficient multidisciplinary teams in which collaboration among team members is key. That requires a tailored agile team that is very carefully selected according to the needs of the platform that is being developed.

Essential to that team is quality assurance. Enter-

prises must ensure that it is integrated into every single stage of development – from the moment the idea is conceived and continuously thereafter. Until recently, quality assurance and software testing personnel were often afterthoughts in product development; deployed only at the very end of the process and only if there was enough time to do so. Now, they are vital to the reputations of businesses and must be there to question, and contribute to, every step of the development process.

Essentially, they act as a conscience to the entire team.

The best people to do that aren't always technical people, or people who come from a software development background. As user experience drives the platform economy, quality assurance experts need to be able to understand human behaviour and detect as well as predict problems based on that understanding. In an economy where every user's opinion counts, we are witnessing

a major shift in the quality assurance role.

### **Quest for Quality conference comes to Dublin**

At Comtrade Digital Services, we understand the need to achieve outstanding quality amid the frenzy of the platform economy. To help businesses, managers and IT professionals overcome the challenges this presents, we are bringing our Quest for

Quality conference to Dublin for the first time on October 4 and 5 2017 at The Marker Hotel, Dublin. Hosting a range of speakers, roundtables, workshops and networking opportunities, the event is a unique opportunity to learn about the new era of quality assurance and discuss best approaches.



**Evelina Emma Robas, Head of Organizational Board, Quest for Quality Conference, Comtrade Digital Services and Nikola Šopar, Director of QA Services, Comtrade Digital Services**

**We are currently on the lookout for speakers to take part in our conference. If you believe you have a strong story to tell our audience, or if you would like to pre-register for tickets, visit [questforquality.eu](http://questforquality.eu).**