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Crowdtesting with testCloud – Managing the Challenges of a Crowdsourcing Intermediary

Case study

Reference no. 313-212-8

Abstract:

Software testing has become highly expensive in terms of time, money and other resources. Further, the classical in-house testing is restricted to the knowledge of a small set of solvers and thus is limited in terms of quality and efficiency. Recognizing this, the German start-up company, testCloud, implemented a crowdsourcing business model offering software companies the possibility to outsource their testing activities to a certain crowd. With this so-called 'crowdtesting,' testCloud facilitates companies in accessing a great number of cost-effective resources and using the collective intelligence of crowds. However, as an intermediary in a crowdsourcing business model, testCloud faces challenges from various directions: In its current form, testCloud's testing offerings are too narrow as customers demand for testing services not solely around internet-based software but also for other kinds of software. On the other side, new mechanisms are necessary to keep the motivation of the continuously growing crowd high. The management of testCloud has decided to alter various aspects of their settlement process in order to be able to address the issues that have arisen. By illustrating how testCloud currently manages its business process, this teaching case helps in understanding and analyzing the challenges of an intermediary in a crowdsourcing business model.

This case was prepared by Shkodran Zogaj, Ulrich Bretschneider and Jan Marco Leimeister. Its objective is to illustrate the challenges that a typical crowdsourcing intermediary faces on different levels. Our information sources included in-depth interviews with the management team of testCloud. The teaching case was developed based on a case study conducted at testCloud in 2012. We would like to thank the testCloud company and especially testCloud's Chief Sales Officer Thomas Grüderich who allowed us to obtain deep insights on the functioning and operating procedures of the crowdsourcing intermediary testCloud.

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