What is a test tool?

A software product that supports one or more test activities, such as planning and control, specification, building initial files and data, test execution and test analysis.

Benefits of using any type of tool?

Long term investments which need maintenance

Diagram

Description automatically generated

When a hotel is ready to use, there is a long term requirement for the provision of services e.g. clearning – from time to time the need for upgrades to infrastructure to keep up with new technology and customer demands, The long term benefit is that this upfront investment and ongoingin maintainance can support and provide subtaintial income return

In addition, there are risks that, over a period of time, the location of the hotel will become less attractive, resulting in lower demand, lower usage and a maintenance cost that is greater than the income received. Therefore, the initial investment is wasted because the ongoing need/requirement did not exist.

The same advantages and disadvantages apply to the use of most types of test tool. However, there are exceptions to this generalisation (and to the same generalisation made in the ISTQB syllabus). Some tools, such as comparators, can be used virtually straight out of the box. A comparator can check whether one large test file is the same as another. If it is different, it can identify and report on the differences. This is very difficult and time-consuming to do manually. In addition, defect management tools are fairly intuitive and easy for both experienced and novice testers to use. They are also likely to provide a ‘quick win’.

Other tools can be built by developers in-house as the need arises. For instance, test harnesses, test oracles or test data preparation tools may be relatively easy to produce for developers with a good understanding of the tool requirements and the systems and databases in the test environment

**Types of tool**

There are several ways in which test tools can be classified. They can be classified according to:

* their purpose;
* the test process and the Software Development Life Cycle with which they are primarily associated;
* the type of testing that they support;
* the source of tool (shareware, open source, free or commercial);
* the technology used;
* who uses them.

1. Why is an understanding of the test organisation’s maturity essential before introducing a test tool?
2. What is the purpose of defining requirements for the tool?
3. Why is it important to evaluate the tool vendor as well as the tool itself?
4. What is meant by a proof of concept?
5. What is the purpose of a pilot project?
6. When is it appropriate to combine a proof of concept and pilot project?
7. Name three factors in the successful implementation of tools.