



**Promoting Software Testing in Your  
Organization**

**Testing Circus** Regular Feature

**- Rob van Steenbergen**

# How to promote Testing in Your Organization



**Test Promotional Tip 12: Publish in the organization's magazine about testing.**

*I had written a list of tips for promoting software testing. One of those was: "Publish in the organization's magazine about software testing."*

*Testing (or any other subject) is generally taken more seriously when an article appears in print in a magazine. If it is printed, the article has more value for people in common. So publishing articles about testing in your organization's magazine is a good way to promote test awareness.*

*I've used the formulas mentioned below myself, and so far with success. So let's talk about some communication and marketing magic.*

*There are two formulas that almost sound like magic spells: NIDIA and AIDA*

*NIDIA: News, Importance, Deviation, Interest, Authority*

*AIDA: Attention, Interest, Desire and Action*

## **NIDIA**

*If you want to write an article and want to get it published, the chance of getting it published will not always be a 100%. You can increase your chances for publishing by setting up your article as real news. The NIDIA formula is used by journalists to determine: "What is news".*

**News:** *The article you write is relevant and happening at this moment. Or it has just happened or is about to happen in the near future.*

*Examples: You tested something with great results, or a test guru has visited your country and you've talked*

*to him, been to his training or watched his presentation. Near future: Maybe you'll be introducing usability testing or release a new product that you've been testing with success.*

**Importance:** *Something is news to many people when there is something at stake.*

*Examples: A lot of bugs are in the product that is released by you or another company, a competitive company has released a comparable product (is it better?)*

**Deviation:** *Unusual news standing out of the "way things go normally"*

*Examples: Someone has won a prize with testing, or strange things happened when you were testing.*

**Interest:** *A development or event which the readers themselves are affected by.*

*Examples: Testing this way, will change the way we work in the company, not only for IT, but for all other departments. Do a calculation of costs of defects that could have been found in testing, instead of production. Time to market is improved by testing early in the process. Most people will always care for money and time wasted or saved.*

**Authority:** *Information that comes from a major source gets lots of people attention. This could be a person or an organization.*

*Examples: The test guru I mentioned before, you interviewed him. Or the news comes from a high level*

manager or the government or another well known company.

Does your topic / article relate to the points above (or at least one)? This will increase your chances to get your article published.

### **AIDA**

For the structure of your article and the purpose of "promoting the testing profession" you will have to think about how the structure of your article should be. A way to do it is write it as an "advertisement". The AIDA model is a marketing model, which incorporates four important steps in an advertisement (and thus usable for any article) to be covered. See the four steps as four parts of your article.

### **Attention**

First, you need the attention of the reader to pull him or her in your article. This can be a catchy headline, or a special font or color. Check the magazine in which you want your article published. If the magazine has a lot of blue color in it, take a look if you can color the headline in another color (or the complete first paragraph). Find some positive colors and fonts. No unreadable font on a black surface, that's depressing (at least here in Europe, in other countries and cultures color has different meaning). Make your opening sentences something special that attracts attention. It should make the reader wanting to continue reading.

### **Interest**

This would be the second part / paragraph of your article. Try to transform the attention of the reader into genuine interest. Here you can try to reach the emotions of the reader. Write a paragraph with very positive information about testing. Promise a saving on the cost, speed of going to production or even bug-free products. This is like the "Interest" from the NIDIA magic spell. Be careful not to promise too much, you still want to have some credibility in your career at your company.

### **Desire**

Now you can go deeper into the subject and for example list the benefits of testing compared to not testing at all,

or the pros and cons of automated testing, model based testing, exploratory testing, et cetera. The reader should really want to have the product (or at least get very interested in your work) after reading this paragraph. Don't leave the details, in the interest part you should stay away from details, but more detailed information can be written in this part of your article. Beware of too much detail if that is not the style of the magazine. Think about the people who are reading the magazine. What persons are they? What is their level of knowledge about IT?

### **Action**

In the last part of your article you can try to raise questions in the reader. Provide more information about your topic and give the reader the sense he or she can do something with this information. If you were selling a product, your intention in this paragraph would be that the reader would go to the shop and buy your product. Maybe you want the interested reader to contact you. And then indicate that you are always available for questions on your telephone number and email address. Be open to questions and let that be shining through in this part of the article.

### **Article ready? Think, read, modify and review!**

Often we write something beautiful and then think it is ready. We have sent the article to the publisher and.... We forgot something... You reread the article later and see mistakes you're not so happy about... That is learning to write from pure experience (thus making mistakes). I have the following tips that will maybe help you a bit. These are personal ways of writing for me, so maybe it will work for you or not, but you could try these:

- First think about what you want to write and write the article only when you have a good detailed idea in your head. Don't just start writing without an idea.
- When you have written your article, let it rest for a few days. Sleep on it. In the meantime, think about your text. After a few days, read it again and write your new ideas down while reading.

- *After reading the article on the screen, print it. Often you will find more errors when you read it on paper.*
- *When rereading your article, make long sentences shorter; make two sentences if a sentence feels too long when reading.*
- *Who are the readers (the target of the magazine)? Adjust the language to the target, use professional idiom very limited if it is for a general public. Explain something like “performance testing” instead of assuming everybody knows what that means.*
- *Let a few colleagues or friends read it and let them comment on your article. In this way you always will get some good feedback and even spelling and grammar mistakes are found this way.*

*Good luck with your article and let me know if you could use these tips. When you got other tips for writing, please let me know too.*

*In the next issue – Rob will write more on how to promote testing in an organization. Keep reading Testing Circus.  
- Editor*



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## *Programmer produces code he believes is bug-free*

- 1. Programmer produces code he believes is bug-free.*
- 2. Product is tested. 20 bugs are found.*
- 3. Programmer fixes 10 of the bugs and explains to the testing department that the other 10 aren't really bugs.*
- 4. Testing department finds that five of the fixes didn't work and discovers 15 new bugs.*
- 5. Repeat three times steps 3 and 4.*
- 6. Due to marketing pressure and an extremely premature product announcement based on overly-optimistic programming schedule, the product is released.*
- 7. Users find 137 new bugs.*
- 8. Original programmer, having cashed his royalty check, is nowhere to be found.*
- 9. Newly-assembled programming team fixes almost all of the 137 bugs, but introduces 456 new ones.*
- 10. Original programmer sends underpaid testing department a postcard from Fiji. Entire testing department quits.*
- 11. Company is bought in a hostile takeover by competitor using profits from their latest release, which had 783 bugs.*
- 12. New CEO is brought in by board of directors. He hires a programmer to redo program from scratch.*
- 13. Programmer produces code he believes is bug-free....*

