

### Title of Paper

## A Picture is Worth a Thousand Tests

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### Presenter/Authors

Matt Archer / Ivar Jacobson Consulting (UK)

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### Instructional Skill Level

Introductory     Intermediate     Advanced

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### To whom is the presentation addressed?

Test Practitioners and Engineers

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### Keywords

- Agile Software Testing
  - Tests Expressed as Visual Images
  - Reduced Preparation Costs
  - Reduced Maintenance Costs
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### Abstract

People have been using visual images to effectively exchange ideas for thousands of years, often opting for a single picture instead of several paragraphs of written text. From the ancient Egyptians and their enchanting hieroglyphics to modern day astrologers and their charts of the solar system, images have been widely used to preserve and communicate information in almost every area of life – apart from manual software testing.

When it comes to manual software testing, almost every test is captured as a series of written steps. At a glance, one test looks much like another and tests are routinely read from beginning to end to understand their purpose. What's alarming is when two tests from the same area of an application are studied in detail, similarities are often found at a deeper level, with duplicate steps and instructions being commonplace. In summary, tests preserved and communicated using tables of written text are often time consuming to create, execute and maintain. Considering these factors, it's not surprising that many of the brilliant test ideas conceived by testers never find their way into the project's official testware.

This presentation demonstrates how using visual images can allow a tester to provide meaningful feedback faster – a key measure in today's agile environment. Based on examples, the first part of the presentation discusses the advantages of using images to preserve and communicate tests, including how they can support a more agile way of working based upon reduced preparation and maintenance costs. The second part of the presentation discusses the practical challenges that a team must overcome when using such an approach and the changes in mentality a team must make in order to deliver the desired benefit of meaningful feedback faster.

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### Biography

Matt is a Test Strategist for Ivar Jacobson International and a regular public speaker at software engineering events. He has taken breaks from testing to work as a project manager, analyst and developer, but his true passion will always be finding bugs. He has been involved in all aspects of testing, from creating automated test suites to running process improvement initiatives. Matt sits on the committee for the British Computer Society (BCS) Special Interest Group in Software Testing (SIG-iST) and is Editor of their magazine, "The Tester".

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### Contact information of presenter

18 Soho Square  
London  
W1D 3QL  
United Kingdom

[marcher@ivarjacobson.com](mailto:marcher@ivarjacobson.com)

Tel: +44 (0)20 7025 8070  
Mob: +44 (0)78 9140 4585  
Fax: +44 (0)20 7025 8100

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