Forget silver bullets and be context-driven

Presented by Martin Gijsen

- Independent test automation architect

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Silver bullet

Something that very quickly and easily solves a serious problem

- Merriam-Webster dictionary

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´Silver bullets´ are only silver plated

This tool supports all your interfaces!

Our method always works!

Anyone can use this tool!

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The PuPPET factors

- Take the context into account:
  - People
  - Processes
  - Policies
  - Environment
  - Technologies
  - And … continuity

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Example 1

- Robot Framework and Python:
  - Non-technical testers use dollar signs and assignments
  - Edit the test as text instead of using RIDE
  - Busy testers have to write the 'user keywords'
  - Code in Python against company policy
  - Ignoring people, policy and technology gives poor results

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Example 2

- Specification by Example in FitNesse:
  - Data warehouse: data in, data out
  - Testers and analysts would write and review test cases
  - FitNesse was easy to use and test logs were clear
  - Automation (SSH, JDBC) was completely separate
  - Good attention to people and process
  - Testers and analysts were productive and happy

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Example 3

- Runaway Scrum teams:
  - All 30+ teams were free to select a test automation tool
  - The tools did not integrate to test a chain of systems
  - Few teams used stubs / mocks for system testing
  - No automation coding standard, low code reuse, …
  - Ignoring process, environment, continuity
  - Tool orchestration enabled testing long chains of systems

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Example 4

- Embedded system with many interfaces:
  - Testers selected FitNesse for writing test cases
  - Used one of two preferred languages for automation
  - Used a COTS tool but using its COM API (orchestration)
  - Uses many interfaces from the same test case
  - Respected people, policy and technologies
  - Still in use and also used for other purposes

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Conclusion

- The tool is not the solution, it is people

- Expect 'silver bullets' to be silver plated at best

- Consider all PuPPET factors for lasting success

Thank you

Questions?

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