

Severity – Priority Poll

IGDA QA SIG

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A. Preface

Bug reports usually contain information about the business impact or the technical difficulty of the bug. This information can be provided in different ways, most used being Severity and Priority.

Severity of a bug is technical in nature and it is always constant. Can be said to be how bad a defect is while Priority is usually more of a business decision and depends on the business objective of the application and how its owners see the bug.

This poll was done using IGDA QA SIG mailing list. List readers were asked to participate in the poll and share their views on the matter. There were 10 participants and many of which not only answered the poll but also pointed out interesting views about using Test management tools.

B. Terminology

Severity

“The degree of impact that a defect has on the development or operation of a component or system.” [After IEEE 610][ISTQB Syllabus]

Priority

“The level of (business) importance assigned to an item, e.g. defect.” [ISTQB Syllabus]

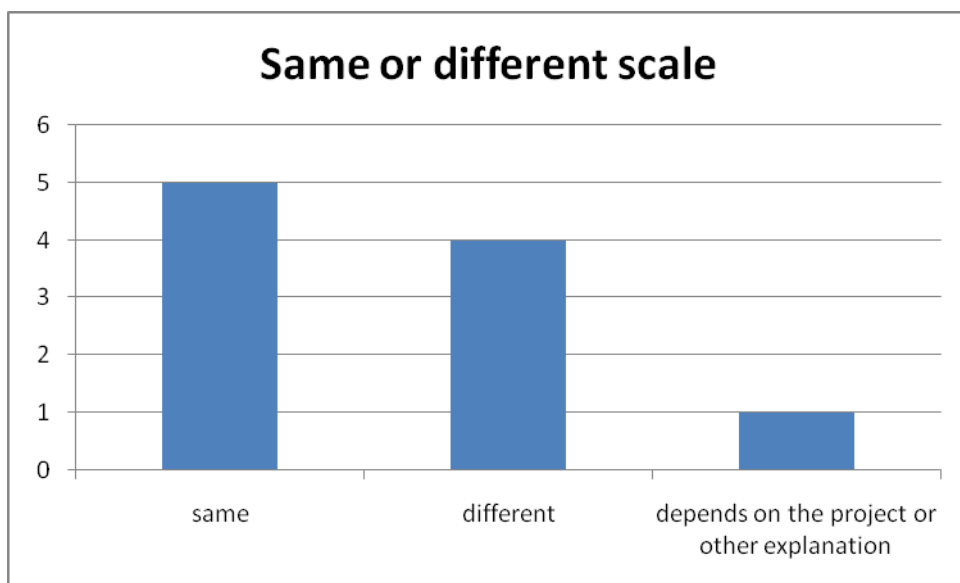
Test management tool

“A tool that provides support to the test management and control part of a test process. It often has several capabilities, such as testware management, scheduling of tests, the logging of results, progress tracking, incident management and test reporting.” [ISTQB Syllabus]

C. Poll

1. Which do you use as a bug tracking scale?

- a) Severity
- b) Priority
- c) Severity and Priority
- d) Other?

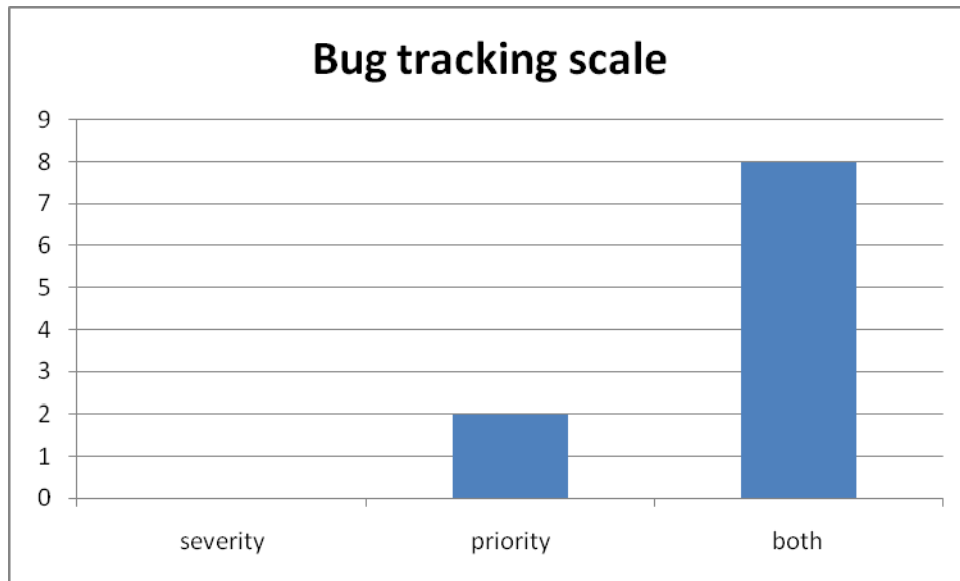


2. Do you find it beneficial for the dev and qa teams to use same scale?

a) Same scale for different teams is mandatory. Have you noticed any benefits with this style?

b) Our different teams have different scales. Have you noticed any benefits with this style?

c) Other comments?



D. Other interesting comments

“I have found through experimentation that different "stakeholders" will provide different gradings of sev and priority. Testers seem to assign a higher severity than developers, in general. Getting other roles in the organization involved can also provide different results. I even kept a composite severity rating by averaging the scores of people with different perspectives. In one non-gaming project I was on we kept logging problems against the help screens. These issues got low severity and priority, and therefore seldom got fixed. Until...an initiative to survey key customers over the phone revealed that the customers complained big time about the crappy help screens. This caused management to initiate a joint effort between developers and testers to review and overhaul all of the help screens in the product.” - Charles S. -

“Priority is also a level from one to four with these definitions for each level: 1 = blocking, fix now, not possible to punt 2 = fix within next sprint 3 = fix sometime before ship 4 = suggestion.” - Dan T. -

“By making it clear that testers aren't expected to assess the full range of factors affecting the decision to fix a bug, having two scales also helps to counter the unhelpful myth of the heroic tester that handcuffs herself to the release candidate and refuses to permit a defective product to be foisted on the public by apathetic developers with no regard for the customer.” - Will J. -