

looking beyond horizons..

From the CEO

At Maveric, it is a habit to ask, “After this, what?”

Just after the dotcom bust, we were asking ourselves the same question. Maveric’s core team held the view that the party was over and the single point of focus is going to be “return on IT investments.”

We concluded that downstream quality efforts, namely, testing, would get immediate attention and it would take a while for upstream quality efforts, namely, requirements and design assurance, to gain priority.

We held the conviction that a domain and product competency based approach was a strategic differentiator for a third party testing firm. We started with narrowing down our industry exposure. Keeping competency as a touchstone, we arrived at banking, financial services and insurance.

Subsequent to choosing banking industry as a focus, we went on to:

- Detail the solution landscape in this domain (Fig 1)
- Identify the top three products in each of the selected sub-domains
- Induct domain and product specialists into the Maveric team
- Structure the test delivery team with domain, product, testing and technical writing competence
- Develop functional frameworks and test condition and data libraries for each of the sub-verticals

Yes, it took three years to put all the pieces into place. The effort was so intense that we, at times, wondered why convictions cost so much! Came the fourth year, and we started seeing encouraging results and the assurance that we were on the right path.



‘Domain and product competencies differentiate a third party tester.’



Proof of the pudding...

Our client satisfaction index for 2004 was 4.6 on 5. The impact is much higher in the User Acceptance Testing (UAT) context, where the average client satisfaction index is 4.75. In the recent client feedback sessions, this is what our clients had to say:

“We are more confident of the Maveric teams as they demonstrate domain and product knowledge and competence.”

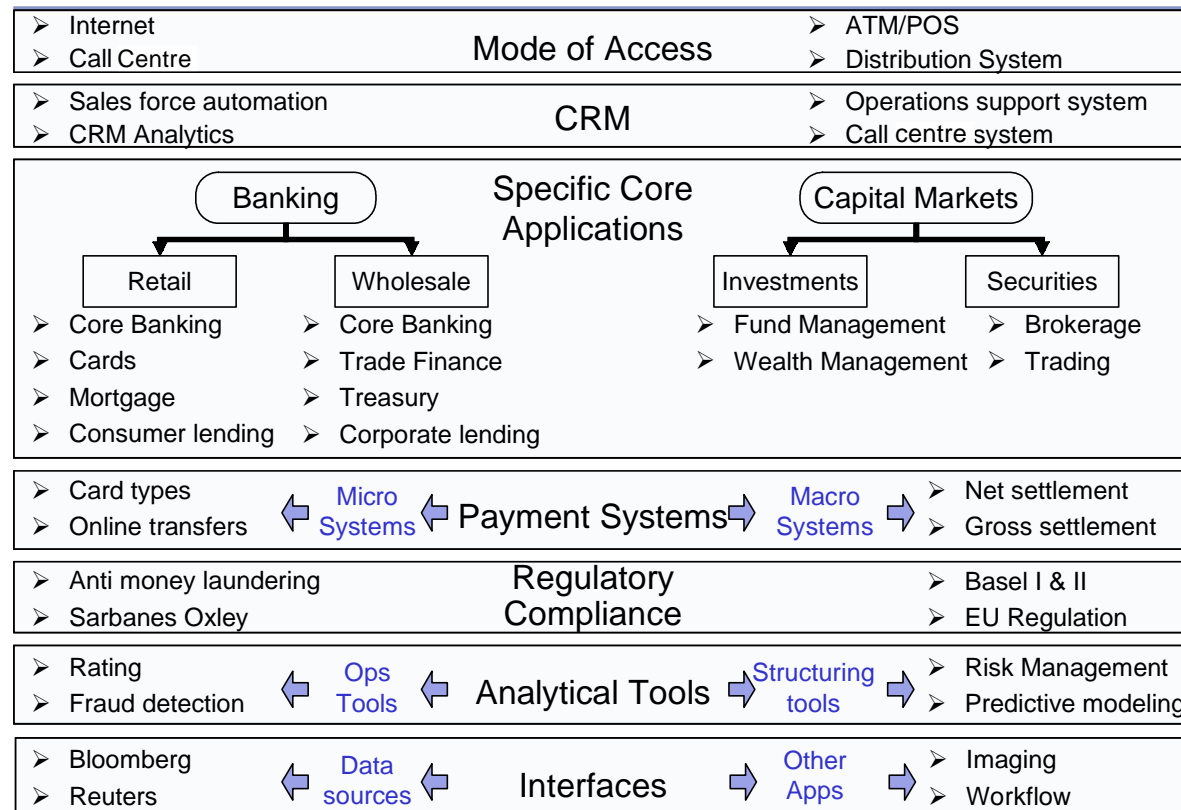
“The accuracy in project scoping and estimation has increased. Even in cases where baseline documentation is not comprehensive, your team gets going aided by your functional frameworks.”

“Your team’s low dependency on us for application knowledge gathering is a big advantage to us.”

“The quality and productivity is higher with regard to development of test scenarios, conditions and data.”

The single factor that brings energy to our 200-member team is Client Satisfaction.

Figure 1: The solution landscape



“Your team’s understanding of functional dependencies has improved the accuracy and productivity of regression test cycles.”

The single factor that brings energy to our 200-member team is Client Satisfaction. Needless to say, we are really charged.

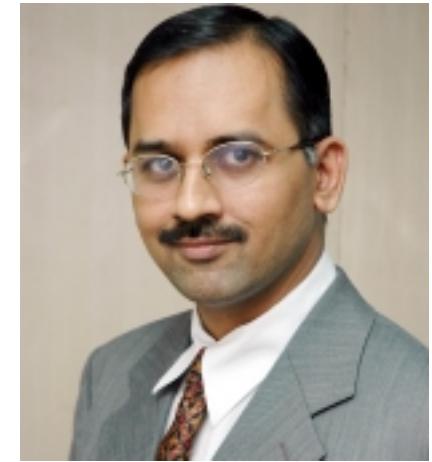
As always, we are asking ourselves the question “After this, what...”

Ranga



Good Times for Independent Enquiry

*More mature technology sourcing processes and economic revival over the last few years have brought Independent Verification and Validation (IV&V) into the mainstream, in India and in the UK, feels **P. Venkatesh**, one of the Founding Directors of Maveric Systems.*



In recent months, we have witnessed two welcome trends among our clients.

1. Global banking clients who have made considerable investments in technology are focusing on getting more value out of their existing investments before making any new investments.
2. Institutions implementing large-scale technology initiatives are more sensitive to the value of independent enquiry and are engaging independent verification and validation firms fairly early in the technology sourcing process.

We are already seeing the beginning of a more mature, productive and collaborative endeavour among the end-users of technology, systems integrators and independent verification and validation (IV&V) providers.

Over the last few years, we have been seeing a marked transition in the expectations of our clients. Our scope

in recent testing engagements have expanded to include reviewing the technology management processes at the client end, including those related to

- Engagement management with vendors
- Reviewing the quality gateway standards and administration right from business requirements definition to user acceptance specification and adherence
- Reviewing the quality process of the systems integrator, including testing process and coverage, and establishing the base criteria and standards for the vendors who can do the verification and validation exercise.

In the UK, we have been experiencing significant traction in the investment banking domain for IV&V services.

There is a more collaborative endeavour among the end-users of technology....



The investment banking business, especially the fixed income securities market, has been witnessing flat and, at times, diminishing returns over the last few years. The institutions that did not cave in to the pressure and have bounced back from this with renewed vigour are those that have, with foresight, automated their processes.

Some of the emerging trends are:

- Common platform across markets, products, clients and channels
- Integration of multiple platforms through custom-built bridges
- Straight-through processing across pricing, request handling, order management, execution and settlement; building online components to bring multiple parties on to a common platform and regulate the message flow through defined business rules
- Automating various reconciliation systems, both internal and external, are the principles that have driven these investments.

In India, the rapid evolution of IV&V services is due to the major public sector banks, which are on an overdrive with regard to overhauling their limited technology investments. They are exhibiting a mature and cautious outlook in technology absorption.

By involving an independent third party for the verification and validation exercise at an early stage and making the scope comprehensive to include verification and validation, training of staff, post-production support and helpdesk handling, they are ensuring that technology issues in production are minimised. The scope spans business requirement verification to validation of the application from functional, user and performance perspectives. The vendor's initial engagement covers the primary period of the implementation that may run anywhere between 18 and 24 months from commencement so that successive releases can be handled in a shorter term.

Testing is done both with test data as well as the branches' initial production data, so that any unidentified differences between test and production environment are effectively handled. In line with the focus to quicken the initial roll out, manual testing is opted for initially, and, after two releases, automation shortens the time-to-production for other releases.

Usability and Performance testing are scheduled around the successful roll out of two releases so that enough baseline data is gathered for a more productive test, and also to meet the next 12 to 15 month's roll-out schedule.

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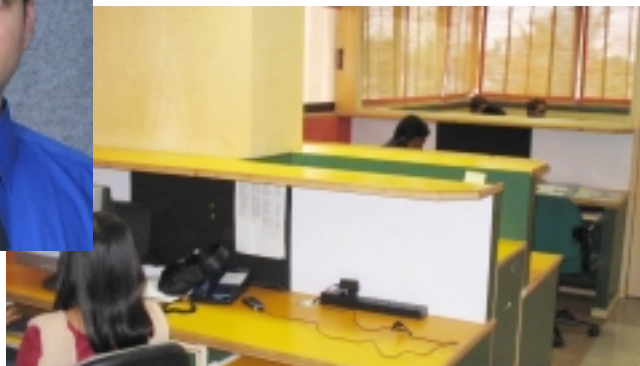
What's on...

Bangalore Office

In Bangalore, we shifted from our existing premises to a new office closer to our clients. The new office was inaugurated on the 21st of February. The current Bangalore team of 30, along with a large team from Chennai, turned up at the new office for a brief inauguration followed by a team breakfast. The last few weeks have seen an aggressive recruitment drive



Aravind



for ramping up Bangalore operations. The new office is taking lead in ramping up a test automation team that will meet emerging client requirements over the next quarter.

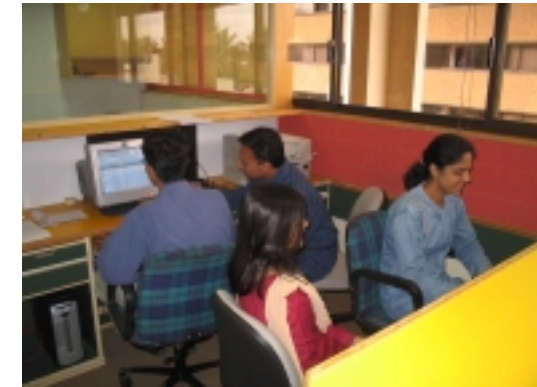
Sajan (Account Manager) handles client relationships at Bangalore and Aravind and Jones (both Test Leads) manage delivery operations.



Sajan

The new office is taking lead in ramping up a test automation team

Taking the lead...



Jones



Another feather – another challenge

During the month of March, Maveric was chosen for another prestigious end-to-end testing engagement with Indian Bank, Chennai. Maveric is proud to be associated with Indian Bank – a 98-year-old bank with over 22,000 employees in 1,377 branches. The engagement focuses on User Acceptance Testing (UAT) of the Core Banking Solution being implemented by the bank. The initiative will cover Retail Banking, Trade Finance, Tele-Banking, Internet Banking, Mobile Banking and Credit Analysis. Maveric has deployed a 30-member team that is currently engaged in test planning. Over the next six months, Maveric will be engaged in Functional Testing, Usability Testing, Automation and Data Migration Testing.



PKB



APNarayanan



Rohini

What's on...

Mumbai Office

Though Maveric has had project teams in Mumbai for the last two quarters, it is only now that we have opened our first office in Mumbai. The new office, in a central location barely 10 minutes away from the airport, was occupied on the 4th of April, and a formal inauguration is being planned. Meanwhile, a new batch of testing professionals is joining in the second week of April and the Mumbai team is gearing up for the induction and training of the new batch.

AP Narayanan (Account Manager) handles client relationships at Mumbai and PK Bandhopadhyay (Test Manager) and Rohini (Test Lead) manage delivery operations.

Ramping up...



We have opened our first office in Mumbai.

