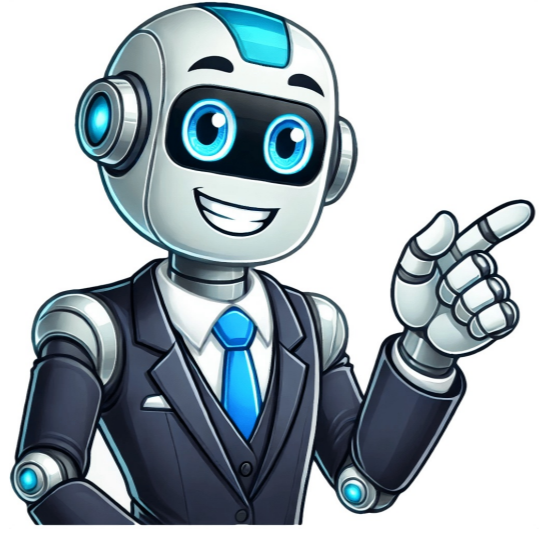


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3rd party testing

In today's market, ensuring product quality and safety is crucial. Third-party testing provides an unbiased evaluation by independent laboratories, verifying that products meet industry standards. This article explores what third-party testing means, its significance, and how it benefits both consumers and manufacturers in maintaining trust and accountability. What Does Third-Party Tested Mean? Third-party testing is a quality control process where an independent, unbiased laboratory tests a product to ensure it meets specific standards. This type of testing is critical for verifying that the product contains what it claims, whether it's a supplement, food item, or safety equipment. By relying on an external organization, manufacturers can provide assurance that their products are free of contaminants, meet regulatory requirements, and are safe for consumers. This unbiased validation boosts consumer confidence, enhances brand reputation, and prevents low-quality or unsafe products from reaching the market. Why Is Third-Party Testing Crucial? Third-party testing is essential because it provides an unbiased verification of a product's safety, quality, and effectiveness. Without independent testing, manufacturers might cut corners, resulting in products that contain contaminants, incorrect ingredient levels, or fail to meet safety standards. This puts consumers at risk and can damage a brand's reputation. For industries like supplements or safety equipment, skipping third-party testing can lead to dangerous outcomes, such as mislabeled ingredients or faulty performance. By ensuring products are thoroughly tested, companies build trust and prevent potentially harmful products from entering the market. Common Types of Third-Party Tests Third-party testing involves a range of assessments to ensure a product's quality, safety, and compliance with industry standards. Here are some of the most common types of tests performed by independent labs: Quality assurance testing: Verifies the integrity of the product to catch inaccuracies before it's sold.Certification testing: Confirms the product meets industry standards and functions as advertised.Pesticide testing: Ensures products are free from harmful pesticide residues.Nutrition and composition analysis: Provides a detailed breakdown of essential nutrients in food products, ensuring compliance with regulatory standards. This analysis supports transparent labeling, helping consumers make informed dietary choices.Veterinary drug residue testing: Ensures that animal products meet safety standards by detecting and controlling traces of veterinary and prohibited drugs. This testing supports producers in monitoring compliance and protecting consumer health through rigorous screening processes. Benefits of Third-Party Testing for Manufacturers and Consumers Source: Freepik Third-party testing brings significant advantages to both manufacturers and consumers: Independent and unbiased results: Since testing is conducted by an impartial body, it eliminates any conflict of interest, ensuring credible, unbiased findings.Improved product quality: External testing often catches defects or inconsistencies missed by in-house checks, leading to higher-quality, more reliable products.Enhanced safety and compliance: Many industries require independent testing to meet legal and safety standards, providing added security for consumers.Boosts customer trust: Certification from a trusted third party instills confidence in consumers, assuring them that the product meets strict quality criteria.Competitive edge: Third-party testing sets a brand apart in a crowded market, showcasing its commitment to delivering superior, well-tested products. How to Verify if a Product is Third-Party Tested To verify if a product is third-party tested, follow these key steps: Check for certification logos: Look for seals from trusted organizations like ConsumerLab.com, NSF, or USP on the product label or packaging. These certifications indicate rigorous testing standards have been met.Visit the manufacturer's website: Reputable companies often mention third-party testing on their websites, specifying which labs performed the tests and what they were testing for.Contact the manufacturer: If third-party testing information isn't clear, you can reach out to the manufacturer directly to inquire about their testing procedures and the lab they used.Use online resources: Websites of organizations like ConsumerLab.com and NSF provide searchable databases of certified products, allowing you to confirm if a product meets their standards. Why Is Relying on In-House Testing Alone Not Enough? In-house testing can introduce bias, as manufacturers may prioritize speed or assume their formulations are flawless. This can lead to rushed or incomplete testing. Third-party testing eliminates this issue by providing an impartial, independent evaluation, ensuring accurate results. External validation is necessary for in-house testing to overlook critical flaws, compromising product quality and safety. Third-party labs bring objectivity and expertise, making their findings more reliable for both manufacturers and consumers. The Value of Third-Party Testing for Your Peace of Mind Third-party testing offers unmatched assurance in product quality, safety, and consistency. By relying on independent labs, manufacturers can eliminate bias and ensure their products meet the highest industry standards, boosting consumer confidence. For consumers, it means trust in the product's integrity and reliability. ATP-Bio understands the importance of rigorous testing in delivering premium supplements. As a trusted contract manufacturer, we uphold the highest quality standards through thorough quality control and assurance processes. From raw material qualification to in-process checks and third-party analysis, every step is meticulously documented for customer or authority auditing. Our daily sanitization, personal hygiene controls, and strict SOPs further enhance product safety. Learn more about how ATP-Bio can support your brand with customized supplement solutions. Related Articles You May Be Interested In: ATP-Bio Also Provides the Services Below: Publisher ATP-BIO Published Nov 05, 2024 We all wrestle with the challenges of security in today's digital marketplace. The security landscape and potential attack surfaces continue to expand, and malware and exploits continue to become more sophisticated. However, one of the most significant security challenges that organizations face is simply deciding which solutions they want to incorporate into their security strategy. Vendors are multiplying at a dizzying pace, and anyone who has even been halfway around the block knows that data sheets and marketing materials aren't nearly as reliable as they could be. Moreover, given time and resource constraints, setting up a testbed and evaluating all potential solutions by hand is rarely a viable option. This is why third-party testing of security products and solutions plays such a critical role in thwarting cyber criminals. What is Third-Party Testing and Why is it Important? The reason is simple: organizations need effective security solutions that meet an evolving set of requirements. The fact that every organization's network demands and business objectives are unique makes the selection process even more complicated. And to make things worse, far too many security vendors don't do a very good job of providing data that enables a fair comparison between competing solutions. Besides often not providing enough information, data sheets can emphasize—and sometimes even inflate—good points, obscure product flaws, and rely on internal test results that don't replicate real-world environments. Third-party testing plays an important role in addressing this issue because it requires the product to be evaluated by an accredited, unbiased third party to ensure product safety and quality assurance. Not only does this maintain product safety and fairness, but it also helps to obtain credibility in the industry. Addressing the Challenges of Comparison Shopping Looking for the right security products can feel worse than comparison shopping at the grocery store. Items next to each other on the shelf may appear similar at a glance, but when you look closely at the labels, you find that one is priced per ounce, while the next is labeled with a price per unit. Another calls itself "healthy," yet contains too many grams of fat. Fortunately, the FDA and equivalent agencies around the world are tasked with protecting the health of citizens, and so they have the authority to ensure that the labels on the food products you buy reflect what's inside the package. And because they use the same measurements, standards, and processes you can make valid comparisons. Unfortunately, there is no such authority for security solutions, which is why third-party testing facilities are so essential. They provide a comparative assessment of solutions using standardized testing criteria and methodologies, allowing organizations to take an educated look at solutions through a common lens that would not otherwise be possible. Everyone Benefits From Third-Party Testing It's not just consumers who benefit from third-party testing. Vendors who regularly participate in these sorts of tests usually learn as much as their potential customers do from the results. Testing methodologies provide critical input to vendors about evolving enterprise requirements, while test results can help confirm they're on the right track (or provide evidence for necessary course corrections) in terms of corporate expectations and comparisons to other products on the market. Independent testing can even help manufacturers better understand market shifts in the options being made available by competitors to make informed choices about where to focus engineering efforts. With the advent of digital transformation, for example, the networks that security tools were designed to protect are undergoing profound and often radical change. They are broader, more complex, and subject to a more sophisticated threat landscape than ever before. Effective testing methodologies often reflect these new requirements, meaning that yesterday's winners who sit on their laurels can quickly become less relevant as test results reflect new requirements. Staying Ahead of Evolving Security Requirements To be effective, independent testing must be based on open methodologies (refined enterprise requirements), impartially applied across available products, and then quantifiably reported. This means that organizations that rely on testing results to evaluate products need to do more than merely look at the results. They have to have confidence in the impartiality of the testing methodologies and ensure that the testing itself reflects the evolving challenges today's network requires. Here are a few examples that illustrate the new demands of network environments: Organizations now expect next-generation firewall (NGFW) solutions to be able to provide effective SSL inspection, and that functionality needs to be integrated into any firewall test results on which organizations rely. The same is true for technologies such as integrated sandboxing and SD-WAN, reflecting the changing nature of threats, connectivity, and traffic. Data center security gateways not only need to continue delivering high performance, but also provide advanced security functions such as segmentation, deeper levels of inspection, and seamless integration with cloud-based data and workflow resources. Endpoint security must now provide advanced exploit prevention and utilize machine learning to more effectively address today's more sophisticated threats. Breach prevention must combine the ability to not only detect known and unknown threats but also automatically respond to detected cyber events to stay ahead of fast-moving threats. New tests also need to be continuously introduced. Web Application Firewalls (WAFs) are a relatively new area of testing, reflecting the growing need for dedicated protection of the web services portion of the network. Likewise, cloud services, IoT protection, securing OT environments, application integrity, and cross-functionality between traditionally isolated security solutions will all need their own, or to be added to existing testing processes to better reflect the rapid changes taking place in today's networks. Examining the Challenges of Third-party Testing Of course, not all testing is the same. This is why companies looking at test results must be also aware of some of the challenges. Here are two critical considerations: Not all tests are created equal. When examining test results, you must understand what was tested. Different tests, even conducted by the same lab, look at different things and may have different objectives. Some are very narrowly focused. Some evaluate things like efficacy over performance. Most do not evaluate critical elements such as interoperability, visibility, or collaboration. This is why it is important that the testing organization publishes how their testing is conducted, and that you ensure that their methodologies match your criteria. Not all test results are created equal, either. It is also vitally important to know something about the organization that produced the test results you are reviewing. Many, such as AV-Comparatives, AV-Test, ICSA, NSS Labs, SE Labs, or Virus Bulletin operate with a high degree of integrity. A few other labs that are not members of AMTSSO might not even follow the testing standards and provide a vendor with just about whatever test results they want. Third-party Testing is Not Perfect, But It Is Important For organizations addressing digital transformation, many of the current test methodologies being used by labs and testing centers provide critical insight into emerging requirements, enabling IT teams to evolve their security infrastructure appropriately. They help organizations narrow down potential solution candidates based on things such as superior effectiveness, performance, innovation, and value. They are an excellent place for organizations to start looking for validated solutions to ensure their security meets their evolving customer needs and internal digital business requirements. But also remember that most tests evaluate a product in isolation and that the solution you choose not only needs to be at the top of its game but also function as part of your larger security architecture. In addition to selecting a third-party-validated solution, also be sure to look for things such as interoperability and the ability to share and respond to threat intelligence as part of a coordinated response that's tied to an open security fabric. This will ensure you're leveraging the right approach that unifies all security technologies to improve threat response time and better protect your network Read more about the Fortinet Security Fabric and the Third Generation of Network Security. Visit Fortinet's FortiGate SD-WAN homepage to learn more about this advanced security solution. What you need to know: Third-party testing and certification is a quality control process where an independent organisation reviews a product to see if it meets certain standards. The third-party must be certified themselves and capable of testing products to ISO 17020, the international standard for inspecting bodies. Sometimes third-party testing is necessary to meet the safety or security demands of the law, however, it's often a measure companies take for added benefits like better quality products, improved customer relations, and advantage over competitors. Bradbury Group has invested in third party testing across a range of our products, achieving certifications in security, fire, acoustic and thermal values. When you're looking to invest in a product, there's the possibility that you'll see a logo or read a note in the description that indicates that it has been tested and certified by a third party. For instance, fire safety equipment is often approved by a recognised scheme, while certain security doors or windows need to meet the standards of certain types of attack against them. But what is third-party testing and certification? In this guide, we're going to consider this question, look at who carries it out, and explain whether the process is necessary, as well as what benefits it offers. What is third-party testing and certification? Third-party testing and certification is a quality control process where an independent organisation reviews a product to see if it meets certain standards. The testing is usually focused on the manufacturing phase and how well the finished product performs under certain conditions. Though the vast majority of manufacturers will run their own quality control checks in-house, involving an industry-recognised third-party ensures there's no bias or skewing of results. If a product passes all of the necessary tests, it will be awarded certification, typically in the form of a written assurance or as a graded result depending on performance. Manufacturers will typically opt for third-party testing so that potential clients can make an informed purchasing decision and buy with confidence. The certifier's mark is usually displayed on packaging, included in marketing materials, or found on the product itself. There are a number of things that a third-party can inspect, but the most common check is one made of the finished product to ensure it is up to standard. Other types of check may include a pre-production inspection of raw materials to verify their quality, and a during production inspection that looks at randomly selected units to make sure production is going as intended. Who carries out third-party testing and certification? Third-party testing is carried out by an independent organisation or company that has the capacity to thoroughly examine the manufacturing and performance of a product. They must also comply with ISO 17020, the international standard for bodies that carry out inspection. The ISO confirms that they are impartial and consistent when testing and certifying. Furthermore, any third-party must not be involved in any other activities, such as design, procurement, fabrication, construction, or installation. They can only partake in the inspection and testing process. Is third-party testing and certification necessary? Third-party testing and certification is not always a necessity, but many industries require some products to meet certain standards, particularly when they are critical for safety or security. For instance, a fire door is an essential component in the safety of a building, providing both a barrier to a potential fire and a means of escape. The Fire Safety Order 2005 rules that these doors need to be tested to the standard of either BS 476-22:1987 or BS EN 1634-1:2014, both of which measure the fire resistance of the product. The testing and certification of any fire door needs to be carried out by an independent third-party, and a door must pass before it can be put on the market. A good example can be found here at Bradbury Group, where our fire-rated doors are certified to industry standards by CERTIFIRE, an independent scheme that is recognised by regulatory authorities around the world. To attain this, we had to satisfy their rigorous testing standards. Under the Certifire scheme, our fire doors are certified to prevent the spread of fire for up to 240 minutes (4 hours). There are, however, some types of third-party testing that aren't mandatory and are undertaken on a voluntarily basis by companies. One example of this can be found in eco-certification schemes, such as the Carbon Trust Standard. This certification is not enforced by law, but allows a company to show their green credentials. Like any other third-party inspection, if an organisation meets the requirements of the scheme, they are allowed to market themselves with the certification. What are the benefits of third-party testing and certification? Now that we've looked at the essentials of third-party testing and certification, we can explore some of the benefits that the process can offer. It's completely independent. One of the main benefits of third-party testing is that it's carried out by a completely independent body, rather than by the manufacturer (first-party) or the customer (second-party). As the certifying party has no financial interest in the product, isn't subject to internal pressures, and must also be an expert in the field, their findings are much more balanced and credible, with zero bias. Better and more consistent quality of products. Allowing a third-party to thoroughly inspect your products and the manufacturing process is likely to lead to a better-quality item and more consistency in standards across the board. Though you may be carrying out your own checks in-house, an impartial inspection by an experienced independent party can find defects or other issues that your own team missed. As a result, you can take steps to remedy the flaws before your product gets to market, making sure that your customers are receiving a high-quality item. And, once you know the areas where you can make improvements, you can then apply these measures to future batches and even other lines, improving the overall standard of your product offering. Ensures safety and security standards are met. When your products are relied upon for safety or security, third-party testing and certification plays an important role in making sure they meet the right standards — so much so that independent inspection is enshrined within the law for many critical products. In many cases, any third-party must be regulated in how they carry out testing, so you can be sure that the process will be rigorous and appropriate to meet industry standards. Even if there isn't compulsory third-party certification in your sector, subjecting your product to this process will help to maintain a higher level of safety and reliability for your customers. At Bradbury Group, we take great care to manufacture the best security doors on the market, which means they are tested to the highest industry benchmarks. Our security doors are LPCB certified, the leading loss prevention standard, and we have products that offer LPS 1175 SR2, SR3, and SR4 levels of security. Boosts customer confidence in products and services Another big advantage of undertaking third-party testing is that your customers are much likelier to have confidence in your products and services. Consumers will see that an independent party has inspected your offering and given a seal of approval to show it meets the necessary quality standards. From this they're likely to gain assuredness that they're investing in a premium product. Once you've achieved certification and communicated this in your marketing, you will begin to reap the benefits. This is an important factor for us here at Bradbury Group, as we aspire to be the most trusted steel door manufacturer on the market. Therefore, we take getting our products independently certified very seriously so that our customers can have complete confidence when they invest. Immediate acceptance for new products. Attaining third-party certification can also help to ease a new product into a marketplace. This is because consumers, retailers, and distributors usually recognise the credibility that this type of testing carries, so they're much more receptive and willing to invest in your brand, even though they may not be familiar with your other products. Helps you stand out from other brands. When the market is crowded with offerings from different companies, it can be difficult to set your product apart unless you can offer something that they can't. By making sure that your product has undergone the most thorough examination possible through third-party certification, you can show that you're serious about delivering a quality item and aren't afraid to put it to the test. This is very much the case with products from Bradbury Group, as we're very happy for our products to be tested to the highest standard. This, along with our investment in our manufacturing process and research and development, helps us to stand out as a leader in the industry. Here at Bradbury Group, we have extensive knowledge of meeting the standards required by both the safety and security industries. Many of our steel, certified, and communal doors, as well as our grilles and cages, have third-party accreditation by a selection of respected certification boards. You can take a look at our quality standards and product certifications to find out more about the range of industry standards our high-quality doors are able to meet. If you have any questions about third-party testing and certification, feel free to get in touch with us. When it comes to software development, quality assurance and the process of software testing are as important as the actual code. Yet, the software QA process is largely carried out last, just before the release of the project. Although the QA testing process is often time-consuming and detail-oriented, it plays a key role in making sure that the entire testing effort is successful, helping deliver reliable software and the best products. If planned and executed well, the quality assurance process can assure both the high quality and success of the product along with smooth business operations. One of the smart ways to guarantee a positive outcome from third-party QA testing is to embrace a few best practices while performing test management. In this blog, we are exploring the concept of QA testing in more detail along with best practices to adopt in 3rd party QA testing. Table of Contents: What is QA Testing? Quality Assurance (QA) testing is a systematic process that ensures product and service excellence. A qualified QA team examines the specific requirements to design, develop, and manufacture reliable products to increase company credibility, client confidence, and the ability to be successful in a competitive environment. Put simply, QA testing is an excellent technique used to prevent issues with the product you are offering and to ensure exceptional user experience for your customers. An organization has to ensure that its processes are efficient and effective as per the quality standards defined for software products. Related Read: How QA Services Can Improve Your Business Competitiveness Best Practices in Third-Party QA Testing The only way to achieve a high-quality product is to have an effective QA process in place. Here are a few best practices in 3rd party QA testing that will help you achieve greater success in quality assurance: 1. Build a Robust Product and Third-Party Application Knowledge before Testing There are many times when third-party application issues during testing can be mistaken for actual product issues. This can significantly impact testing and affect your time-to-market. It is, therefore, important that the QA team should develop an extensive knowledge of all domains (APIs, OS, mobile, etc.) before executing test scenarios. 2. Plan the Testing and QA Process in Detail One of the best ways to improve the overall quality of the end product is to well plan, define, and document the software test process. Good documentation is an effective way to build efficient communication within the software team and allows them to maintain the quality and test plans for a project. A few of the most valuable documents that can be shared with clients or stakeholders include: Test plan Supported platforms Release notes Test cases/checklists 3. Focus on Improvement in Quality The key objective of any quality assurance process is to assure all the stakeholders that the processes and activities used during the development of your software are thoroughly designed to maintain the high quality of the end product. The QA testing, therefore, should primarily focus on improving the process of development of software to optimize the quality of end products. 4. Apply Effective Methodologies An effective QA testing methodology can be instrumental in reducing the cost of the overall lifecycle of the software. It ensures that the software is conforming to all the requirements and standards, which are fundamental assumptions in the development of life-critical products. Additionally, it is also important to define the right processes to be used in the development of the product and ensure that those processes are used as per the plan strictly, with no deviations. 5. Prioritize Risk Management with Quality Assurance Unlike the popular notion that QA is synonymous with testing, quality assurance is a much broader term. It involves a whole spectrum of processes, activities, and risk management to assure the quality of your product. Risk management, coupled with a quality check is, in fact, one of the building blocks of adequate quality assurance. 6. Utilize Testing Strategies Based on Requirements To be able to perform different types of tests, such as security, mobile, agile, big data, and analytics, you need to follow different testing approaches that suit the specific kind of test management framework. Simply put, it is important to follow a requirements-based testing approach that can help you in both system/application validation and in calculating the specific testing efforts needed. 7. Test Early and Test Often QA testing aims to incorporate testing at each stage of the project's lifecycle to identify issues as early as possible. Within each testing phase, QA engineers test and retest the product to check the viability of the new features added. This allows them to identify and catch any problems that may have been introduced during this process. Testing early often involves continuous monitoring of the process to make sure that all the agreed-upon standards and procedures are being followed diligently along the development process. 8. Automation It is always a great idea to find new ways to automate specific test cases that are repetitive. This, in no way, means spending a lot of money to automate each and everything. The ideal option is to hire the services of a test automation service provider and install servers capable of handling the automated tests effectively. Also Read: 4 Most Common Mistakes in Automation and How to Avoid Them 9. Practice to get it Right the First Time In any delivery project even with watertight requirements, mistakes are inevitable. Getting it right the first time in software testing essentially means that all such potential errors should be eliminated. The idea here is to determine with some degree of accuracy what you are trying to do in the project and create a solution that reflects what you want at the end and ensure that any kind of deviations are understood and accepted. Bottom Line Irrespective of the size or type of your business, it is necessary to let the products you develop undergo a rigorous quality assurance process as it will help your product stand firm in the face of competition. The best quality assurance testing practices you adopt should inculcate different processes in general and risk management processes in particular. The key focus here should be to improve the overall quality of the software/product with continuous monitoring during and after the software release. Relying on the services of a professional QA testing agency like Hurix can help your business. While performing quality assurance testing, the aim of the QA engineer or tester should be to comply with all the fundamental principles and industry practices along with keeping the end-user's perspective in mind. Get in touch with Hurix to see your business grow.