RICHARD MUIA

Technical Product Champion and Quality Advocate

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SUMMARY

Technical, customer-obsessed professional with 12+ years across QA, support, and service management in fintech and payments — including 8+ years solving problems directly for customers and integration partners without routing them to a specialist. Consistently the first person into a customer's technical issue: tracing it to root cause, resolving it personally where possible, and feeding what was learned back into regression tests and product fixes so the same problem never returns. Comfortable working independently across code, APIs, and CI/CD, and equally comfortable on a call talking a non-technical user through a fix. Thrives in fast-paced, remote-first, high-autonomy teams.

PROBLEM-SOLVING HIGHLIGHTS

- Unblocked a stalled integration: A payment integrator was stuck on a recurring API error despite detailed documentation and close to abandoning the integration. Set up an after-hours call to walk through the flow live and identified the one missed step causing it — resolved without escalating to engineering.
- Reset a strained partner relationship: An overpromised delivery timeline put a partner integration at risk and the partner was frustrated. Restructured delivery into incremental releases so they had visible progress at each step, rebuilding trust and keeping the integration on track.
- Resolved a “not our product” issue rather than passing it on: A customer lost front-end access shortly after onboarding. Stayed on the issue instead of escalating it and traced it to a client-side firewall — resolved directly in one session.

EXPERIENCE

Senior QA Engineer in Test | Cellulant Kenya Limited - 01/2025 – Present

- Own the feedback loop between customers, support, and engineering: take real user-reported issues, diagnose them directly, and turn them into regression tests and shipped product fixes rather than one-off patches.
- Lead strategic quality initiatives across backend services, APIs, mobile applications, and CI/CD pipelines to protect platform stability and the customer experience it depends on.
- Partner directly with engineers to catch issues before they reach customers, integrating testing earlier into the development lifecycle.
- Advocate for best practices in code health, testing, and maintainability in partnership with the Quality Engineering department — the kind of behind-the-scenes work that keeps customers from ever seeing a repeat issue.
- Build and maintain the tooling that makes quality visible to non-technical stakeholders, translating technical signals into terms the business can act on.
- Configure automated tests for reliable, efficient execution in CI/CD environments, optimizing system throughput and scalability.

Achievements:

- Expanded regression coverage by systematically converting user-reported issues into automated and manual test cases, eliminating 20% of recurring production defects within six months.
- Increased automated test coverage across core services by 10% by promoting clean-code and test-pyramid practices.
- Led the design and build of a stakeholder-facing QA dashboard aggregating real-time data from ClickUp and TestRail, significantly reducing weekly reporting effort and improving visibility into quality metrics for non-technical stakeholders.

QA Engineer | AZA Finance - 03/2020 – 09/2024

- Served as first responder on customer-reported issues on a payments and FX platform.
- Acted as the direct technical point of contact for customers and integration partners during support calls, resolving issues in real time and translating the conversation into lasting fixes.
- Built a regression and API validation suite so every release carried proof it wouldn't reintroduce a problem a customer had already reported.
- Produced test documentation — plans, scripts, cases, acceptance criteria — that outlived individual team members and gave the wider team a shared source of truth.
- Used Git for version control and collaborative development across the QA and engineering teams.

Achievements:

- Embedded a proactive QA discipline emphasizing early defect detection, substantially reducing technical debt.
- Implemented modern automation and API testing tools, improving regression coverage and test effectiveness across core systems.
- Lowered production defect escape rate through preventive testing strategies, enabling faster delivery without compromising quality.

Service Management Specialist | Tracom Services Limited - 06/2017 – 02/2020

- Owned client relationships as the first point of contact across the full service lifecycle — investigation, troubleshooting, resolution, and follow-up — for a portfolio of clients and partners.
- Set up and maintained the service desk, managing a four-member team and the defect management system used for issue tracking, assignment, and resolution.
- Delivered user training and wrote customer-specific implementation manuals, supporting adoption after go-live rather than treating onboarding as a one-time handoff.
- Triaged and resolved cross-platform issues involving device failures.

Achievements:

- Set up, configured, and trained teams on service and defect management tools, centralizing issue tracking and doubling cross-team collaboration.
- Improved our MTTR from 3 days to 24hours through structured defect management workflows, leading to better customer feedback and support outcomes.

Software Test / Support Lead | Tracom Services Limited- 12/2013 – 05/2017

- Provided subject-matter expertise in testing procedures and defect resolution; developed training materials for end users as part of knowledge transfer.
- Developed end-to-end test strategy based on software specifications, and communicated testing timelines with stakeholders.
- Performed user acceptance testing and software training, and delivered customer support remotely and via one-to-one field meetings.

Achievements:

- Achieved a 50% drop in customer-reported bugs by establishing mandatory developer-QA pairing sessions
- Improved test-reporting quality using macro-based Excel worksheets, reducing bug-resolution turnaround time by 70% on average.
- Implemented the TestLink management system, achieving 100% traceability of user requirements.

EDUCATION

- BSc, Computer Science — University of the People (in progress, online)
- Diploma, Information Technology — [Kiambu Institute of Science & Technology], Kenya.

SKILLS

- Testing & QA: Automated and manual testing, BDD with Cucumber/Gherkin, test planning and design, defect management.
- Customer-facing: Direct customer troubleshooting, escalation handling, UAT facilitation, end-user training and documentation, stakeholder communication.
- Collaboration: Cross-functional partnership with engineering, product, and support teams; Agile methodologies; data-driven decision-making.
- Mindset: Intellectual curiosity, problem-solving, ownership, attention to detail, reliability.

TECHNOLOGY STACK

- Automation & Performance Testing: Cypress, Playwright, k6, VeloAI.
- API & Backend Testing: RESTful APIs, Postman, Rest Assured, SQL (query-level validation for data integrity and backend testing).
- CI/CD, Observability & Release Pipelines: Jenkins, GitHub Actions, Grafana, Datadog.
- Systems & Scripting: Linux/Unix, Bash, Python, Git/GitHub.
- Web & Product: WordPress (site building, theme customization, WooCommerce); currently building hands-on familiarity with product analytics.
- Collaboration & Support Tooling: Jira, Confluence, TestRail, ClickUp.