



White Paper online testing @home

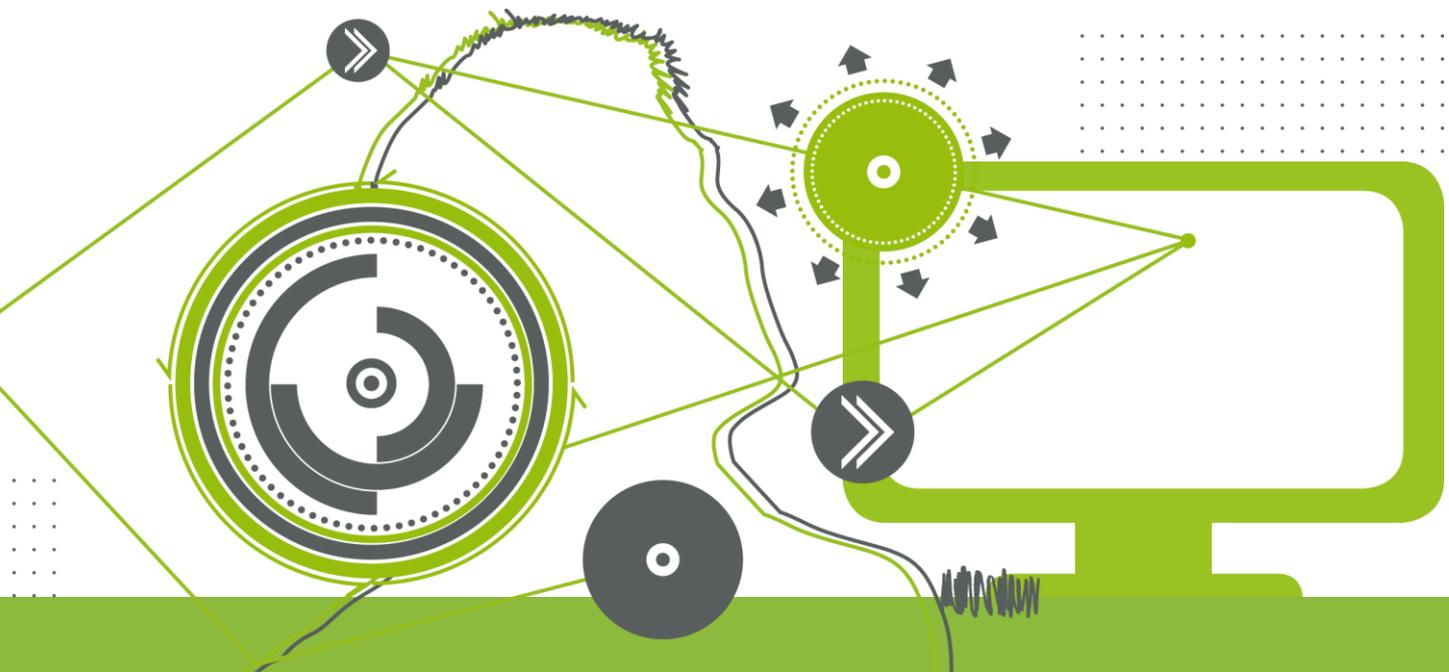
Increased use of online assessment leads to more @home assessment

Authors

*Marco van Aarle, Registered Psychologist NIP / Work & Organisation,
Kenhardt International BV*

Jeroen Visscher, CTO HRorganizer BV

Maarten Hack, CEO HRorganizer BV



In the Netherlands, the use of psychometric testing is more widely spread than in any other country in the world. This was one of the findings of a major international survey conducted by cut-e in which 2,400 organisations were involved. cut-e is the international market leader in the design and implementation of online tests for recruitment, selection and development, handling more than 4 million online assessments every year in over 70 countries and in 40 different languages.

In the Netherlands, cut-e is represented by two companies: Kenhardt which advises organisations on assessment at every stage of the employee life cycle and HRorganizer which has embedded cut-e's psychometric instruments in the online expert system HRorganizer.com



Increase in online assessments @home

There has been an unmistakable rise in the use of assessments - both fully online and in online/offline combinations. Whilst this means lower recruitment costs for employers, it also creates challenges, for example:

- How do we create optimal test administration conditions?
- How can we prevent fraud?

Versions of psychometric assessment currently used in organisations

7% increase in usage of online assessment in the last 2 years.

83% of respondents either use pure online assessment or a mix of online and offline assessment. This is a rise of 7% compared to the last report. Respectively the use of only offline versions has fallen by 7%.

Question asked (Q8.) Which versions of psychometric assessment do you use? (Multiple answers possible, 2013 included N=1178)	2012/13 %	2010/11 %	Change %
Online versions (Internet-based)	44	41	↑ +3
Both offline and online versions	39	35	↑ +4
Offline versions (paper-and-pencil or computer-based)	17	24	↓ -7



Kenhardt and HRorganizer have developed an approach which enables candidates to prepare properly and go through each component to the best of their abilities.



Because there is more and more emphasis on cost reduction there is high demand for total @home solutions.

For starters and midcareer positions online testing @home is used to an increasing extent and the same goes for a combination of offline and online testing for management and senior professional positions.



The best test conditions possible

It's particularly important to create the very best administration conditions when using ability tests because, unlike personality questionnaires, these tests are all about measuring maximum performance. How can we guarantee that someone using an online @home assessment will do the ability test in such way that one's maximum performance is actually measured?

Ability tests used to be administered in a special test room with a supervisor carrying a stopwatch to make sure each candidate only used the time allowed.

At the end of the 1980s the first automated and timed tests using a PC were introduced to the market. It wasn't until the turn of the century that administering accurately timed tests through the Internet became possible. This led to increased administration of tests in the candidates own home environment rather than "at the office", usually to keep costs of the recruitment process as low as possible and the process speedy.



Tolerating the disadvantage of not being able to provide the very best performance happens far too often.

Fortunately some professionals do make the effort and contact candidates by phone to find out whether they were properly rested and focussed during the test and, if necessary, to offer certain components again.

HRorganizer's solution



Each test administration is different; this means that retesting is possible without memory effect. This is achieved by:



1) Item generation; the system composes a question at real time,

2) Item banking; the system chooses a question from a number of versions available in the database.



This means it is not only possible to retest but there is also the possibility of practising with "real" tests.



The ability tests also measure response tendencies like speed and accuracy. In a practice session, participants who work with too much attention to detail are advised to work a little faster and, vice versa, those who work too fast are advised to "try and be more precise".

Establishing and optimising the testing conditions @home is actively promoted. This is done by asking participants about the testing conditions, both before the test and after. The questions asked before the test offer a clear picture of what is ideal and what could be a problem:



preparation (step 1 of 3)

During this assessment program it is required to operate at peak performance. Are you ready?

Are you well rested, focused and ready to begin?

yes no



Is your telephone switched off?

yes no



Did you make sure you will not be disturbed?

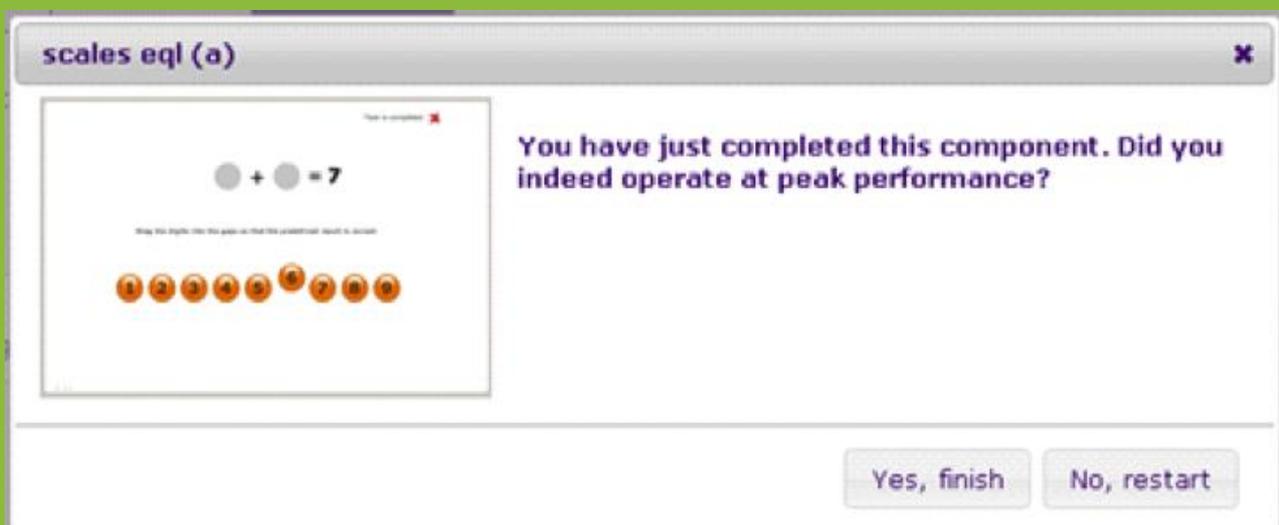
yes no



After each test component, the system asks candidates whether they were able to perform to the best of their abilities and offers them the opportunity of repeating that component.

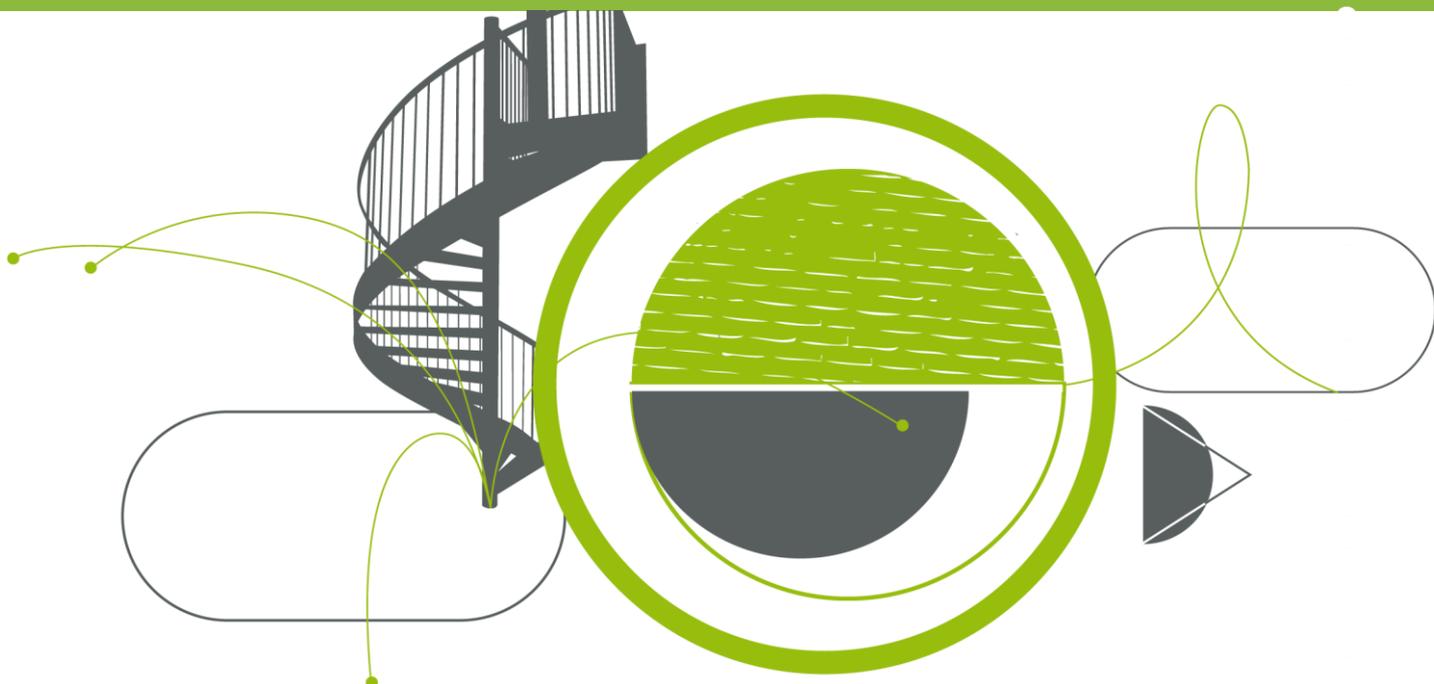
If retaken, the system selects and uses the highest score; this is after all the best measurement of maximum performance!

This approach ensures that a home-tested candidate has always had the chance to prepare and go through each component thoroughly.



It also gives the professional an opportunity to examine the candidate's behaviour: what answers did he or she give to the questions asked in advance? Did the candidate start any of the components again? If so, how often?

This information helps the professional to see at a glance whether the @home administration requires further attention or not and whether the results are reliable enough to continue with the assessment process.



1

Preventing fraud

Because these ability tests can be retaken without a disruptive memory effect, candidate retesting is always possible. Retesting can be used as a verification or validation process as part of a standard procedure or in the case test scores appear unreliable.

2

Making candidates aware of this retesting process acts as a real deterrent against fraud. This effect can be further enhanced by including a digital 'contract of honesty' in the process: participants must declare that they are going to be honest and that they will accept all the consequences of fraud.

3

There are organisations which have been working for years with "smart" systems that can automatically detect fraud but this expertise is not yet used in the assessment industry. Cito, one of the shareholders of HRorganizer, is very interested in this subject and therefore also has a participation in the company Kryterion.

[survey results cut-e](https://www.hrorganizer.com)
www.hrorganizer.com

