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Seek Perfection

Elevate Taps Cloud Lab and Automation to Streamline Mobile Web Testing

For Elevate, a Texas-based online credit solutions company, the mobile web user experience has become increasingly critical to business success.

Traffic to the Elevate website—where borrowers can apply for online credit solutions through two different products, Rise (a state-licensed installment loan) or Elastic (a bank issued line of credit)—has grown year-over-year, with mobile web traffic outpacing desktop web traffic. Currently, 60% of Elevate's traffic comes from a mobile device – 80% from iOS devices and 18% from Samsung (Android) devices.

The recent rise in mobile traffic has increased Elevate's Development and QA teams' focus on ensuring high-quality user experiences across mobile web browsers. Improving Elevate's quality of mobile web experience has required both a change in thinking—from a desktop testing mentality to a new digital reality led by mobile—and a change in technology. After all, a high-quality experience helps eliminate user interface deficiency and lowers the chance of loan application abandonment, thus contributing to the company's opportunity for increased revenue.

The Challenges

Elevate's QA strategy for mobile was a manual process, until 2015. The company utilized an outsourced team of five full-time testers. While this was an adequate short-term solution, outsourcing presented some challenges:

- **Security compliance –** Testers operated outside the company's firewall, raising security concerns and complicating the ability to test early release candidates. In addition, the Development, QA, and Product teams utilized their own devices, adding to the security team's workload.

- **Time constraints -** Manually testing on real devices was time intensive and created a roadblock to increasing test coverage across mobile devices.

- **Tracking quality and collaboration issues –** Testing teams did not have access to the same devices as their counterparts and lacked real-time visibility into team test status. Internal teams relied on emails containing screenshots of test results, with no way to validate and ensure accuracy.

- **Reactive approach –** Mobile OS updates triggered test failures that were reported as defects, causing the company to re-run certification tests late into the release cycle.

The company was also in the process of adopting a DevTest platform supporting both waterfall and agile processes during this timeframe. Elevate chose Microsoft's DevOps platform due to the flexibility in supporting both approaches while offering the ability to support real-time insights throughout the SDLC.

The Solution

Darrell Kennedy, Director of QA at Elevate, evaluated several mobile testing solutions, from local on-premise solutions to cloud-based solutions.

"We decided on Perfecto for three main reasons: security, integration to Microsoft Visual Studio, and the direct support of Selenium for mobile devices," says Kennedy. "Only Perfecto provided the security assurances we require as a regulated financial firm. Perfecto was also the only vendor that integrated with both Visual Studio and Selenium."

Microsoft integration was key in bringing mobile into Elevate's evolving agile processes. The company made great strides automating desktop web testing using Microsoft Test Manager for test execution and Selenium for test authoring. Perfecto's support for Selenium Remote WebDriver allowed Kennedy's team to apply the same desktop scripts to mobile devices.

In addition, real-time reporting improved collaboration not only between development and QA, but across business development, product teams and management. "Reports with video recordings are giving us an invaluable tool to communicate and share findings," said Kennedy. "The reports allowed teams to visualize the flow before and after the test, giving us a better understanding of user experience."

Perfecto has enabled the company to proactively address mobile market changes by verifying websites on browser/OS changes as they happen, or even before release. Release enhancements are now easily added to the existing regression test suite and new mobile devices can be accessed instantly.

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–Darrell Kennedy, Director of QA, Elevate

The Results

"Perfecto has helped us think differently," Kennedy says. "It has enabled us to align delivery of a great desktop web experience while also ensuring a great mobile browser experience, with little automation code change. Mobile is now at the forefront."

In addition to improved customer satisfaction and internal efficiencies, the company has realized operational and cost benefits, including:

- **Test automation –** Sixty percent of test cases on mobile devices became automated and 100% of Rise and Elastic Certification Tests used to verify OS and browser updates were automated within six months. All critical application processing is now fully automated and 80% of functionality testing is automated, with a goal of reaching 100%.

- **Same-day device certification –** With access to Perfecto's private cloud, the company can certify applications work on new devices and OSes within two hours of release.

- **Cost reduction –** The company has experienced labor cost savings by moving from manual to automated testing.

- **Organizational alignment –** Elevate has transitioned to a mobile-led strategy across the organization, focusing on certification (device and browser) and mobile user experience (certifying consistent experience across desktop and mobile)

- **Customer satisfaction –** Customer ratings for Rise and Elastic have improved concurrently with increasing mobile traffic, resulting in more loans being processed in shorter time periods.