NativeScript

UGroupMedia Simplifies App Dev with Cross-Platform Approach Using NativeScript

CASE STUDY

ugroupmedia

INDUSTRY
Entertainment

PRODUCT
NativeScript

SUMMARY
UGroupMedia's Portable North Pole app was developed natively, with three different versions of the codebase supporting the web, iOS and Android platforms. NativeScript helped improve development efficiency by enabling UGroupMedia to share significant parts of code across all three platforms.

> "With NativeScript, I can use my mobile skills to actively call APIs directly; I don't have to go through plug-ins or consume libraries."

Richard Smith, Lead Application Developer for Web and Mobile, UGroupMedia

Challenge

UGroupMedia is the Montreal-based company behind the immensely popular Portable North Pole application, which enables parents to create personalized video messages for their kids from Santa.

While the Portable North Pole app was an instant success, managing the app wasn't as easy as UGroupMedia would have wanted. The company outsourced development for a long time, but due to the nature of outsourcing, the quality of the end product often differed from year to year. This led the company to bring development in house, which introduced a new challenge: UGroupMedia's development team was small but each version of the Portable North Pole app was developed natively. This made maintaining all three versions problematic for a small team.

Solution

To improve development efficiency, UGroupMedia wanted to go the cross-platform route. After linking up with Progress partner nStudio, UGroupMedia ultimately decided to use NativeScript®—the open-source platform for building truly native mobile experiences with Angular, TypeScript and JavaScript.

The Portable North Pole web application was already built on AngularJS, so when Angular launched and expanded the framework to better support mobile, UGroupMedia wanted to move everything toward Angular. NativeScript supported Angular at launch, which enabled UGroupMedia to share code, core libraries and core business logic among all three platforms—iOS, Android and web.

NativeScript being an open-source framework was also a big selling point. There were times at which the UGroupMedia development team needed to go into the core and make changes to fit the specific requirements of Portable North Pole, and the open-source nature of NativeScript provided the greater level of control that UGroupMedia needed.

"With NativeScript, I can use my mobile skills to actively call APIs directly; I don't have to go through plug-ins or consume libraries," Richard Smith, Lead Application Developer for Web and Mobile, UGroupMedia, explained.

Results

UGroupMedia was able to completely rewrite the Portable North Pole application in time for the 2017 holiday season. Moving into 2018, the UGroupMedia was better able to take advantage of NativeScript to further drive development efficiency.

This was particularly evident when UGroupMedia decided to do a last-minute UI change for the 2018 holiday season. NativeScript enabled UGroupMedia to address the tab-view structure once and then apply it to the other versions of the application, completing the UI rework in just 3-4 weeks.

In fact, Smith estimates that approximately 60% of the code between all three apps is currently shared, which greatly improves development speed and efficiency. With more time, he anticipates as much as 80% of code can be shared.

NativeScript also enabled UGroupMedia to maintain high uptime and availability. In the buildup to Christmas, even momentary downtime or application crashes can result in big losses. Despite being accessed by up to 100,000 devices at any given moment, the Portable North Pole application maintained a 99.6% crash-free rate.

> **"People always question how slick you can actually make your UI with cross-platform development. NativeScript makes it easy to efficiently implement a polished, engaging UX that also delivers native performance across platforms."**
>
> Nathan Walker, Co-Founder, nStudio

With two years of experience working with NativeScript, UGroupMedia aims to push the boundaries even further in 2019, with a special emphasis on providing an even better user experience.

"People always question how slick you can actually make your UI with cross-platform development," said Nathan Walker, Co-Founder, nStudio. "NativeScript makes it easy to efficiently implement a polished, engaging UX that also delivers native performance across platforms and we hope to illustrate that in 2019."

About UGroupMedia

UGroupMedia is the proud producer of Portable North Pole, a global family entertainment property that brings the magic of personalized video content alive with our cutting-edge technology.

About nStudio

With a background that encompasses technology, audio/video production and education/consulting, nStudio is passionate about implementing creative solutions for you.

→ Create Truly Native Mobile Apps with NativeScript

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