

A photograph of a young couple in a park. The woman, wearing a black and white striped shirt, is smiling and holding a teal smartphone, taking a selfie. The man, wearing a white button-down shirt, is also smiling and has his arm around her. They are standing on a paved path with trees in the background.

Simplyhealth improves mobile user
experience through more efficient testing with

Kobiton



simplyhealth has been helping people living in the UK with their everyday health needs for more than 140 years. Its roots are in the hospital funds set up during the Victorian era to help working people save for their medical care, and it still follows those values today. With no shareholders, its profits go back into supporting customers and healthcare charitable causes, donating in excess £1 million each year.



Kobiton

Simplyhealth serves nearly 3.5 million customers through cash plans, dental plans, Denplan and pet health plans. Its Independent Living Centres provide daily living and mobility products, including powerchairs, mobility scooters and wheelchairs.

Challenge

In 2013, mobile traffic to the company's website had risen significantly, and the trend was expected to continue. While this was good news, there was a concern that the customer experience might erode as a result, along with the company's ability to provide continuous application delivery on mobile devices.

There were several challenges that needed to be addressed:

- Because testing occurred later in the development cycle, the testing team found issues later, causing costly rework for the development team.
- Dealing with multiple mobile handsets not only affected productivity but also increased expenses because of the time spent searching for, ordering, and waiting for devices to be shipped.
- The development team was using mobile device simulators, which did not accurately represent the behavior of actual devices.
- Apple and Android devices behaved differently in some functional areas, and it was becoming impossible to do cross-platform testing with a single script.
- Testing was becoming a bottleneck, and Simplyhealth's award-winning customer service levels for its mobile customers were in jeopardy.
- The digital marketing team had difficulties verifying customer experience on mobile devices because they couldn't see when devices were available.

The Testing team needed a new solution—one that offered true continuous mobile application delivery. Being part of an agile organisation that is committed to collaboration, the team wanted two things: first, to be able to shift left—that is, to conduct early stage testing; and second, to ensure the solution could be used by all departments.

From this came a list of 34 in-depth requirements, including to:

- allow for the highest levels of security to be maintained, complying with the Data Protection Act (similar to HIPAA regulations in the U.S.)
- provide the ability to utilise the existing automation framework and toolset and hook into Simplyhealth's continuous integration solution for automatic test execution
- offer a way to swap devices in and out quickly and easily



Benefits in Brief

- Adoption across the organisation—by Testing, Development, Branding, User Experience and Support—promotes collaboration, increases efficiencies and enables a flexible work environment for a distributed workforce
- Early identification of issues means they are addressed sooner, saving time and money
- Existing scripts can be utilized thanks to a tool-agnostic mobile testing infrastructure that can be embedded into existing automation framework
- Integration into the CI solution, which also uses Jenkins, HP Quality Center, and HP UFT, means the mobile experience is verified automatically with every release, enabling continuous delivery
- Intermittent iOS issues, which would have taken weeks to resolve/test, are corrected quickly, saving time and increasing productivity
- Virtual device access provides the ability to reserve/free devices with the touch of a button remotely, so different communities can be setup to isolate certain devices for the CI solution



- provide easy accessibility from any location
- have a simple user interface
- maintain high levels of performance
- offer scalability for future growth
- be backed by dependable, knowledgeable support and a solid development roadmap

Based on Gartner's Magic Quadrant, the team developed a short list of four industry-leading products to evaluate.

Solution

After a thorough evaluation, Simplyhealth concluded that Kobiton was the clear leader in the search. Offering a private cloud infrastructure, Kobiton provides comprehensive management of mobile application testing assets. Because implementation would occur behind the corporate firewall, the solution would be secure, easy to install, manage, and maintain, and would allow them to locally manage security, device inventory, and device sharing. They also liked the efficient structure—everything is housed in a mobile cart with a rack that accommodates multiple mobile devices. Finally, with Kobiton, Simplyhealth would have a virtual test lab that is productagnostic, allowing their workforce to easily test devices quickly, from any location, using their own test scripts.

Kobiton configured a proof of concept. The team saw first-hand how this technology truly brings order to the chaos of managing mobile devices and apps in an enterprise test lab, and they were sold.

According to Chris Dale, IT Test and Release Manager for Simplyhealth, the implementation went very smoothly. "We had a good working relationship from the beginning," he said. "Within a few hours, the Kobiton team had the solution out of the crate and up and running, and we were writing automation scripts. We were using the product in production mode within a day."

The Next Generation: deviceBridge

deviceBridge enables mobile app developers to use cloud-based, real mobile devices with tools like Xcode for app checkout and debugging. deviceBridge also expands Kobiton's universe of mobile app test automation to include using cloud-based devices with open source test frameworks—such as Appium and Calabash—bringing all the remote access, management, scheduling, and DevOps benefits of Kobiton to these new uses.

Equipping companies to continue to work with the latest operating systems from Google and Apple, deviceBridge represents a complete re-thinking of how mobile device clouds can improve quality in all phases of mobile app development, testing, and support.

Results

The results were fast and powerful. The testing team's productivity has improved because they were able to use their current automation framework rather than developing new automation tools. This saved nearly a year of development time.

The product has been enthusiastically adopted across departments at Simplyhealth, which is a testament not only to its functionality, but also to the testing team's commitment and agility.

"The solution was exactly what we were looking for and has delivered outstanding results," said Dale. "We have been impressed not only with the technology, but with how Kobiton listened to us, worked to understand our goals, and has continued to be responsive to whatever we need."

The Kobiton team also provided valuable input, such as ideas to help tie the testing automation tools into Simplyhealth's implementation, as well as other assistance to facilitate a smooth transition, from proof of concept to production to full deployment.

When it comes to hard return on investment (ROI), Simplyhealth has made some impressive predictions. When comparing the manual costs of testing its top four devices to the costs of Kobiton (including the development of automated scripts), the projections indicated break-even within two years.

"We are very pleased about what Simplyhealth has been able to accomplish with Kobiton," said Paul O'Callaghan, VP, International Sales at Kobiton. "However, the success of this implementation is not just about a quality product; it is due in large part to an educated, well-prepared customer with a solid plan. The result was a win-win. This is a textbook example of what other organisations can do with this technology, and we are excited about what we can do with Simplyhealth in the future to help them continue on their path."

Next Steps

So, what is next for Simplyhealth? The goal is to work toward a single, continuous delivery platform, from design to testing, marketing, and throughout the organisation. This strategy will include deviceBridge, a new extension to Kobiton, which offers revolutionary support for both open-source automated testing frameworks and mobile app development tools.



About Kobiton

Kobiton is the mobile and IoT experience platform trusted by leading organizations globally. Our best-in-class software platform helps drive improved revenue on the mobile and IoT channels by lowering app abandonment, improving quality and reducing time-to-market.

Used by over 60,000 developers and testers worldwide, Kobiton is transforming the way companies deliver mobile apps and IoT devices through innovative applications of Artificial Intelligence, Real-Device Testing and the industry's first and only mobile scriptless automation solution.

Drive quality across the entire SDLC. Prevent bugs before pushing test to code with advanced ADB debugging and access to real devices within your IDE. Perfect your application site with the Kobiton Intelligent quality Suite, and build, execute, and report against scriptless and/or scripted automated Functional, Visual, and Performance Tests. When issues are found in test, you can easily resolve them with AI-assisted remediation and ADB debugging. And, all of this is seamlessly integratable with your CI/CD pipeline/tooling so that you can kick-off tests with confidence and ultimately release faster than your competition.

Run your tests on the industry's most flexible and high-performance real device cloud or on-premises solution for 30FPS video streaming, in-depth session exploration, and analytics solutions that offer visibility and traceability throughout your entire testing process.

With Kobiton, build, test, deploy, and release better mobile apps, websites, and IoT devices. There's a reason the world's mobile elite choose Kobiton to deliver perfect mobile and IoT experiences for their users.