Success Story

PocketSlip Case Study | Delphi®

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>
> – Ryno Coetzee, Software Engineer

pocketslip

Delphi®

Introduction

Johannesburg, South Africa-based PocketSlip was established in 2014 as a developer of digital mobile apps that enable retailers to eliminate paper receipts. Users simply download the PocketSlip application to their phone. Once they have registered, they can shop at a partner store and request a PocketSlip receipt. Since being introduced, the concept has experienced exponential adoption to the point where PocketSlip is now ready to expand its innovative solution to an international customer base.

Challenge

When he came up with the idea for PocketSlip, Ryno Coetzee, a Software Engineer, says there was nothing like it on the market. "Sending receipts from POS [point of sale] systems to mobile was a pretty new thing. I had never met anybody or seen anyone do it, so there was a lot of exploratory work needed before developing the product."

Given the competitive nature of the marketplace, Coetzee says they needed to develop the app as quickly as possible. "We had about three months to take it from conception to deployment. We needed to be the first to market, so we didn't have six months or a year to learn things."

One of the major challenges in developing the app was the fact that retailers had a variety of POS systems. To overcome that, Coetzee had to create an API (application

programming interface) on the back end that could push information to the app.

"It took a lot of work to fish out what systems different retailers were using and to get the integration going," he says.

Coetzee says although he was an experienced programmer, this was the first time he had developed a mobile app. "I was taking something that was unfamiliar to me and figuring out how to integrate it with an API."

To overcome these challenges, Coetzee decided he needed a fast, efficient, and easy-to-use development tool that could be used across multiple mobile platforms. His choice was Embarcadero Delphi.

Solution

Coetzee says Delphi was an obvious choice. In fact he was already familiar with the Delphi platform prior to taking on mobile app development. "When I had the spark to create PocketSlip, I knew I needed Delphi to get the mobile thing going. It uses the same language [for mobile] as I had been working with for the last decade, and I realized it could get me over the hurdle. I believe Delphi is one of the best languages out there."

A key factor for Coetzee was timing. "I didn't want to go through a whole learning curve. I needed to get the job done and knew Delphi would allow us to develop the app for multiple platforms in a short amount of time."

ORGANIZATION

PocketSlip

APPLICATIONS

Mobile digital receipt apps for retailers

TOOLS USED

Delphi

CHALLENGES

Limited time to bring app to market

Need to deploy app simultaneously on multiple mobile platforms

Integration required for different retailer back-end systems

RESULTS

Rapid app development

Multi-platform support using single code source

Exponential market growth

The most important factor for Coetzee was that Delphi enabled him to use a single code base for deployment to millions of devices. "That one code base can be deployed to Android, iOS, Windows and OS X. It's brilliant!"

The FireMonkey cross-platform GUI (graphical user interface) framework was a particularly compelling feature, he adds. "I can write Delphi code on FireMonkey, which it then translates into Android, iOS or whatever else I choose. The fact that it's platform agnostic is pretty cool too, because I can talk to a SQL database on any device and take the same code to create an integration package for POS vendors or retailers. I just have to copy and paste the code."

Another plus for Coetzee is the import libraries that allow him to source components and extensions from Embarcadero software partners. "Instead of taking four or five days to create a feature or component I can go to

an Embarcadero partner and buy one for a small fee and download it. The Embarcadero development community is huge so it makes my life so much easier."

Results

Not only did Coetzee meet his development timelines, but within the first three weeks of launching the app PocketSlip had 136 registered users. By the second month, it had added another 150. "The response has been phenomenal," Coetzee says. PocketSlip is also in talks with major banks in South Africa as momentum grows.

Coetzee admits there is still a great deal of integration work ahead as more companies come on board with PocketSlip. "There's still a lot we can do with Delphi. Right now we're working on Sage integration with a cookware company. We can easily sit and write code within four to five days of going through the discovery stages."

He says ad hoc integration is relatively simple with Delphi. "Basically it's just ETL – extracting, transforming, and loading - data to the API."

Having written Delphi code for many years, going to mobile was easy for Coetzee. "That's the strength of Delphi, because you keep the same code base, click a button, and boom! It's a mobile app."

Coetzee estimates that the app will have reached the saturation point in the South African market within a year. "We're growing by 50 users a day. We definitely want to take this international. We're just testing the waters here first before we go full steam ahead."