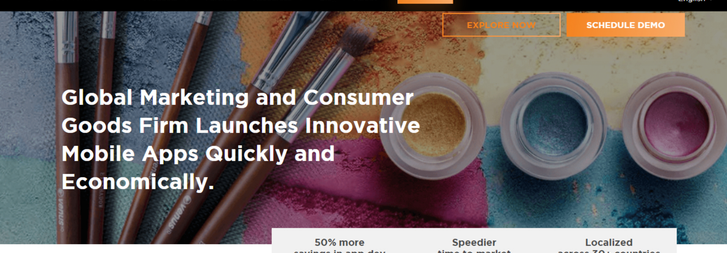

Global Marketing and Consumer Goods Firm Launches Innovative Mobile Apps Quickly and Economically.

50% more savings in app dev costs

Speedier time to market

Localized across 30+ countries

Industry: Consumer goods distribution
Products: HCL Volt MX
Region: North America/US

Challenge

To provide global business owners with new and engaging mobile tools and applications to help them stay competitive.

Solution

HCL Volt MX delivers low-code for building beautiful apps across any device, the ability to build once and deploy everywhere, and built-in, multi-layered security.

Results

The company centralized its app dev, enabling developers to easily build and share apps across teams worldwide, reducing project times and costs by half.

> *Individual business owners within our company expect mobile solutions from us because they operate their business the same way that they operate their lives — from their phone.*
>
> **—VP and Business Owner**
> Customer Solutions/IT

READ THE FULL STORY

Staying Relevant in the New Economy

This company's marketing approach to retail enables a global army of individual business owners to build their own businesses on their own terms and, in the process, make money for themselves and the company. But when the Internet age arrived, along came new ways of doing business, offering alternatives to the company's long-standing model of "personal selling." In particular, the rise of the gig economy, has presented a new set of competitive challenges to a business that has to evolve on the fly.

"Business owners have more options today than they've ever had," said the VP of customer solutions. "They have this gig economy, this idea of picking up smaller pieces of work and earning money through that. Those opportunities are much more readily available than they have ever been. And that's competition for our company."

This combination of factors caused the company leadership to look hard at what they needed to do to support the business owners and keep them engaged with our company. The answer was clear: Digital transformation built around a visionary mobile strategy.

Mobility has emerged as a key transformation agent for the company, which has turned the very technology that threatened its model into the platform that will drive its continued growth and success.

"Business owners expect mobile solutions from us because they operate their businesses the same way that they operate their lives — from their phones," said the VP. "That's a huge area of innovation for us, to be able to put our business in the palm of every person's hand."

Business owners have historically met with customers in person, demonstrating physical products, or relying on printed catalogs, taking orders by hand and submitting them manually. Today, the company's innovative mobile strategy enables it to do all of this via smartphone, and allows business owners to conduct business virtually from anywhere at any time, thus expanding their reach.

But bringing this vision to life proved to be a challenge at first. The company was saddled with a decentralized mobile application development environment that had teams all over the world developing similar applications, which resulted in lots of duplicated effort and inconsistent user experiences. It didn't help that they were reliant upon an assortment of mobile technologies that lacked portability and provided poor user experiences. Developers were creating hybrid apps that couldn't take advantage of native phone features such as touch ID, location-based services, or even the ability to shake a device and reset an order form.

What's more, the company also needed a mobile platform that would enable that development to benefit business owners all over the world simultaneously. As the company grew into the global force it is today, its mobile development organization had spread itself as well, with developers for every market. "When markets would develop a mobile product or a mobile application, everybody was doing it in a different way," said the VP of global digital services.

The Search for a new Digital Partner

The company's leadership had a vision in which a single development effort would result in a library of globally reusable application components. They also wanted to be able to incorporate emerging technologies such as augmented reality (AR) and voice recognition (VR).

After a long search in which it considered pretty much every mobile technology provider, all signs pointed toward HCL Volt MX, a platform that delivers everything the company was looking for: fast, low-code development for building full native apps; the ability to create once and reuse globally; a rich visual development environment that enables rapid prototyping of immersive digital experiences; and built-in, multi-layered security.

The HCL Volt MX platform is proving to be the transformative agent the company hoped it would be.

Accelerating and Scaling Innovation

A main reason the company is reaping huge benefits now is because before the company built a single application, it developed a component strategy.

Developers around the world now can assemble apps faster using reusable components, an approach that effectively combines the targeted ability to develop locally with the efficiency of a shareable and centralized global repository.

"Basically, we were able to centralize the application development approach without centralizing the actual application development itself," said the global manager (GM) of web and native apps. And with components driving development efforts, the GM added, "instead of always thinking only in terms of apps, we started to think in terms of capabilities.

"For example, if one of our business regions builds a QR code scanner, that scanner now is "component-ized" and shared so that development teams around the world can bring that capability into their own business-owner-facing apps with minimal effort.

The GM offered an anecdote that illustrates just how powerful this ability is: Our Latin American development team was expected to launch an app, and with the App Factory in place, instead of having to build that app from scratch, developers were able to incorporate components that had already been created in Korea and India.

"That allowed us to reduce the time and cost of the project by half," said the GM.

This also speaks to the extent to which the company's component strategy has spurred more development collaboration by building trust between geographically disperse teams, while also reducing the burden on IT.

"To strategize a component, more of our development teams across the world have started talking to each other. By the time it actually culminates in a component, the teams have already aligned." said the Manager of IT Sales Solutions. "And from an IT standpoint, I have to develop less, I have to manage less, and I have to maintain less.

Meanwhile, those in the development trenches are similarly encouraged by how HCL Volt MX low-code development has eased their efforts. "The platform really delivers on that promise, said the Senior Digital Specialist of Native Apps. "A lot of widgets are easily available in the platform for dragging and dropping to build your application."

As an added benefit, the company gets extensive analytics on the performance of its apps, and it can feed those reports into the development cycle, creating a continuous improvement loop.

> Having the systematic approach of creating components really allows us to launch our apps much faster in a more economical way. That has allowed us to reduce the time and the cost of projects by half.
>
> **—Global Manager Web & Native Apps**

Driving Continuous Innovation

Going forward, the company is working on incorporating advanced technologies such as augmented reality (AR), artificial intelligence and voice recognition into its environment. The GM said AR is a particular area of focus because of its potential to transform the product demonstration experiences that the business owners present to customers.

"We have developed an SDK that allows us to drop augmented reality capabilities into the apps we build with Volt MX" the GM said. For example, he offered a scenario in which a business owner is showing a customer a water or air filtration system. Instead of having to drag the entire unit onto the sales call, the business owner can instead use AR to provide a thorough virtual tour of the product and its design.

Any way you look at it, the company's mobile strategy, powered by HCL Volt MX, is enabling the company to start writing a successful next chapter in its history. Perhaps the most important indicator is the bottom line, and there's good news there: Our company reported revenue of $8.8 billion last year, a two-percent increase over the year before, and executives attribute that improvement in part to the company's investments in digital transformation, specifically mobility.

The way the VP sees it, HCL Volt MX has simply made the company's business stronger.

About the company

The world's largest direct selling company — manufacturing and distributing nutrition, beauty, personal care and home products — and sold in over 100 countries by independent business owners.

VIEW THEIR STORY

To learn more about HCL Volt MX, please contact your HCL representative or HCL Business Partner and schedule a demo.

SCHEDULE DEMO