Jet2 on Its Way to 100% Test Automation

Airline and holiday firm uses productivity improvements to increase test coverage and raise quality.

Profile
Jet2.com is the third largest airline in the UK, operating over 200 scheduled routes to 55 leisure destinations in the Mediterranean, Canary Islands and European leisure cities. The company also includes Jet2holidays — one of the UK’s largest package holiday tour operators, offering a range of package holiday products including accommodation, flights, and transfers to more than 2,700 hotels at 48 destinations.

The vast majority of Jet2’s bookings are conducted online, via its consumer-facing websites. Ensuring the quality of these sites and the back-end systems and services that support them are critical to the company’s success.

Objective: test automation
Jet2 first looked at the possibility of automating software testing across its business. The company initially tried a Selenium-based automation system, but it wasn’t deemed a good fit.

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“The Selenium tool really didn’t work for our organization,” recalled Allan Crisp, General Manager, Systems Support at Jet2.com. “It only offered the ability to test at the browser level and was too time-consuming to build a decent framework.”

The project was subsequently abandoned until 2014, when Jet2 heard about Eggplant’s products at a software testing event in London. Following an initial evaluation, the company quickly made the decision to reignite its test automation objectives using Eggplant Functional.

Eggplant Functional uses a patented image-based approach to GUI testing that allows it to interact with any device by looking at the screen, in the same way a user does. Digital businesses today are increasingly focused on improving user experience (UX), which is increasingly more important for customer success and retention.

**Agile with Eggplant**

“We were very impressed with Eggplant’s image-based approach to testing, which is well-suited to our user-focused approach,” said Crisp. “Other tools focus on testing at the code level. Eggplant allows us to test our systems like a user, and it also provides great cross-platform testing capabilities, which meets our need for testing across many different systems and browsers.”

The team at Jet2 was quickly able to get up and running with Eggplant Functional. Initial focus was placed on test automation for Jet2holidays, and end-to-end testing the e-commerce platform that underpins the website.

“We are testing everything from searching, booking, managing bookings and check-in, as well as the systems used by our call centre,” said Crisp. “The great thing is that we were able to get going so quickly — Eggplant makes scripting easy, so after some initial help from Eggplant, we were quickly on our way. The support received from Eggplant throughout our engagement with them has been excellent.”

Jet2 has been using an agile development methodology for more than eight years, and finding a testing tool that was agile-compatible was important to the company.

“We settled on a scrum methodology, with two-week sprints, and Eggplant has actually helped us become more agile,” said Crisp. “We have a regression pack of tests that used to be run manually for every sprint, and these are the tests that we focused on automating first.”

The company also uses Eggplant Manager to support test management across the organization.

“We have 16 packs of tests running every single day,” said Crisp. “So it’s great to be able to use the scheduling features of Eggplant Manager to set up a test pack and then it’s done— literally fire and forget!”
Results
In less than 12 months, Jet2 achieved test automation coverage for 100% of integration tests, 85% of call centre systems, and 90% of the Jet2holidays website functions.

“We are aiming for 100% automation across the board,” said Crisp. “But the key thing is that our automation efforts so far have already saved over five man-days of effort per release. That equates to around a 30% time-saving on testing every month, which we have been able to apply to increasing test coverage, raising the quality of our releases, and ultimately getting more into every release.”

The Future
The ease-of-use and results delivered by Eggplant Functional has won it many fans within Jet2.

“The ease with which we can get people up and running on Eggplant is incredible — we had an intern join our team for a short time and they were quickly able to start doing scripts, which just wouldn’t be possible with other tools,” said Crisp. “Now even some of our business intelligence team are starting to look at Eggplant to see if they can use it in other areas.”

Following the Jet2holidays success, the company will shortly implement Eggplant Functional across the main Jet2 site as well, aiming for 100 percent test coverage across both sites.

“So far, we’ve had to drop 940 charges, which meant 940 unique clinical encounters, and 72 mandatory fields,” he says. “There was no way we could do that without Eggplant Functional.”

ALLAN CRISP, GENERAL MANAGER, SYSTEMS SUPPORT AT JET2.COM

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