Automation Enables Earlier Identification of Defects

Overview.
Albertsons Companies, Inc., is one of the largest American supermarket chains with 2,252 stores, 1,725 pharmacies, 398 fuel centers, 22 dedicated distribution centers, and 20 manufacturing facilities across 35 states.

With the drive towards frictionless retail, Albertsons was looking at ways to realize that vision. As it reviewed its technology infrastructure, it wanted to move from relying on manual testing of its point of sale (POS) and peripheral systems to an automated solution that would improve the quality of its software and the customer experience. This was critical to the business as POS issues, such as not taking a card payment, directly impact revenue and frustrate customers.

Albertsons turned to Eggplant for its AI-driven test automation and its partner IntelliQA, which specializes in industrialized test automation.
Accelerating POS Automation

POS Automation
The initial scope was to automate Albertson’s main bank testing as manual testing of the complex system was a slow and onerous task. Albertsons needed a test automation solution that didn’t require installation on physical devices as that presented an array of security concerns. Eggplant’s innovative solution is the only software that can test any technology on any device, operating system, or browser at any layer, from the user interface to application programming interfaces to the database, without being installed.

The intelligent automation tests thousands of scenarios quickly and continuously hunts for defects. This rapidly accelerated the delivery and quality of Albertson’s POS software. It also freed up the team to focus on evaluation and exploratory testing rather than repetitive manual test execution. The intelligent automation slashed the time to execute tests from almost two weeks to just a couple days.

The next project was to automate the gas station testing. With fuel pumps, a leading source of credit card fraud, EMV compliance avoids liability for fraudulent transactions. Once the hardware is modified, the process needs to be certified, which Eggplant and IntelliQA teamed up to solve. As a result, Albertsons has greater insight into how its customers are interacting with its digital problems as well as actionable intelligence on areas that are causing issues.

As a result of the benefits delivered to date and the demand for a contactless retail experience, Albertsons is looking to now automate the self-checkout process.

Results

• **Productivity**
The retail POS test automation has been particularly valuable during the global pandemic by allowing manual testers to focus their efforts on new solutions were being introduced to help ensure the safety of our customers and essential retail associates.

• **Efficiency**
We have been able to quickly trigger automated testing whenever a new version of vendor POS code was delivered to us. This has enabled us to more quickly validate the quality of the software and identify new defects faster. It accelerates the time to identify issues and to consequently deploy software to the stores.

• **Cost reductions**
The automation of almost 500 retail POS regression test cases has allowed us to reduce the need to add manual testers for new initiatives.
As shared by Mike Friedel, Sr. Director Retail Customer Solutions at Albertsons, in-store, automation has enabled the earlier identification of defects and is helping to ensure that high-quality, feature-rich software can reach the stores faster. “Our customers benefit from an improved experience, while our colleagues, without technology frustrations, can focus on the customer. Additionally, our implementation of test automation provided significant relief during the recent challenges with Covid-19. Eggplant is core to the capability, and we are excited by the use of AI within the product to optimize execution paths and hunt down defects.”

“We truly have benefited from the robotics in our testing. The faster execution has enabled us to have back-to-back POS code drops or parallel testing for different purposes, POS for regression testing, pin pad update testing, and intake pre-release testing.”

MARTHA CROSLEY, QA TEST MANAGER

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