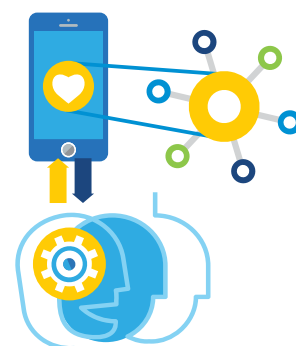


Keeping Customers Delighted and Engaged with Mobile APIs

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KEEP

Company Size

Mid-Market

Industry

Data Services/Retail

API Program

Public: developer.edmunds.com

Goals of API Program

Promote innovation with Edmunds data through Developer Outreach

Grow the Edmunds brand through a public developer portal and apps across devices

Speed up the partner onboarding process

Results

API has cut app development time by 75%

Relative to Q3 2011, member registrations have increased 742% and production developers have increased 5,150% in two years

B2B partnerships with the likes of eBay and Toyota

As a commerce discovery platform with a wide web-based audience, Keep wanted to be able to reach customers anywhere, anytime, all while maintaining the rich content and aesthetic qualities it has on the web. Powered by a robust mobile API and secure API Management, Keep's iOS app became one of the most popular apps in the Lifestyle category in the iTunes App Store.

Innovation in Retail Online

Keep allows people to browse, discover, and purchase the latest trends curated from across the web by tastemakers and people with passion for products. Users can create their own profiles and follow others, producing a personalized shopping experience curated by Keep's community of tastemakers. As a consumer website garnering hundreds of thousands of users, the founders of Keep knew that in order to truly provide the best customer experience, the company needed to allow its customers to access the site anywhere, anytime—all while maintaining the aesthetic qualities and rich content of the website.

The company had created a mobile version of its website, but looked to APIs to build a dedicated, fully functioning app. "It's difficult to produce a snappy interaction on the mobile web," says Joe Predham, Mobile Lead at Keep. "We made it a priority to build an iPhone app, but we needed a scalable data endpoint so we could reach customers anywhere." Plus, Keep wanted content on the app to update automatically from the website, rather than having to do so manually.

Making the Move to Mobile

While developing an iOS app internally with a mobile-dedicated API, Keep's developers understood that managing the anticipated traffic, as well as supporting secure exchanges, would strain in-house staff.

As a small team, Keep's executives understood that purchasing API management, rather than building the infrastructure itself, would allow its engineers to focus on user experience and creating the best app possible.

"We want to delight our users, and there is significant time taken away from that if we have to build and maintain infrastructure to maintain our APIs," says Predham. "As much as we can offload to a trusted solutions provider, the better experience our customers can have."

When scanning the marketplace, the choice for Keep was easy. "Mashery is the big name in API Management, and I'd be hard pressed to name a viable competitor," says Predham. "We immediately understood that Mashery would get us off the ground quickly so we could have our app in the market fast."

Security In-House and in the Cloud

Keep spent four months developing its iOS app, which was seamlessly integrated with Mashery API Management in just one week. This speed is noted by Predham, "Had we chosen to develop API management infrastructure on our own, it could've easily taken a month more development time. Plus, there is a lot technical debt that comes with building your own API solution."

Aside from eliminating the pains of building in-house API Management, Keep also outsourced a solution to satisfy its concerns over security and management of thousands of users. Keep uses the Mashery OAuth 2.0 Accelerator to extend secure authentication to each user with every app download.

API Management also provides easy rate limiting and monitoring, call caching, and support so that Keep's developers can spend their time focusing on creating a user experience that mirrors the high-touch aesthetic qualities of Keep's website. "Mashery allows us to offload our concerns about security and managing traffic so we can focus on providing the best experience for our users," says Predham.

"Intel® Services allows us to offload our concerns about security and managing traffic so we can focus on providing the best experience for our users."

Instant Success in the App Store & Beyond

With its app primed for an onslaught of downloads and traffic via its API, Keep launched its first mobile app, Keep Shopping, for iOS. In its first month live, Keep Shopping became one of the most popular apps in the Lifestyle category on iTunes, and the API received more than 7.5 million API calls. Furthermore, all of Keep's key interaction rates have increased over 100 percent on the mobile app in comparison to its website. "As soon as we released the app, all our numbers started ticking up, and mobile engagement skyrocketed," says Predham. "We're seeing downloads both from people who already know and love Keep, as well as new customers."

With a solid API in place insured by the utmost security and management, the future of Keep's mobile program is promising. The same API can be used to power apps for other form-factors, like tablets and Android phones, making mobile expansion all the more easy. "API Management will be key to growing our app offerings and scaling our program," says Predham.

"Had we chosen to develop API management infrastructure on our own, it could've easily taken a month more development time, plus a lot of technical debt."

—Joe Predham
Mobile Lead, Keep

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