Case Study - Establishing the mobile sales management system of Aegis Hwajin Cosmetics Co., Ltd.

Aegis Hwajin Cosmetics

Thirty two years have passed since July 1982 when Aegis Hwajin Cosmetics (CEO. Kang Hyun-Song) entered the cosmetic industry.

Since its foundation, Hwajin has developed premium functional cosmetics and esthetic equipment with the belief that "we produce either best products or nothing." In addition, we adhere to door-to-door sales for the sake of close relationship with customers. We have kept this sales policy because we regard ourselves not as mere salespeople but as "beauty messengers." What is more, we believe that our heart-felt service can enhance beauty of our customers and thus make them happy.

Besides, we have cherished a female workforce by gradually increasing the number of female employees, who now make up the vast majority in our company (96%). In this way, Hwajin has laid the groundwork for fostering talented women and let them realize their dreams just with their qualifications, as indicated by our company's slogan "From Sales to Management" (i.e., regardless of backgrounds, one can get promoted from a sales position all the way up to a management position if he/she has great ability.)

Project Overview

In December 2012, Hwajin Cosmetics launched a project to convert the operational method of its mobile sales management system from a native app to a web app.

The management system provides real-time information about sales according to regions and other detailed classifications. The key to the project success was to maintain usability and decent data-processing performance which the previous native app enjoyed.

Moreover, it was also crucial to develop optimum user interfaces (UIs)/ user experience (UX) for various screen sizes as the system had to be applicable to most of devices that run on iOS or Android.

Introducing the Nexacro Platform

Hwajin Cosmetics has adhered to only door-to-door sales where some 20 thousand of its salespeople meet customers in person. Therefore, identifying the state of sales activities and revenues in real time is imperative for the company to come up with effective sales strategies and thus have an advantage over competitors.   Accordingly, the newly-developed system needed to be sufficient in usability and performance compared to the existing native app system.

As an IT department that is in charge of both system development and system operation, we had to develop, test, and install new platforms whenever encountering new mobile devices; plus, we would be burdened with the management of excessive sources. Consequently, we seriously considered introducing a web app for the sake of effective development and integrated operation. As a result of reviewing many products to permit web app development that facilitates all-inclusive sources, we chose the HTML5 version of NEXACRO, which is an integrated development platform.

Why they chose the Nexacro Platform

Operational aspect

With brand-new mobile devices coming out every day, our company was required to support all types of devices for our employees to work smoothly. This meant that, whenever we were confronted with new apparatuses, we had to conduct a test to see whether the existing app runs properly, possibly followed by the modification of existing programs and consequent patch distributions. The whole process of the aforementioned tasks required a great deal of time and thus triggered a barrage of user complains, leaving us in desperate need for better-responsive system.

Development aspect

There are a variety of smartphone OSes currently used in Korea, including iOS, Android, and Windows Phone. To make our system applicable to such various OSes, we are required to learn at least two or three programming languages and development tools, which is a daunting challenge to us—not to mention that we cannot hire new developers whenever needed. Moreover, developing our system in the form of native apps has its limitations given that devices equipped with new types of OSes may be produced in the future.

Maintenance aspect

In the past, we really struggled with tests, modifications, and distributions whenever new devices were released. Nowadays, people have not only smartphones and tablet PCs but also phablets, mobile devices designed to combine or straddle the functions of a

smartphone and tablet (e.g. Samsung Galaxy Note). Against the backdrop, The Nexacro Platform was an answer to the facilitation of all-inclusive sources and enhancement of work efficiency—our two biggest concerns—as it enables the development of a task screen optimized for various screen sizes.

Effects of NEXACRO

We enjoyed plentiful positive effects at each stage of the project

During the project

Hwajin Cosmetics tends to maximize personnel efficiency by tapping into only internal workforce unless it needs to build large-scale next generation system. Therefore, it is important for the company to use a versatile development tool. With NEXACRO offering rich and diverse functions to develop an enterprise application, we could conveniently develop most of system features that we had planned in the design stage. Moreover, UX-Studio, a development tool which is a part of the NEXACRO package, performed better than other products and thus improved development convenience.

In conclusion, the project to establish new system of the company was successfully completed just with one developer and one designer.

After the project

We could draw positive responses from users, who have various devices, because we utilized functions like Multi-layout Manager (MLM) and Position 2, which are designed to develop UI optimized for browsers of not only smartphones but also tablets and desktop PCs. We think that The Nexacro Platform proved itself as software seeking "One Source for Multi-Use (OSMU)."

Being able to support all types of devices with one source only implies that we are allowed to respond swiftly to user demands in the future, helping our company become a real-time enterprise (RTE).

Improved efficiency of the IT department	Can build system that is applicable to various smartphones and tablets just with one instance of development Convenient development through the use of standard JavaScript No need to distribute additional apps despite modifications during operation Cost-saving because bring your own device (BYOD) is possible
Improved user productivity	Users are enabled to work anytime and anywhere since the system support various smart devices owned by users. Maximizes ease and efficiency of work through faster data processing
Improved development productivity	Reduced time to establish system that can support various devices thanks to advanced functions such as MLM and Position2 Reduced time to verify and fix errors that occur during development thanks to the debugging function embedded in UX-Studio Reduced time to develop task screens thanks to rich functions provided by various components such as a grid

The Developer Perspective

This issue features an interview with Kim Jae-Hak, Team Head from the IT Department and Hong Seung-Taek, Assistant Manager from the Management Support Team, the developer and designer who participated in the establishment of Hwajin Cosmetics' system.

"Choosing NEXACRO was like a God's Choice"- Assistant Manager Hong

Q. What were the biggest reasons for choosing NEXACRO Platform?

Kim) Frankly speaking, we were looking for a tool that enables the limited staff of the IT department to manage heavy workload. When we used to operate a native app, we were flooded with endless tasks of supporting an array of newly-released devices.

If we are to support various devices with just one instance of development, we are required to unify multiple sources into one. This is why NEXACRO appealed to us, as a developer and operator.

As a result, we are now very satisfied and not afraid of facing any new mobile devices.

Q. What is the most notable feature of the new system?

Hong) The mobile sales management system is used by all the members of Hwajin Cosmetics including the CEO. This system is particularly important to some 20,000 salespeople of our company, who are the core of the company's competitiveness.

There is no doubt that our company's sales management system should be unrivalled for usability and convenience as our salespeople use it every day in the field.

Our system's users are mostly married women. Therefore, the development project focused on improving visual comfort through the screen layout, colors, icons, etc. while making it easy for such users to learn how to use the system.

NEXACRO helped us enormously to reflect foregoing user demands easily in the development of the system as it provided a variety of components and functions.

Q. The project was carried out not long after NEXACRO was first released. Was there any related problem?

Kim) It was shortly after the new version of NEXACRO was first released, and thus there were few existing examples of employing the software. Accordingly, it is true that we lacked development or design guides as well as diverse samples.

However, we solved most of our problems thanks to the sufficient help form the Customer Center of Nexaweb, so we successfully completed our project. To developers, manuals and samples are most useful for speedy development. In that respect, we suffered a little difficulty during the project since there were insufficient amounts of help info, samples and manuals—the scarcity was inevitable because the time was not long after the release of the product. I understand that now there are more related materials

available. I hope that the materials will increase consistently so that we can have our job done in the future projects more easily.

Q. What is the biggest advantage of NEXACRO?

Kim) As a person with wide experience of development languages and tools, I would like to mention that NEXACRO allows developers and designers a great deal of flexibility once they get used to the software's functions. In this context, I think that UX-Studio offers greater convenience and productivity than any other development tools can do, just as touted by Nexaweb.

Q. The layout of the task screens is quite unique. Is there any reason for this?

Hong) Normally, task screens designed for desktop PCs feature menu areas on the left side while holding work area on the right-hand side. In contrast, we arranged our task screens in the opposite way.

Although this type of layout was rare, we made such a decision after contemplating long time because we knew that tablet users usually hold their devices by their left hands and use their right hands to touch the screens.

In the field test, we obtained favorable responses about the layout from users. In conclusion, I believe that this was a good opportunity for me, as a designer, to learn what I should consider with regard to UX and usability.
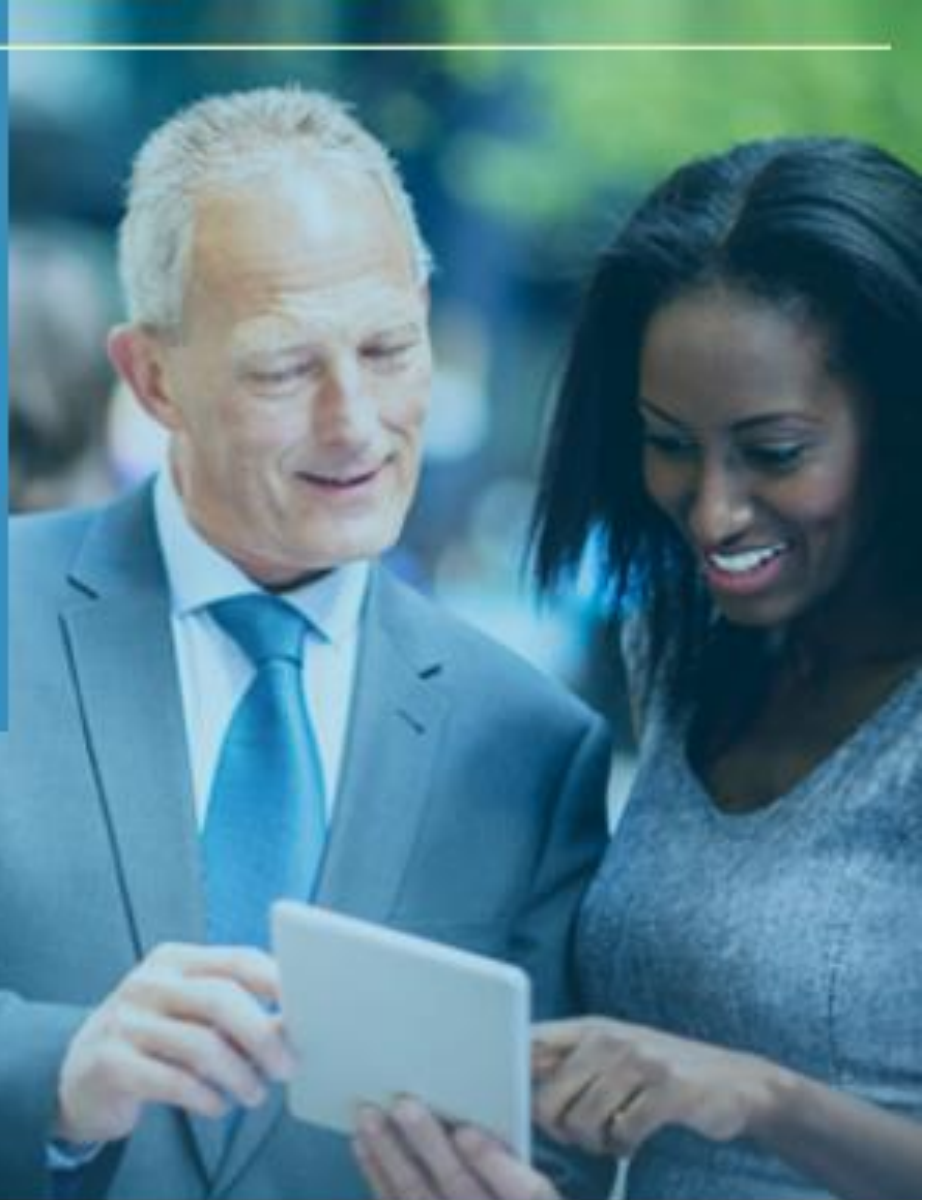
Q. How happy are you with the overall outcome of the project?

Kim) Our approximately 20,000 salespeople use various mobile devices for their work. As a result, when we opened the mobile sales management system after developing it with the NEXACRO, data processing speed was not consistent in some low-end devices. Therefore, the IT department decided to revamp the system by introducing the HTML5 version of NEXACRO, in a bid to ensure minimum levels of convenience and efficiency for low-tier devices. We believe that such effort was paid off.

Fortunately, both the CEO and the salespeople of our company are happy with the system. As any staffer in our ID department has become capable of developing system and maintaining it easily through UX-Studio, we expect that the benefit of using NEXACRO will grow over time.

About the Nexacro Platform

Nexaweb provides software and services for the development of enterprise-class mobile, tablet, and web applications. Nexaweb was founded in 2000, offering tools and enterprise to develop web and, later, mobile applications for the enterprise. Today, Nexaweb has more than 2,200 sutomers around the world across a range of industries.

Contact us for more information.

www.nexaweb.com   781-345-5500   info@nexaweb.com

Nexaweb Inc.

1 New England Executive
Office Park, Suite 205
Burlington, MA 01803
Tel: 781-345-5500
Fax:781-345-5501
www.nexaweb.com

Nexaweb Japan Inc.

Akihabara OS building 10F
5-3-1 Sotokanda
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 101-0021
Tel: 81-03-5812-6358
Fax: 81-03-5812-6343
www.nexaweb.co.jp

TobeSoft Co., Ltd.

Intops Building 2-5F
617 Bongeunsa-Ro
Gangnam-gu, Seoul, Korea 135-873
Tel: 82-2-2140-7700
Fax: 82-2-2140-7799
www.tobesoft.com