

Shiseido Co., Ltd. enhances the customer experience

IBM MobileFirst solution provides innovative ways for Beauty Consultants to engage customers

Overview

The need

Shiseido Co., Ltd., wanted to enhance the customer experience by providing its Beauty Consultants (BCs) with a new way to engage with customers, influence product development and socially connect with each other.

The solution

Using IBM MobileFirst Platform Foundation software Shiseido developed, secured and deployed the “Bureau” enterprise mobile app for Apple iPads, a one-stop solution for streamlining communications, scheduling, reporting and other BC tasks.

The benefit

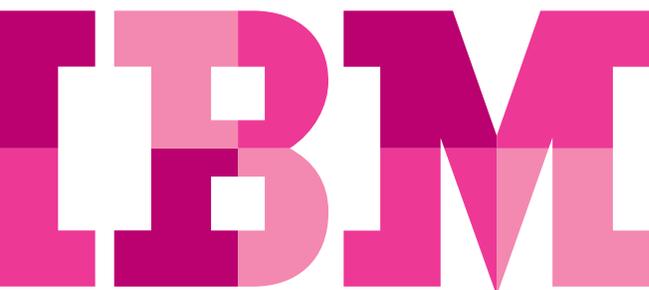
The Bureau app helps BCs enhance customer engagement, improve teamwork and deliver product feedback.

One of the world’s leading cosmetics firms, Shiseido Co., Ltd. aims to create beauty and wellness. It operates multi-branded businesses in Europe, the United States and Asia. The Tokyo-based company employs some 46,000 people.

Helping consultants create beauty and wellness

Shiseido sells products with the help of 22,000 independent customer-facing Beauty Consultants (BCs), department store employees who work at Shiseido cosmetics counters. The company has been supporting BCs’ work with technology for nearly 30 years and began exploring mobility early on. To advance mobile innovation and offer better tools for customer engagement, product feedback and teamwork, Shiseido wanted to equip BCs with Apple iPad “Beauty Tablets,” which required developing new mobile apps for the tablet format.

The new mobile apps help Beauty Consultants continue to differentiate the Shiseido experience through ‘Omotenashi’ [the Japanese spirit of hospitality]. “IBM is a valuable partner, supporting our long-term vision to continuously enhance our brand value and drive growth and leadership in the global beauty industry,” said Chikako Sekine, Corporate Executive Officer, Shiseido, Co., Ltd.



Streamlining mobile app development

Creating apps for varied devices and operating environments can be difficult if developers have to become experts in the language and parameters of each mobile device. That's why Shiseido implemented the IBM® MobileFirst Platform Foundation (formerly IBM Worklight® Foundation) solution. This development platform supports popular devices with the simplicity of a single, shared code base. Shiseido's developers used it to create a Beauty Tablet app using familiar web languages, and were able to reuse some code from the cell phone apps. The platform also helps to manage security and streamlines app prototyping, testing and quality control.

Boosting ROI

The MobileFirst Platform Foundation software helped Shiseido overcome challenges to progress from project planning to deployment of 10,000 tablets in just one year. With no new hires, existing personnel have deployed a range of mobile apps ahead of schedule, and maintenance costs have dropped significantly.

Increasing BC responsiveness

The deployed apps are reliable and highly secure, helping BCs improve their consultation skills and customer interactions. The first and most critical capability provided to BCs was the "Bureau" solution. Analogous to a real bureau or dresser where a woman has everything she needs to look her best, every module of the app is like a drawer with critical capabilities essential for BCs to be productive and deliver exceptional customer experiences.

Solution Component

Software

- IBM® MobileFirst™ Platform Foundation (formerly IBM Worklight® Foundation)
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One module in the app creates a virtual community for BCs to learn from each other. By sharing photos, tips and tricks, and commenting on each other's work, BCs build a greater sense of pride and teamwork. Social data analytics identify best practices and incorporate knowledge and know-how into future training for BCs. This module helps raise the bar for building consistent service and skills among consultants. Another module enables BCs to capture real feedback from customers and communicate it to product teams as quickly and accurately as possible. In the past, it took nearly a month for a BC to write up a detailed enough report and have it be read or analyzed at corporate headquarters. Now, a single photograph accompanied by BC comments from the customer can be delivered to the appropriate product team within a day.

Using the mobile apps, BCs can spend more time with customers, improve their product knowledge, better manage their schedules and collaborate easily with coworkers. In addition, replacing hardcopy brochures with digital content lowers costs. And by enhancing BCs' ability to communicate customer feedback to headquarters, the apps help Shiseido respond faster to market conditions and customer needs.

For more information

To learn more about IBM MobileFirst Platform Foundation software, please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner, or visit the following website:

ibm.com/software/products/mobilefirstfoundation



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