

An Inside Look at uTest Apphance

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As we mentioned earlier today, [uTest is pleased to announce our acquisition of Apphance](#). While Doron already wrote about what led us to acquire [Apphance](#), I wanted to cover some of the details about what you can do with the product.

Apphance rolls up a powerful mobile quality toolkit into something that works on nearly all the major mobile platforms. Things that used to require several tools, or simply didn't exist on certain platforms, now become easy with Apphance. Developers have access to features that add value during development (pre-production) and after launch (production). That makes Apphance a must-have tool for anyone writing a mobile app, whether they're just getting started or if they've already published their app in the app store.

Let's go through some of the major features and see what they can do:

Over-The-Air App Distribution

This one is huge for anyone developing a mobile app where build updates happen frequently. With over-the-air app distribution, you can upload a new build and your testers will be able to download an update either within the app or via email. That means they're not wasting time testing an out-of-date version of your app or trying to get updates installed on their device.

Date	Version	Status	Build	Actions
10 Jul 2012	1.0.0	1	Get Version	📄 📱 📧
10 Jul 2012	1.0.0	6	Get Version	📄 📱 📧
10 Jul 2012	1.0.0	1	Get Version	📄 📱 📧
10 Jul 2012	1.0.0	1	Get Version	📄 📱 📧

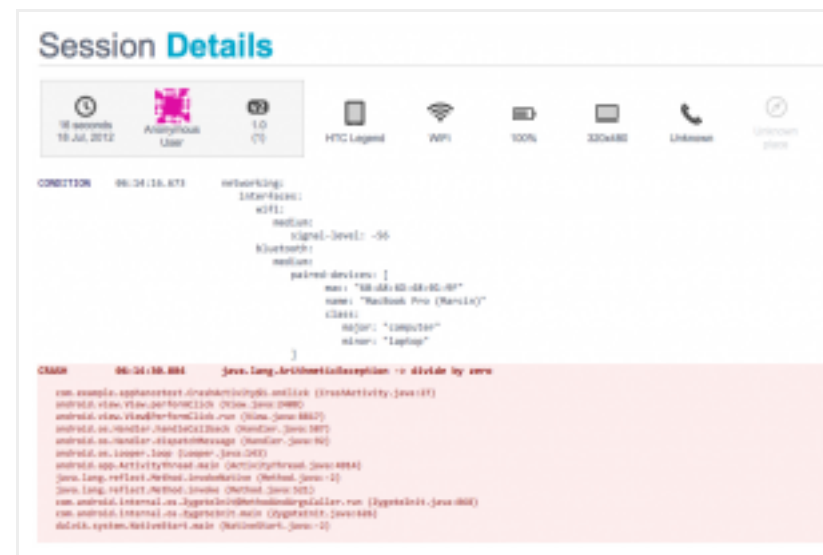
While app distribution is just for pre-production apps, having Apphance track your builds can be very useful for everyone from pre-production to production users. Apphance will keep track of your different builds, so it can tie crash reports and bug data to individual app versions.

ID	Name	Address	Test user email
1	iPhone 4S	10.0.0.1	1.0.0
2	iPhone 4S	10.0.0.2	1.0.0
3	iPhone 4S	10.0.0.3	1.0.0
4	iPhone 4S	10.0.0.4	1.0.0
5	iPhone 4S	10.0.0.5	1.0.0
6	iPhone 4S	10.0.0.6	1.0.0

That means that you'll be able to see how a given version of your app is performing in testing and in-the-wild. You can even choose to ignore reports from older versions of your app and just focus on data from the latest builds, which is perfect for production apps where there are always users who forget to upgrade from their app store.

Crash Reporting

Nobody likes it when their app crashes, but figuring out why it crashed can be incredibly challenging. Even if the developer is holding the device in their hands, the exact reason the app crashed may not be apparent without extracting the buried system and crash logs.



Apphance solves this by detecting crashes and sending crash reports to the Apphance servers in the cloud. Developers can not only see which versions of their app have crashes, but they can even see the details about why the app crashed. Apphance also lets the developer manually log their own status messages, making it easy to track activities that are significant to individual apps. A developer can then go back and review the steps leading up to specific crashes.

Along with the crash report, Apphance will also send some additional data about the state of the device and the app. The exact data it sends depends on whether Apphance is running in pre-production mode or production mode. In pre-production mode, Apphance will send as much detail as possible, while in production mode Apphance sends a more limited amount of detail out of respect for the users' privacy. You can learn more about the exact details Apphance sends from our [help topics](#).

In-App Bug Reporting

When testers discover bugs in mobile apps, it can be difficult to capture the needed screenshots, write notes about the steps to reproduce the bug, and then enter all that into a bug tracking system that's usually opened on a completely separate device. Apphance changes all that, allowing testers to report bugs from within the app itself. All the tester needs to do is shake the device (or any other mechanism the developer can specify), and Apphance will begin the bug reporting process. Apphance will take screenshots and get the details from the tester, all without ever leaving the app.



When the bug gets submitted, Apphance includes the same information as a crash report. That means developers can see the state of the device and the app, along with any additional logging information they add manually.

User Feedback

Even the best apps can have frustrated users, and inevitably frustrated users write negative reviews. Apphance gives developers a new tool to listen to user complaints from within the app. When a user is frustrated or having trouble, they can send their concerns directly to the developer using Apphance's user feedback feature.

Conclusion

All this adds up to Apphance being one incredible mobile quality tool. Developers for iOS, Android, Windows Phone, Kindle, and Nook now have a tool that can distribute their builds to testers, track crashes and bugs in the wild, and get feedback from customers. To learn more about Apphance, check out the [website](#) or read the online [help topics](#).

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