

Smule connecting the world through music

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YAR WOO, VP ENGINEERING AT SMULE

Meet Smule

From kids in far-off corners of the world to celebrities on the Ellen Show, Smule’s appeal is universal. Founded in 2008, the San Francisco-based company offers apps that allow you to sing karaoke, play guitar and piano, rap, and more – all through your smartphone interface. They also feature a global social network so that you can share your musical performances with friends.

Smule’s flagship apps are free to download and use; fans pay for subscription access to its extensive music catalog. Sing! Karaoke, Magic Piano, Guitar!, and AutoRap are among its most popular apps. Thanks to the company’s latest innovation, the Smule Partner Artist Program, fans can sing duets with famous singers.

Over 300 million people around the globe have used Smule to create, share, discover, and enjoy music. Users post more than 12 million songs and performances each day. As Chief Executive Jeff Smith says, “Smule is a social network that’s as much about creation as consumption. We’re building a global network around music and performance.”

The Challenge

The goal: Deliver a seamless mobile musical experience that delights customers.

Supporting around 30 million active users a month – across all seven continents, and a variety of devices and operating systems – comes with its challenges. While the company was thrilled with its global popularity, such a diverse user population came with its hurdles. Namely, it vastly multiplied the challenges that come with supporting high-traffic apps on multiple platforms, carriers, and software versions.



ABOUT SMULE

Employees: 90

Industry: Entertainment

Location: San Francisco

User base: 30 million unique users/ month, in 140 countries

Challenge: Diagnose and correct app problems to support high volumes of downloads and a smooth, glitch-free user experience.

“Aptelligent lets us triage any issues and before they create any negative user experiences. We can now immediately tell whether something has gone wrong and if a crash has spiked in our user base.”

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Pressure was compounded by the nature of the music app industry. Smule was very well aware that with the bevy of music sharing and making platforms on the market, only the best survive. They needed a suite of highly stable, crash-free apps that also met customers' high expectations for uptime, sound quality, and easy usability.

Without additional diagnostic or troubleshooting information, the job of debugging and resolving customer issues was a laborious process. These time-consuming detours took up precious engineering energies that would be better spent developing new features.

Finding a Solution

Smule was on a quest for critical insights and metrics, from failure diagnostics to end-user performance.

They went out to find a knight in shining armor who could deliver this and more.

They knew that that knight would come in the form of a mobile application intelligence solution. Only this could give them the detailed visibility into their apps' behaviors and performances that they needed. After a rigorous selection process, they chose Aptelligent for this mission. Its strong developer adoption and accuracy in reporting real-time crashes sealed the deal.

Aptelligent in Action

Aptelligent has taken the guesswork out of app crashes and issues. Armed with complete diagnostic information, the team keeps a constant pulse on app performance. They rely on Aptelligent's mobile app intelligence for insights including:

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Whether they're looking at a global view or zeroing in on a specific area, the team has complete visibility into every part of the app's performance. From geolocation to OS, the team can segment their data to see tailored information. When a new version is released, the team can quickly flag and fix any issue.

CRASH REPORTING

To understand the complete mobile picture, Azul's Mobile Customer Success Team can conduct trend analysis by individual user. By measuring these workflows over time, the team has been able to optimize their customer's overall experience. The result? Maximized revenue, engagement, and retention.

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ABOUT APTELIGENT

Aptelligent is the App Intelligence company trusted by the largest mobile apps in the world. Aptelligent's software provides actionable mobile app insights to improve digital business on iOS, Android, and Hybrid apps. Product managers and developers use Aptelligent's insights to diagnose app performance issues that impact user experience. The platform collects and analyzes app performance issues and connects problems to key business metrics. Mobile teams also have access to Aptelligent's big data platform, as well as industry and app benchmarks. Aptelligent is based in San Francisco.

Learn more at www.apelligent.com.

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BREADCRUMBS

Aptelligent’s breadcrumbs feature connects the dots in a mobile scenario. If a user ran into a crash or a performance issue, the team can trace the exact actions that led to the complication. This makes it easy to reproduce problems and reduce troubleshooting time.

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Results and Looking Forward

The result: Happier customers, easier collaboration, fewer developer headaches.

Deploying Aptelligent’s solutions quickly gave Smule unprecedented insight into user problems and how to target them. Previously, the team relied on a painstaking process of manual diagnostics and user feedback to catch any issues. Now, a quick look at their Aptelligent dashboard gives them all the information they need. Instead of performing detective work, the team now spends their valuable time creating new apps and evolving the user experience.

“Aptelligent has been immensely valuable in helping us get ahead of user complaints.” – Yar Woo, VP Engineering at Smule

The commitment to the customer experience has yielded an exceptionally high-performing app. The proof is in the reviews; both the iOS and Android apps have 4.5+ star ratings and are listed in iTunes’ Top 100 Apps.

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People all over the world are singing Smule’s praises. In April 2015, it raised \$26 million to scale its global network even faster. The release of Apple’s new 3D Touch feature opened a whole new suite of innovative possibilities for the company. Magic Piano, for instance, is now capable of pressure-sensitive playing, so users can really emphasize those powerful notes. When country superstar Luke Bryan posted a virtual duet he sang with Jason Derulo on Smule, it got 28 millions views and 815,000 shares within the first 24 hours of its release.

As Smule keeps hitting high note after high note, Aptelligent will be working in the background to help ensure that their users – from piano players to karaoke singers – will get the best experience possible.