

Discovery Health Benefits from User Experience Monitoring & Performance Tests

The Client

Discovery is one of South Africa's fastest growing financial services companies. It is a leader in the life and health sectors and has been a pioneer in the field of online customer services since the Internet was accepted as a serious business tool.

As a multi-channel consumer service company, Discovery Health's online service portal, DiscoveryWorld, is a critical part of its customer interface.

The Challenge

The way in which customers experience the portal and are able to use the services it provides are very important metrics for Discovery's service delivery effectiveness.

While Discovery's site has always been functionally rich, it relied heavily on graphics and complex page layouts to create an impressive visual experience.

Qualica was brought in by Discovery Health to help it understand how customers experienced the portal and to look at ways to optimise that experience.

Discovery recognised that in order to lead the online service delivery market, it needed to understand how members interacted with the portal and adjust the site to optimise their experiences.

Discovery had no way to manage the links in its Internet connectivity chain, and the user experience was only ever as good as the weakest of these. It needed a way to remove uncertainty from the user's experience of its online services.

The Solution

Discovery wanted to move towards a function-rich and easily accessible customer portal. It needed to be able to address any performance problems and apply fixes in the event of a significant slow-down or failure on the site before call centre volumes rose significantly.

Qualica was required to examine network-monitoring integration, customise control probes that would be placed on the internal network, and conduct workshops to determine what functionality was to be tested.

Qualica's solution uses scripts to mimic a customer's interaction with the site. Response times from the server to client computers in various external locations were measured and the network-performance was monitored and logged for analysis.

Slow response times were sought out, broken links and missing data uncovered and the site's general performance was tested across a range of scenarios. Once the probes had done their work, the findings were presented to Discovery.

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The Results

Discovery now understands how its customers experience DiscoveryWorld. It’s able to feed back information on the site’s performance to an in-house development team. The site is now updated constantly to improve performance and user-experience based on measurable benchmarks using various ISPs and Internet connection types as data carriers.

Discovery’s operational management team is better informed, and better able to make decisions to increase hardware or connectivity infrastructure to meet performance benchmarks.

The company is able to maintain good performance on the portal and allow customers to service themselves quickly and efficiently.

This reduces the need for call-centre agents, maintains the online integrity of the brand and provides a selling point for prospective members or corporate customers.