CASE STUDY

RETAIL / HOSPITALITY

Helping Costa Coffee deliver a faster, more seamless digital experience

How specialist testing and automation supported Costa Coffee's loyalty app, accelerating regression testing, reducing delivery costs and building confidence at scale.



COSTA COFFEE

THE CHALLENGE

Modernising the loyalty experience for millions of customers

97%

reduction in regression testing time

From eight days to approximately 1.5 hours

£6,000

saved per release cycle

60%

reduction in testing costs

30%

longer testing window

1.5m

app downloads

Creating a better digital experience for millions of customers

Costa Coffee's Coffee Club loyalty programme had been an important part of its customer engagement strategy since its introduction in March 2010, enabling customers to earn rewards through purchases and strengthening customer relationships.

In August 2014, Costa Coffee introduced the Coffee Club app for iOS and Android, allowing customers to access their loyalty accounts, check points balances and manage their membership digitally.

By 2018, the app had attracted approximately 1.3 million downloads. However, as customer expectations evolved and competing loyalty apps introduced more sophisticated features, the existing experience was becoming increasingly limited.

Costa Coffee recognised the opportunity to modernise the app, improve usability and introduce new functionality that would make the loyalty programme more convenient and engaging — embarking on a major redesign that would support existing members while attracting new users.

The challenge went beyond the app itself. The new platform needed to work reliably across iOS and Android devices, integrate with existing loyalty, payment and retail systems, and perform consistently during periods of high customer demand.

With an ambitious launch timeline and limited internal testing capacity, Costa Coffee needed a comprehensive quality assurance approach that could support rapid delivery without compromising the customer experience.

> **The challenge was to introduce new digital capabilities at speed while maintaining the reliability, performance and consistency customers expected from Costa Coffee.**

THE SOLUTION

Embedding quality across the digital experience

01

Mobile and functional testing

New and existing journeys validated across a wide range of iOS and Android devices.

02

Performance and integration assurance

Back-end services tested against campaign-driven peaks in customer demand.

03

Automated regression testing

A reusable suite covering more than 80% of regression scripts, run on demand.

04

Scalable onshore and offshore delivery

An integrated model that extended the testing window and reduced cost.

The new Coffee Club app needed to be tested against an ambitious launch timeline, with a strategy that was both time-efficient and cost-effective. Existing knowledge of Costa Coffee's business processes and systems helped support the continuous delivery of the app.

Functional testing was carried out across the new features and redesigned app interface using a wide range of iOS and Android devices, helping ensure customers could access a consistent experience regardless of their chosen platform. Testing also validated existing functionality, including account registration, loyalty points, store information and integration with Costa Coffee's wider digital services.

The engagement extended beyond the mobile interface. Performance testing assessed how the app and its integrated back-end services would respond to different usage scenarios, including periods of increased demand generated by campaigns and promotions.

A key priority was reducing the time required to complete regression testing without sacrificing coverage. A reusable automation suite was developed to validate existing functionality following changes, with tests executed ahead of the working day or immediately after development changes.

The testing approach combined onshore specialists with an offshore delivery team, creating a scalable model that could respond to changing project demands and maintain momentum against demanding release schedules.

> **Over time the automation approach achieved more than 80% regression script coverage, providing a more efficient foundation for ongoing app development.**

SCOPE AND DELIVERY

Testing the complete customer experience



Illustrative representation of the app functionality and supporting systems covered by testing.

Device compatibility

Functional testing across a wide range of iOS and Android devices confirmed a consistent experience regardless of platform, protecting established customer journeys alongside new functionality.

Performance and back-end integration

Testing extended to the wider systems supporting the loyalty programme, assessing how integrated services responded to increased demand from campaigns and promotions.

Financial reporting and data validation

A structured approach to financial report testing increased the detail used to interrogate data before business validation, identifying defects earlier and streamlining sign-off.

Onshore and offshore delivery

Combining onshore specialists with an integrated offshore team created a scalable model, extending the testing window by 30% while reducing testing costs.

Automated regression testing

A reusable automation suite validated existing functionality after every change, running ahead of the working day or immediately following development updates. Over time the approach achieved more than 80% regression script coverage, providing an efficient foundation for ongoing app development.

THE OUTCOMES

Faster testing. Lower costs. Greater confidence.

97%

reduction in regression testing time

Automation transformed regression testing, reducing validation time from eight days to approximately 1.5 hours and enabling significantly faster testing of application changes.

This reduced the effort required for repeat testing and supported more frequent delivery as functionality continued to evolve.

£6,000

saved per release cycle

Reusable automation reduced repeat testing costs.

60%

testing cost savings

Offshore delivery improved efficiency.

30%

longer testing window

Integrated teams extended testing capacity.

1.5m

app downloads

The relaunch achieved significant adoption.

Prepared for exceptional promotional demand

The app supported a major three-day birthday promotion that generated significant customer activity. Performance testing helped prepare the app and its supporting systems for periods of exceptionally high demand.

650,000+
new user registrations

1.8 million
in-store transactions

912,000
digital vouchers redeemed

These figures demonstrate the scale of activity the app was prepared to support; they are not presented as outcomes of testing alone.

Supporting evolving customer needs

Ongoing testing support was also provided for app updates, including during the COVID-19 pandemic — covering functionality designed to reduce physical contact, such as contactless ordering through Costa Express machines and ordering from café tables.

A more responsive approach to delivery

By validating customer-facing functionality alongside supporting integrations, reporting processes and back-end systems, the engagement helped Costa Coffee introduce new services with greater confidence.

About 2i

2i is a specialist testing, quality engineering and assurance consultancy, helping organisations deliver complex technology change with confidence.

As software development accelerates and AI transforms how technology is built, traditional approaches to testing alone are no longer enough. We combine human expertise, intelligent technology and risk-led insight to help organisations move beyond reactive testing towards a more proactive, continuous and informed approach to quality.

Our approach reflects the evolution towards **Quality Intelligence**, bringing together four essential outcomes:

Control

Greater visibility and understanding of quality and risk throughout the technology lifecycle.

Confidence

Evidence-based insight to support faster, better-informed decisions.

Trust

Independent assurance that technology performs reliably, securely and as intended.

Value

Quality that supports business outcomes, reduces risk and enables innovation.

From complex digital transformation and system integration to AI-driven development, we help organisations build quality into every stage of delivery.

Deliver change with confidence.

Discover how 2i can support your next technology programme.

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