

# Case Study

*Big three television network revamps their OTT offerings to provide users with complete digital access to breaking news.*

NBC News, a subsidiary of NBCUniversal, owned by Comcast, and a leading source of global news and information for more than 75 years, wanted to unify their over-the-top (OTT) offerings for NBC News, NBC Today, and MSNBC, and to provide a top-tier digital experience for their audience.

## Challenge

NBCUniversal recently launched a new series of websites and OTT apps for their subsidiary brands. However, the OTT applications for NBC News, NBC Today, and MSNBC operated differently and did not present a unified user experience. NBC wanted to:

- + Unify the three channels across OTT platforms — Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV, and Roku — for easier management, while highlighting the aspects that make each unique.
- + Provide both OTT subscribers and cord-cutters with access to breaking news content, capitalizing on a TV Everywhere model.
- + Create an innovative experience that could be supported by older OTT devices.

*“The app works great and has a lot of content. The notifications are helpful!”*

- APPLE TV REVIEW, DECEMBER 2018

# Solution

NBC chose TribalScale for our ability to produce work ready for client review on a weekly basis. This is a core element of our communicative and iterative process and is how we ensure we are constantly delivering value and meeting business objectives. We built 9 applications, one for each brand across the 3 OTT platforms. A few highlights of the engagement included:

- + **EXTENSIVE FEATURE SET:** Across all 9 applications, we included a carousel to present all 3 brands, a channel carousel, lead-ins for upcoming content, search functionality, user settings, user authentication, and instant play. With the above features, we were able to create and deliver an unparalleled way of consuming news on OTT.
- + **OPTIONS FOR MONETIZATION:** To help NBC capitalize on OTT, we included a free trial period to capture and convert potential subscribers. We also included deep linking on the Roku applications for additional ad-based acquisition.
- + **ACCOMMODATING DEVICES:** There is a broad range of OTT devices, and many older ones do not support product experiences designed and developed for newer devices. We accommodated for this range by recommending specific designs, and by building an experience that could scale to any device, new or old, while achieving all visual fidelities, animations, and design specifications created for a higher-end device.
- + **PAIR PROGRAMMING:** Our engineers paired internally in building the applications, but we also paired with NBC employees to enable knowledge transfer of Agile development, and to ensure they had a complete grasp of the codebase, which allowed for greater post-engagement self-sufficiency.

## TECHNOLOGIES

- + tvOS: Swift
- + FireTV: Kotlin
- + Roku: BrightScript
- + Analytics Engine

# Outcome

Our experienced engineers and designers worked with NBC's teams to ensure the application designs neatly rendered across the wide-range of OTT devices. In cases where modifications were needed, our team advised on development strategy and accommodated the device through specific engineering to ensure we delivered a quality experience for NBC News.

After building, quality assurance testing, and releasing an OTT application per platform, with each having 3 distinct branding options, in just 5 months, NBC was able to make their full-suite of breaking news content available across Apple TV, Fire TV, and Roku. We successfully built and designed OTT applications that dynamically brand themselves on build-time and on run-time.

We built the codebase to be extensible and easy to maintain, and by pairing with NBC News team members across the engagement we set them up for success beyond the handover. Individuals on their team expressed to us how much they learned through pair programming, how it helped with solving complex problems, as well as how much they enjoyed the practice.

Beyond successfully delivering on all 9 applications, we are very pleased we were able to make an impact on their team and how they build software.

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WITH...

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apple tv

*“Unplug from cable! The cost for even the most basic cable service in my neighbourhood had crept up... With this app, we still get our favourite shows over the internet on our smart TV. We can get previous episodes...and with fewer ads.”*

- FIRE TV REVIEW, APRIL 2019

# TRIBAL<sup>7</sup> SCALE

TribalScale is a global innovation firm that helps enterprises adapt and thrive in the digital era. We have years of experience in digital strategy, design, and multi-platform engineering and through agile practices, we transform teams, build best-in-class digital products, and create disruptive startups.

Whether we're righting the ship for another company or creating a fresh end-to-end solution, we innovate for a better tomorrow.

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