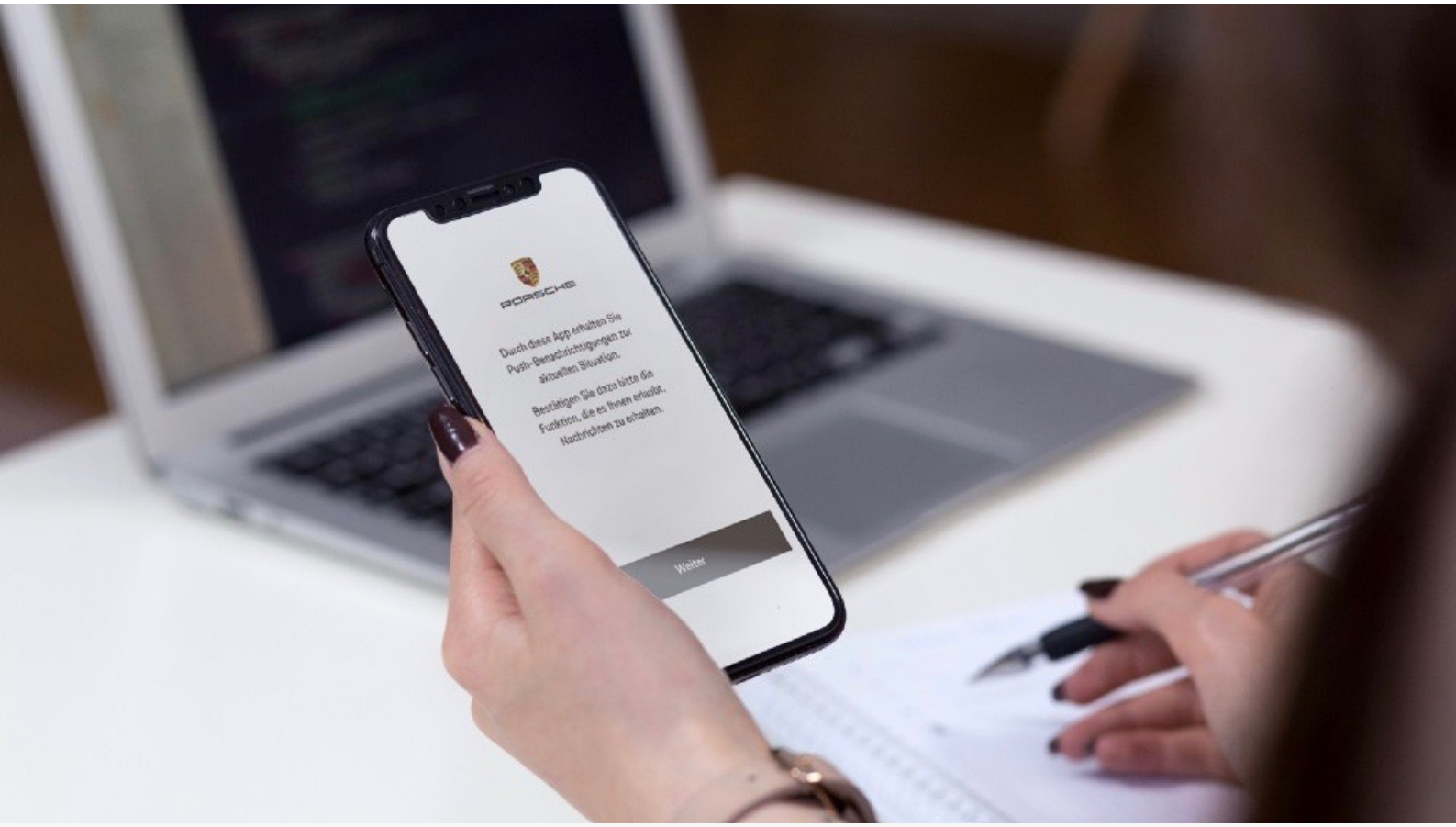


Digital Engineering in Times of Covid-19: Building an app to strengthen internal communications

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12/08/2020 The challenges brought on by Covid-19 demand ingenuity and innovation of companies, but above all: transparency. At Porsche Digital, we have set out to do our part to meet these needs and developed a push app designed to keep Porsche employees informed about the latest developments regarding Covid-19 and its effects on their workplace.

At the beginning of the outbreak of Covid-19 in Germany, the state of knowledge changed every hour. Politics and organizations were forced to react quickly despite the large uncertainty. Like many other organizations, Porsche realized quickly that this needs **a new level of flexibility**— not only regarding business decisions but also for internal communications.

Challenge: How can internal news reach everyone?

In Germany alone, Porsche has 32.000 employees who are either working in offices or in production plants. There's already a **wide range of measures in place to reach and engage employees** such as newsletters, digital communication tools, the intranet or print-outs. Yet, with everyone working remote, Porsche's traditional channels were not sufficient anymore.

Most workers don't have company laptops and therefore only had limited access to internal networks and news. Moreover,**highly current internal communication became even more important due to quickly changing circumstances.** It became clear that Porsche needed to find a new way to reach all employees and keep everyone informed, no matter if they work in an office or a production facility. This was not just a question of enhancing transparency, but more importantly a question of facilitating access to relevant information for all colleagues.

The solution is digital

That's where Porsche Digital stepped in. At Porsche Digital, we work in cross-functional teams that mostly exist of business and marketing experts, UX designers, software engineers and agile coaches on developing new digital products, services and solutions for different use cases. The Carrera Push App is a great example of**how we use digital technology to generate a positive impact.** But let's start at the beginning.

On March 13, one day before we all started working from home, my colleagues Patrick Puritscher, Markus Kieselmann und Javier Donado and I heard about the problem for the first time. Along with our mother company Porsche, we explored easy and accessible digital ways of communicating.

Why we decided to build an app

In the beginning, we discussed many solutions. Initial ideas included an SMS push service, an email newsletter, and a website. But these ideas gradually evaporated in favor of a push app, partly because of privacy concerns, and partly because we decided to **build the solution on Porsche's existing intranet**, Carrera Online.

We agreed on developing the *Carrera Push App* . The app was going to offer Porsche a new channel for reaching every employee in Germany and keeping them informed on a regular basis, regardless of device and location — thereby **creating an extended easy-to-access corporate intranet.**

From the initial idea to roll-out in only one week

After briefing our team, we began developing the *Carrera Push App* (for iOS and Android in parallel) the next day. Besides engineering, we were also responsible for the UX design.

The following Monday, we held a sync meeting with colleagues from Porsche and sharpened our ideas for the app. On Tuesday, we were able to present the final version. It is written in React Native and **works on both major operating systems.**

Together with Porsche, we decided to distribute the *Carrera Push App* as an enterprise app and to create a landing page where the installation process is explained. What is more, the landing page allowed us to**immediately communicate an URL to Porsche employees**. We also used a QR code for that purpose. Communication within the factories and roll-out to the company devices started the next day — only one week after the initial kick-off call.

Creating a fully functional app in such a short period of time was a herculean task for all involved. As the project lead,**I am more than proud of our team at Porsche Digital.**

Hard work pays off: 50% adoption rate after three weeks

But the hard work was well-rewarded: During the first day after the release, already 10.000 employees got registered in the app, which was really exciting for us — and luckily didn't even impress our backend. The run didn't cause a server overload or any other issue.

Since then, Porsche has used the *Carrera Push App* to keep its employees **up to date on the latest developments** (e.g. when will production start again, what kind of hygiene measures are in place, and so on). Fortunately, Porsche could start manufacturing again and now the app keeps informing employees about hygiene and safety measures. As of today, the app has 16.000 users.

What we learned by developing at a fast pace

Despite working remotely, we managed to collaboratively build and roll out the *Carrera Push App* within just one week. **An agile way of working really helped us to achieve our goals:** We define a plan, start executing on it, and if does not work as expected, we change and execute again. Projects like this prove that this way of working helps us to drive the digital transformation. As working as digital engineers, **we aim to develop and deliver digital products and services that are user-oriented, intelligent, innovative and targeted.** The *Carrera Push App* is a great example of that.

Info

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Subline: Patrick Puritscher, Markus Kieselmann und Javier Donado formed the core project team.

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Subline: The outcome of one week of intense work: The Carrera Push App.

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Title: Office Porsche Digital, Ludwigsburg, 2020 Porsche AG
Subline: The engineers of Porsche Digital usually work in Ludwigsburg and Berlin. The Carrera Push App was built remote.

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