



# customer spotlight

## **Napa Group, LLC**

### Accelerating Mobile App Development and Deployment

Innovative wine merchant uses rapid development, testing, and real-time app updates from Ionic Pro.



Acker Auctions, part of Acker Merrall & Condit, is the world's largest wine auction house, the first in Asia and the first to exceed US\$100 million in revenues. [Napa Group, LLC](#), a digital consultancy based in Manhattan, was engaged to meet tight mobile auction application deadlines, and to incorporate innovative auction functionality consistent across platforms. Napa used Ionic Pro to simplify and accelerate the application lifecycle: the development, testing, monitoring and deployment of Acker's semi-monthly auction application.

## Bi-Weekly App Updates

With a live auction every two weeks, the auction application has to be deployed - and stable - within strict timeframes.

Acker previously relied on a vendor developing native apps for each major platform. Adding any functionality across platforms took months, and deploying and debugging via the app stores created another major challenge. According to Mike Sigle, VP of Product Development at Napa Group, "It was a huge risk to go with a native route, simply because of the time crunch." Mike and team decided to choose Ionic instead.

Using the open source [Ionic Framework](#) and [Ionic Pro](#), a suite of cloud-based tools and services for building and delivering Ionic apps, the Napa Group team can push new features in hours. [Ionic Deploy](#), a key feature of Pro, allows the development team to send live updates directly to users, bypassing the traditional app store updates. This is critical as the auction UX was constantly being tweaked and improved based on continuous user-feedback.

Leveraging Ionic's pre-tested [front-end components](#), they are able to add standard mobile display elements without having to worry about margins and borders and compatibility across platforms. Testing and deployment of these tweaks can be almost instant. As Mike

points out, “One of the huge advantages of Ionic is that we can give a working version to our clients almost instantly, without having to go through the app store.”

“The amount of risk goes down exponentially compared to deploying the app on the app store, waiting for it to get reviewed, realizing there’s a bug and taking 2 or 3 more days before you can get a fix uploaded.”

– Mike Sigle, VP of Product Development

### **Rapid Testing, Iteration, and Monitoring**

“One of the huge advantages of using Ionic Pro was to have these different Channels, which are essentially environments to us. We can push code to our Development environment and have QA test it; then we can move it to Staging and do a smoke test; then, with a single button click [using Ionic Deploy] all our code is live to our users. The amount of risk goes down exponentially compared to deploying the app on the app store, waiting for it to get reviewed, realizing there’s a bug and taking 2 or 3 more days before you can get a fix uploaded. That deployment speed is a huge asset for us.”

Another advantage: faster debugging and delivery of stable code with better segregation of errors.

Napa setup Ionic Pro error monitoring and used

versioning within Channels to segregate errors into different queues. During a recent auction they were getting random errors they were not able to reproduce locally. Luckily, they were able to view the full error details provided by [Ionic Monitor](#). Mike observed: “We found it to be very robust during the last auction when a server-side error occurred

and we were able to pinpoint it immediately. Now every time code is tested and pushed, we monitor production in real-time using Ionic Monitor dashboard to watch for errors and track where they are occurring.”

### Familiar Web Languages

The Napa team felt the advantage of working in Ionic’s hybrid development environment, which is based on familiar web languages like JavaScript, CSS, and HTML. “It is outstanding in that regard. We could not have pulled this off without using Ionic. We would have needed to hire a dedicated app person for each platform, a UX designer for each type of platform; it would have been prohibitively costly, and required far more coordination across teams.” The entire development workflow is simplified by having developers work in familiar JavaScript and CSS. The same UX engineer that is working on the website application manages the mobile auction UI.

#### THE CHALLENGES

- Meeting quick two-week development deadlines
- Enhancements to increase user engagement
- Consistent, quality UI across platforms

#### THE SOLUTION

- Ionic Pro accelerated test, monitor and deploy
- Simplified application development environment
- Single UX designer working with Javascript and CSS

#### THE BENEFITS

- Faster, more stable auction application
- Increased engagement with end-users
- Capacity to add new features quickly
- Smaller development teams and less development cost