

# Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS) Built and Released a New App in Just 3 Months



Industry:  
Travel

Company Size:  
30,000+

## THE CHALLENGE: OFFERING A STREAMLINED, PERSONALIZED TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS), the national railway system in the Netherlands, plays an indispensable role in millions of people’s daily lives by providing train, bike and car transportation options across the country. To help fulfill the company’s goal of making the door-to-door journey as pleasant as possible, NS offers its users a website and an app for full-service trip planning.

The company wanted to better serve customers by providing a more streamlined, inclusive and personalized experience. Its IT team was planning a move from waterfall methodology to agile methodology, which required its testers to significantly scale up the volume of tests. To accomplish this, the company needed to increase test coverage, both in the app and across more browsers and devices. Unfortunately, testing was already a painfully slow and manual process, with testers relying on their own infrastructure and phones to complete the task. These practices left testing incomplete and inconsistent, leading to negative experiences for customers.

“Not every device and not all browsers were tested,” Serge van Veenendaal, a NS non-functional test specialist, explains. “There simply wasn’t time to test it all manually, so there were more errors than we wanted.”

Another problem that the company struggled with was the onboarding of staff. Introducing new employees to their automation processes was slow and painful. “Before, when new people were hired, they had to learn what types of tests had to be performed, which kinds of browsers or devices needed to be tested, etc. We had many teams and a lot of tribal knowledge,” van Veenendaal shares. Without a centralized system, this onboarding and knowledge sharing was difficult. NS needed to make a change and started researching industry-leading, cross-browser, cross-platform testing options.

“NS is extremely satisfied with Sauce Labs. It now uses a local data center, which helps the company avoid security issues while improving performance time by 50 percent. “Now, testing is faster and more thorough,” van Veenendaal says. “If we have any issues, we find them quickly. It’s simply more efficient to work with one dashboard and one tool.”



**Serge van Veenendaal**  
Non-Functional Test Specialist, Nederlandse Spoorwegen

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## THE SOLUTION: AN AUTOMATED, CLOUD-BASED TESTING SOLUTION

In a thorough evaluation of testing solutions, the NS testers were impressed with Sauce Labs, citing the solution's intuitiveness and dashboard as differentiators. "The ease of working stood out," van Veenendaal says. "For example, working with the cross-browser tests really make a difference." Ultimately, the company chose Sauce Labs because of its wide, reliable testing coverage, local data center and outstanding customer support.

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## THE RESULTS: IMPROVING PERFORMANCE BY 50% AND RESPONDING FASTER TO CUSTOMER NEEDS

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And the perks of using Sauce Labs extend beyond the testing department. "The developers use Sauce Labs from their local environments and are very happy with all the possibilities. They can test and check all the things they want to know, seeing in real time if a new feature is broken," van Veenendaal says.

Perhaps most important of all, NS can provide customers with a better experience. "We're able to offer our customers a more personalized experience," van Veenendaal explains. "It feels like a trusted environment, where they feel comfortable sharing personal and financial information." Using Sauce Labs has also allowed the company to respond faster to customer needs. When COVID-19 impacted travel, NS built and released a new app in three months to help customers. Previously, that would have taken the company much longer. The team at NS believes this innovation is just the beginning.

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## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE: MORE PERSONALIZED CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

Next, the company wants to offer a complete vacation-planning platform. To support this initiative, NS will continue to rely on its partnership with Sauce Labs and is interested in seeing what other new features and products Sauce Labs can provide in enhancing their customers' experience. "In the future, we hope to be able to provide customers with the opportunity to plan their entire trip from our site," van Veenendaal says. "Whether that's booking the train, buying tickets for museums or making reservations for restaurants, we want to offer an even more personalized experience."

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