



Glovo's transition from CI-as-a-Service to Orka

About Glovo

Glovo is a Spanish, tech-first company that connects businesses, customers and couriers around the globe. They have achieved enormous growth through innovation across their business model and mobile application, which serves as the heart of their operation.

Founded in 2014, Glovo has embraced adaptation and social responsibility as their path to success. Initially, Glovo provided a straightforward courier service comprised of "Buy Something" and "Send Something" options, but they soon expanded their mobile application to include an online marketplace leveraging advanced tech and introducing a vast network of couriers and businesses.

From there, Glovo expanded rapidly across the globe in their quest to serve local communities by enabling people to quickly find what they need in their city, while striving to aid local economies by paying local taxes, aligning courier compensation with local living standards and more.

Before MacStadium

Before transitioning to MacStadium in late 2020, Glovo's DevOps processes were run with a third-party, Continuous Integration as a Service (ClaaS) provider. They were running 10 concurrent builds, which were managed entirely through the ClaaS provider. However, as the company's expansion continued, they were met with the need to remove bottlenecks in their development process to quickly iterate on their mobile application and meet market demand.

One core barrier was the time required for continuous integration (CI) builds to execute with their ClaaS provider. Because the service was completely managed, there were limited choices in macOS build infrastructure, which was compounding the challenge of extended development cycles required to deliver new application features and continue building its active, global user base.



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Who:

Glovo is a Spanish, tech-first company that connects businesses, customers, and couriers around the globe.

Situation:

Glovo's processes were growing more quickly than their chosen ClaaS solution could handle, which caused significant bottlenecks in their CI buildtimes.

Solution:

The Glovo team transitioned to Orka on a powerful Mac cloud with MacStadium to handle their iOS app development processes.

Impact:

Glovo achieved a 30% reduction in build time, allowing them to increase development throughput and scale the organization faster.



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Closing the Feedback Loop

Transitioning Glovo's iOS DevOps processes to MacStadium's Orka, enabled the company to leverage much more powerful macOS compute resources and dramatically reduce build times. "MacStadium helped us massively reduce the feedback cycle for our mobile engineers," says a lead iOS engineer with Glovo.

This was the result of reduced wait time for iOS developers to execute their CI tests – to ensure that the code they were pushing wasn't introducing bugs into the codebase. This extended to reduce context switching for developers and made for more efficient development cycles for new app features.

Integrating with Orka

Ultimately, Glovo was able to shift their iOS CI processes to Orka with minimal changes to their overall development pipeline. They chose Jenkins as a build orchestrator and found that the Jenkins plugin for Orka made the transition quick and easy. In fact, "from the developers' point of view, nothing really changed," said Glovo's iOS engineer.

"It was super easy to integrate Orka with Jenkins. With only a few lines of code, we could run jobs."

In terms of DevOps processes, the biggest change in Glovo's migration from a third-party ClaaS provider was the need to manage base images used to spin up macOS VMs; however, this was a welcome challenge as having a greater degree of granular control over the images themselves is essential for reducing build times, and they've been able to achieve this with Orka.

Impact on Glovo

In Glovo's original migration from a third-party ClaaS provider to MacStadium, they achieved an initial 30% reduction in build times by only using half of the maximum capacity of each node. "Now that we have been testing the new M1 support from MacStadium, we have seen a build time reduction of approximately 58% accross our projects," explained Glovo's iOS engineer.

"MacStadium has helped us increase the throughput of our engineers and enabled us to scale faster. It has also given us much more control [over] our resources."



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Glovo's engineers were quick to leverage the greater control they suddenly had over their macOS compute resources by implementing a cache mechanism that helped them reduce build times even more.

Glovo has grown their Orka cluster multiple times to maintain pace as their development teams have continued to scale up. Currently, they are testing the new M1 nodes and Glovo's iOS engineer explained that "we experienced such impressive improvements that we are planning to upgrade our cluster from Intel to ARM machines."

Conclusion

Scaling their infrastructure in parallel with their team's expansion has been a major challenge for Glovo, as their industry-leading growth has continually been fueled by technical innovation. The granular control over macOS compute resources that Orka offers and the flexibility to add nodes and adjust their contract at any given time has proven to be key for Glovo to drive continued innovation and achieve rapid and efficient growth.

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Contact us to learn more about how Orka can improve the efficiency of your iOS and macOS development workflows.