10 REASONS TO CHOOSE APPLAUSE

What sets Applause apart? Let us show you.
Delivering a winning app is becoming more challenging – and even more important. Companies around the world are realizing that if they want to win and keep users, they need to produce high quality apps right from the start.

To do this, top companies are embracing a 360° approach to app quality – one that spans the entire software development lifecycle - starting with planning, extending through development and testing and continuing when your app is in the hands of real users.

Covering all these bases and gathering all this information might seem challenging, but Applause provides a unique approach that empowers you to produce winning apps at every step of the app lifecycle.

In this eBook, we’ll introduce uTest, our global community of professional testers, and highlight ten reasons why choosing Applause will give you the services, tools and results you need to succeed in today’s modern apps economy.
TESTING COVERAGE

Do all of your users live in the same city as you? Probably not. That’s why Applause has a global community of professional testers to provide testing coverage where your users live, work and play.

TESTING ON REAL NETWORKS

The network connection in your lab may be great, but can you confidently say the same for all of your users? You need to test your application under the conditions your users encounter everyday – a busy airport, a rural area, walking through the tall buildings of a city. Your users won’t always have a perfect connection and you need to know how your app will respond. All our testing is done in the locations and situations your users encounter everyday.
LOCATION-BASED TESTING MADE POSSIBLE •• Even if you have your employees spend a day walking around testing a mobile app in different locations or you test your web app’s load time on your mom’s less-than-stellar internet connection, you’re still only getting a small snapshot of real use cases. To get an accurate representation you’d have to send testers around the world to test different scenarios. Applause has testers ready and waiting where you need them – so there’s no need to book plane tickets.

EASY EXPANSION •• If you’re looking to expand your app’s presence to new markets, Applause has a vetted community of professional testers – familiar with our standards and platform – ready to go. With testers all over the globe, we have just about every corner of the world covered.
TESTING MATRIX COVERAGE

The days of one computer, one operating system, one browser and tethered use are long gone. The testing matrix has exploded and testing teams are doing all they can to keep up.

DEVICE FRAGMENTATION • • Think about every Android device you can. Now add a handful (or two) of iOS devices, some up-and-coming Windows Phone devices and extra tablets like the Nook and Kindle Fire. How many different screen sizes, feature sets and UIs is that? Did we mention operating system versions? If you’re feeling a bit dizzy, don’t worry. Applause gives you access to every hardware and software combination your users are likely to encounter in the real world so you don’t need to stock a warehouse-sized test lab.

KEEPING UP WITH NEW RELEASES • • Our global community is filled with tech enthusiasts. As soon as a new device hits the market, they snap it up. When a new OS version is released, they update some of their devices while keep others running older versions to continue testing all scenarios. It is incredibly expensive and time consuming keeping up with each new device and every OS update, so let our community do it for you.
**FRINGE USE CASE COVERAGE**  •  •  If you need to test on rare hardware or an uncommon matrix combination it can be hard to find a testing solution that can easily accommodate your needs. Access to so many different testers makes it easier for Applause to fulfill your needs. If it’s really unusual, we’re happy to work with you to get the coverage you need.

**SIMULATORS & EMULATORS DON’T CUT IT**  •  •  Simulators and emulators are good for early testing and to catch obvious flaws, but at the end of the day, they’re not real devices used by real people. Can a person easily hit a button with their finger? Is the load time fast enough for the patience of an actual user? People are constantly installing, deleting, opening and closing apps – how does your app respond based on available resources? It all comes back to your application working under real conditions that can’t be simulated in a lab.
CUSTOM TESTING TEAMS

Applause meticulously profiles our testers to keep track of hardware and software availability, demographic details, location, languages, work history and experience. Once community members begin taking test cycles, we track their work. All this gives us the insights to build the best possible teams for your specific needs.

COMPLETE TESTER PROFILES • • At Applause, you’re not just getting a random tester off the street. Every tester fills out a comprehensive profile to help us match the best testers to your project. Having testers who mimic your target audience as much as possible results in more useful feedback. Applause can also work to find testers with more specific demographic requirements – such as testers with children; frequent travelers; members of certain banks, services or organizations; etc.
TESTER EXPERIENCE •• For each of our five testing types, we ask testers to rate themselves as Expert, Intermediate or Novice. We also allow testers to upload their resume and add an About Me section so we can learn about any QA training, certifications and experience.

FINDING EXPERTS •• Within our global community, we have distinguished experts and specialists who have practiced their craft for years – if not decades. We are able to tap these highly-skilled individuals to help with tasks such as usability audits, security testing, test case authoring, automation script creation and load script writing.

TESTER RATINGS •• Members of the global community are assigned ratings based on their activity level and customer approvals (based on the quality of the tester’s work). Reporting bugs that are consistently rejected will lower a tester’s rating. Testers receive an individual rating for each testing type so customers can see where a particular tester excels.
INSTANT, PRIVATE RESULTS

If you’re testing a brand new product, you don’t want the world – or potential competition – to know it’s coming. Applause has several practices in place to make sure your application stays private.

CUSTOM PLATFORM •• Applause has built a custom, cloud-hosted platform to get your pre-public application to our testers. Once uploaded, your app is only available to testers who have been invited to your test cycle. When testing is done, access can be cut off. At no time will your test application be accessible to the general public or to our entire community.

CLOSED COMMUNITY •• Unlike other crowdsourcing options or beta testing where your project is open to random people with little protection, the global community by Applause is closed. Members must sign up and are vetted and closely monitored. We provide testers with a handbook that outlines our policies and only testers who pass a quiz based on the handbook will receive project invitations.
GLOBAL COMMUNITY RULES •• Applause enforces a Tester Code of Conduct that strictly forbids discussing projects, companies or applications under test outside the Applause Platform. It also prohibits using public file sharing sites for Applause work. Our Community Management Team monitors the global community to ensure testers are acting in a professional manner according to our standards. If we feel a tester has violated the code they will be removed from the community immediately.

NDAs •• Part of the policies that testers are expected to follow is a standard Non-Disclosure Agreement. If you would like, the testers on your specific projects can sign an additional NDA provided by your company before seeing test cycle details.
With other testing solutions, you may never meet anyone from your team. If you rely on DIY crowdsourced sites, you might not even have a real person to talk to. Applause is different. You’re provided with the opportunity to collaboratively engage with real people and even get the chance to meet the key players on your team.

**EXPERIENCED PROJECT MANAGERS**  •  Every Applause customer is assigned an experienced project manager (PM). Before each test cycle, you’ll have an in-depth call with your PM to discuss things like scope, tester demographics, desired results, measurements of success, etc. Your PM, or an assigned back-up, is on call at all times should anything arise – no need to deal with a generic help line.
APPLAUSE’S PROJECT MANAGEMENT TEAM HAS PLAYED AN ENORMOUS ROLE IN OUR SUCCESS. THEY ARE AVAILABLE ON IM AT ALL HOURS OF THE DAY AND THEY ARE ALWAYS THERE WHEN YOU NEED THEM.

JESS KAHN
VP OF ENGINEERING, TAPULOUS
**MEET US**  •  •  We want to make sure everything is going well when you work with Applause, so our project managers and customer success managers are happy to come by for an in-person visit. This helps them get a better feel for your product, company, practices and QA dreams. We’re also constantly at conferences around the world and make time to meet with customers in the area. You can even meet some of our testers at our Meetups, which take place in major cities around the globe.

**KNOW YOUR TESTERS**  •  •  When you launch a test cycle with Applause, you’re not putting a project out there and waiting for random people to come. Applause will select the appropriate team every time and you can always review the profiles of each tester. You can even add your favorite testers to a list to make sure they’re invited back. You can also communicate directly with your test team via tools like Tester Messenger and Live Chat during and immediately following the test cycle, allowing you to address issues, answer questions and get clarification faster.
I LOVE THE CAPABILITY OF SELECTING MY OWN TESTERS - I USE THE ‘FAVORITES’ FEATURE ALL THE TIME. WHEN WE GET A BUG FROM CERTAIN TESTERS WE TRUST WE SAY TO OURSELVES, “WE REALLY NEED TO LOOK AT THIS RIGHT AWAY.”

RAFAEL E. SANTOS
VP OF PRODUCT, ROCKET MATTER
You can hire new testers and let employees go occasionally, but overall, internal QA teams are fairly static and don’t allow for much flexibility. Applause offers an alternative that gives you the testers you need, when you need them.

**FLEXIBLE TEAM SIZES**  
Testing needs are going to be drastically different under different circumstances – such as releasing a brand new mobile app on the gamut of Android devices versus updating a website intended to support a handful of select browsers. Trying to house a team for all the different testing scenarios you’re likely to run up against is burdensome – in-house teams can only be so big.

With Applause, your test team can be just the right size at just the right time. From a few testers to a few dozen, it’s all up to you and your current demands. If you feel you’re not getting the coverage or results you need, your project manager can invite more testers to fill the gaps mid-cycle.
TESTERS WHEN YOU NEED THEM •• The final rush before a release can be crazy. The more hands on deck – or eyes on app – the better when it comes to end-stage bug hunting. But building up internal testing teams for a short period of intense work is costly and impractical. Applause puts testers at your fingertips so you can build teams, with little on-ramping, whenever you need them most. When a test cycle is finished those testers are done; not just sitting around waiting for your next project. When you’re ready to test an update, you can start from scratch with new testers, or invite some of your favorites back (or a little of both).

MULTIPLE TEAMS AT ONCE •• Whether you have several projects in the pipeline, are interested in regression testing while you continue forging ahead or want to cover several test cases at once, having a large community of testers means you can run multiple test cycles at the same time. Instead of internal teams working on only a few things at a time, separate teams of testers can cover more ground simultaneously. This can dramatically shorten your testing timetable and get you to market faster.
APPLAUSE HELPED VIRALHEAT AVOID THE POTENTIAL COST OF A DEDICATED QA ENGINEER AND OBTAIN TESTING SERVICES AT A FRACTION OF THE COST.

MARK LUBARSKY
DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING, VIRALHEAT
REDUCED COST

Hiring and training new employees is time consuming and having in-house staff is expensive. Applause enables you to run with a leaner internal QA team and can help lower your overall testing overhead.

MORE AFFORDABLE THAN OUTSOURCING

When working with an outsourced testing company, you’re often locked into a strict contract that doesn’t leave much room for change or adjustments. If your QA plan isn’t 100% perfect or doesn’t go according to plan it will cost you extra to correct or redo entirely. Add the challenge of potential time zone differences and the lack of communication commonly experienced with outsourcing and the whole process can become drawn out, complicated and frustrating. With Applause, we make our services fit your needs, whatever they may be. Want more testers? Need to update the scope? Want to extend the testing time frame? Need to get ahold of a project manager over the weekend? We make it easy.
CHEAPER THAN A FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE •• A full-time employee is expensive – salary, healthcare, benefits, resources, etc. On-ramping carries the latent cost of time and lost productivity. If the employee doesn’t work out it’s all a waste. If you don’t have work to keep employees busy, you’re not getting your money’s worth and are essentially paying for people you don’t need. For startups, the cost of a full time employee – let alone enough in-house testers to sufficiently cover the testing matrix – can be insurmountable.

IMPROVED ROI •• The ROI of software testing can be hard to measure, but the price of buggy software can be devastating – both to your bottom line and to your brand’s reputation. There are some things you can measure though: the number of post-launch bugs, time-to-market, overall QA costs, etc. Plus the cost of keeping test devices in-house – not just the cost of buying the devices, but the added cost of maintenance, such as power and contract bills. It all adds up and if the company execs feel QA is costing too much, taking too long and not proving its worth, it can spell trouble for testing teams. Applause has helped companies increase the ROI of their QA efforts.

FUN FACT
Analyst firm IDC spoke with Jane Lisinker-Koroboc, Director of Quality, Escalations, and IT Desktop Support at Trulia, about the company’s results with Applause. Trulia experienced:

280% QA return on investment
95% reduction in testing costs
10-15% customer base increase

LEARN MORE
Applause is a great supplement to internal testing teams. Your team knows your product and processes, but testing an entire application is a tedious task. Leveraging Applause gives your team more freedom to work on mission critical projects while making sure testing tasks big and small are completed.

**ROUTINE & REGRESSION TESTING**

Routine tests often turn up common bugs or no bugs at all (that’s why they’re routine). Constantly performing tests that are designed to, and often do, pass can wear on your team and make them complacent.

Regression testing is another situation that becomes automatic. If everything was done correctly, nothing should be broken. It’s easy to overlook bugs in regression testing if you assume everything is fine. Shifting these mundane testing tasks to the crowd means you get a new set of eyes and a fresh perspective from testers who aren’t too close to the project.
**FREEDOM TO FOCUS ON DIFFICULT TASKS**  •  Taking these small tasks that often have the same results off the plate of your in-house team gives them time to focus on more critical bugs, larger problems and trickier areas. Knowing these tests will still get done will help your team focus more intensely and feel more confident about the product’s quality.

**BEEF UP SMALL TEAMS**  •  Not all companies can afford an in-house testing team, but that doesn’t mean they should skip QA. Build your dream testing team through Applause while keeping your in-house team small. This is particularly helpful for startups, who need to keep overhead low while getting their product or service off the ground. Many companies with a single internal QA manager have found that Applause gives them easy-to-manage comprehensive coverage that they’re unable to achieve themselves.
WE NEEDED A QA AND TESTING SOLUTION THAT COULD BE PART OF OUR IN-HOUSE TEAM. WE HAVE SUCH A CLOSE KNIT TEAM AND WE WANTED TO KEEP THAT CULTURE, SO TRADITIONAL OUTSOURCING WAS NOT EVEN AN OPTION. OF COURSE, WE ALSO NEEDED EXPERTS WHO COULD HIT THE GROUND RUNNING.

TIM CARLSON
DIR. OF MOBILE PRODUCT DEV & OPERATIONS, USA TODAY
This is a fast-paced world and with the addition of Agile and continuous integration, you need QA practices that can match your cadence. Applause is able to produce results that fit just about any timeline.

In an outsourcing arrangement, you have to wait for a tester or team to become available. If you’re working with the latest devices, operating systems or versions it can take extra time to get those resources in house. We constantly work with our community to get the latest releases and stay ahead of any potential customer needs. With a community so large, it’s easier to fulfill requirements and start testing quickly.
FAST TURNAROUND • • Some test cycles can be completed in as little as 48 hours (your project manager will be able to give you a timeframe after discussing your specific project). Because our testers work on their own time (often at night or over the weekend) you are not bound by traditional office hours. Plus, you have more than one tester working on the project, which means faster results. It’s not unusual for teams to push a new build to Applause on Friday afternoon and have results waiting for them on Monday morning.

ADJUSTMENTS ARE EASY • • With Applause, if we notice something is not going according to plan a cycle can be paused, adjusted and reactivated. It’s easy to make changes along the way to get the best possible results.

EASILY INTEGRATES WITH FAST PACES • • Applause has worked with many companies using fast moving development methods like Agile or continuous integration. With flexible, on-demand teams it’s easy to fit testing in when you need it. Testers can be working while your developers are still coding and can provide quick results to keep your process moving smoothly.
Beta testing relies on general users, not professional testers. Outsourced testing is professional, but takes a lot of time. With the vetted crowdsourced model by Applause, you get the best work from professional testers quickly. We even have practices in place to reduce the noise-to-signal bug ratio.

**ONLY APPROVED BUGS GET PAID**  Testers are incented to report high quality bugs because bugs are approved or rejected by the customer. Duplicate, out-of-scoop or unhelpful bugs that are rejected do not result in payment.

The customer approval system – which allows customers to rate bugs as “exceptionally valuable,” “very valuable” or “somewhat valuable” (each carrying its own pay grade) – means testers are careful to only report new, in-scoop bugs, cutting down on the noise for your team.
USING APPLAUSE ALLOWS US TO BE FLEXIBLE, AS TEST CYCLES CAN BE STARTED VERY QUICKLY WITH IMMEDIATE FEEDBACK.

MARK LUBARSKY
DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING, VIRALHEAT
TESTING AND MONITORING YOUR APP \n
Testing and monitoring your app doesn’t stop once it is in production. You need to keep a constant eye on how your app is being received by the market and how it resonates with users. We understand that regardless of what development methodology you use (waterfall, lean, agile) your main objective is to earn user applause pre-launch and measure user applause post-launch. Because of this, we offer testing services and tools that span the entire SDLC.

DESIGN + DEVELOP

When you’re in the beginning stages of designing your app, don’t forget to turn to us for help! Our usability and security testing are perfect fits for the early stages of app development as our experts can assess your app and let you know of potential vulnerabilities or hinderances to use before you even get QA involved with your app. By taking action early you can be ahead of the curve and get to market faster.
**TEST + RELEASE**

Users demand an app that performs well, moves quickly, and is intuitive, stable and secure. We put your app through its paces by leveraging our community of professional testers to let you understand how your app will work in the real-world by testing with real people on real devices across locations and use cases that match your actual users. From our functional testing, to load testing, to Automation, we have you covered for all your pre-release testing needs.

**LISTEN + LEARN**

You’ve tested your app and you’re ready to launch, right? Almost. There is one final stage prior to pushing an app to production that will allow you to get your app in the hands of actual users pre-release to gather early feedback - beta management. Mobile Beta Management from Applause enables you to run a successful beta program that will drive high engagement rates, generate value app quality data, and delight participants when you finally push your app live.

**ANALYZE + PLAN**

Your users are talking, but are you listening? Now that your app is live it’s time to tap into user feedback. Applause Analytics is a user sentiment tool that continuously crawls more than half of a billion user reviews and star ratings from app stores around the world and turns app store noise into actionable insights that drives quicker, more informed decisions.
In addition to managed testing services, Applause app quality tools help you stay more connected to your users and the health of your apps. Applause has the tools you need to succeed in the high-stakes apps economy.

**360° APP QUALITY™ DASHBOARD**

All your testing tools and services are in one convenient place with the 360° App Quality™ Dashboard. With modules for testing services, app analytics, crash reporting and more, you can keep your finger on the pulse of your apps.

The dashboard puts you in the drivers seat of managing your app’s quality. Requesting new test cycles is only a few clicks away. And it’s easy to stay connected to your testing team. You can ask a question of your enterprise project manager or communicate directly with a tester.
MOBILE BETA MANAGEMENT

Your users ultimately define app quality, so why wouldn’t you want to include them in your app development? Mobile Beta Management is a SaaS solution that helps brands drive successful mobile beta programs. How? By removing the traditional constraints and limitations that other mobile beta tools impose, while delivering simple, mobile-first user workflows that lead to high engagement rates, more valuable user feedback, and higher quality apps.

APPLAUSE ANALYTICS

Your users are talking. Are you listening? Applause Analytics provides insight into what users are saying about your apps in the real world. It crawls every rating and review from the top app stores and distills the noise into actionable intelligence that drives quicker and more informed decisions.
MOBILE AND WEB TEST AUTOMATION

In today’s agile world, winning apps need to evolve at a breakneck pace, but focusing on improving and extending your apps is difficult when every build runs the risk of breaking a previously working function. Test Automation from Applause is a full service offering that ensures your mobile and web apps are behaving consistently from one build to the next.
Applause is leading the app quality revolution by enabling companies to deliver digital experiences that win – from web to mobile to wearables and beyond. By combining in-the-wild testing services, software tools and analytics, Applause helps companies achieve the 360° app quality™ they need to thrive in the modern apps economy. Thousands of companies – including Google, Fox, Amazon, Box, Concur and Runkeeper – choose Applause to launch apps that delight their users.

Applause in-the-wild testing services span the app lifecycle, including functional, test automation, usability, localization, load and security.

Applause app quality tools help companies stay connected to their users and the health of their apps with Mobile Beta Management, Applause Analytics, and the Applause SDK.

The company is headquartered near Boston, with offices in San Mateo, Seattle, Germany, Israel, Poland, and the UK. Since launching as uTest in 2008, Applause has raised more than $80 million in funding, generated triple-digit revenue growth annually, made consecutive Inc. 500 appearances and was named the 7th Most Promising Company in America by Forbes in 2014.