



# THE ALTERNATIVE TO OUTSOURCED TESTING

How crowdsourced testing has changed  
the game for software companies

## THE PROBLEM WITH OUTSOURCING

**T**wice the headache and half the quality. This is how a growing segment of the software industry has come to regard outsourcing or “offshoring.” Tired of being burned by deadline challenges, cultural barriers, inflexible contracts, hidden costs and a loss of control and quality, software professionals are abandoning offshore firms at a time when comprehensive testing coverage and app quality has never been more important.

With a rapidly growing number of connected devices operating under different conditions in different locations, more eyes than ever are on your app. Quality is no longer merely a gut check, it’s table stakes – your app has to work the first time and every time or you’ll suffer major consequences.

Yet traditional outsourcing isn’t equipped to solve these problems. Stagnant, stationary and inflexible, outsourcing firms aren’t set up to meet the new challenges of today’s apps economy. That’s why many companies large and small are turning to crowdsourcing companies that offer comprehensive app quality.

Applause enables companies to take a 360° approach to app quality. From unparalleled in-the-wild testing services to app quality tools for every stage of the app lifecycle, Applause fills the gaps traditional outsourcing can’t.



THE SHEER VARIATION OF TESTING YOU CAN ACCOMPLISH THROUGH APPLAUSE IS AMAZING. THERE'S NO BETTER WAY TO ACHIEVE THIS TYPE OF BROAD TESTING COVERAGE - TRADITIONAL OUTSOURCING WOULDN'T HAVE EVEN COME CLOSE.

ALEX BEN-ARI

VP OF RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT, GINGER SOFTWARE

# COST

**THE PROBLEM WITH OUTSOURCING** •• Offshoring used to be a cost effective route to expanding your testing team, but the cost advantage is disappearing. Even with an offshore firm, companies often need someone internally not only to manage the outsourced team but to handle issues such as irrelevant or incorrect bugs.

The hidden costs of offshoring don't remain hidden for long. Fixed contracts don't take into account the downtime or intense testing phases of the modern software development life cycle. Negotiating overtime

during peak testing can be costly and exhausting. Not to mention if your testing priorities change before your contract ends you'll spend significant time, energy and money to renegotiate the scope of work and get the offshore team re-focused.

**THE APPLAUSE ADVANTAGE** •• Applause allows you to test when you need it – on schedule or spur of the moment. For about the cost of a full time test engineer, you have access to dynamic testing to match your needs. Scale teams up and down as necessary and get access to experts when you need them most.

In addition, Applause handles the intricacies of tester management, weeding out noise, tester payout and questions and even pre-triaging bugs to provide you with the most relevant and actionable intelligence.

**“WE WANTED THE ABILITY TO TEST  
ACROSS BROWSERS AND PLATFORMS  
IN A WAY THAT COULD SAVE US TIME  
AND MONEY. APPLAUSE ENABLED US TO  
DO JUST THAT.”**

**- ALLEN LIN**

QA MANAGER, INTERNET BRANDS



# REAL WORLD COVERAGE

**THE PROBLEM WITH OUTSOURCING** •• Does testing in a single offshore location provide enough real world coverage? No.

The increasing number of devices, carriers, operating systems, browsers and locations makes real world testing outside the lab a necessity for a successful product launch. However, when companies offshore their testing, they're typically only moving their lab to an offshore firm, meaning they still don't have the real world coverage they need. This often leads to the risk of real world bugs going unnoticed.

When it comes to finding bugs under true real-world conditions, offshoring or using an outsourcing company with testers in a single location isn't a sufficient solution.

## IN-THE-WILD TESTING

Learn how moving a portion of your testing out of the lab and into the wild produces better results and higher quality apps.

[LEARN MORE](#)

“BECAUSE WE’RE BUILDING SOMETHING THAT WORKS ACROSS MANY DIFFERENT PLATFORMS, IT’S VERY IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE TO TEST ACROSS THE WHOLE MATRIX. WE DON’T HAVE THE RESOURCES TO DO THAT INTERNALLY. IT’S A LOT OF WORK. SO APPLAUSE WAS A GREAT FIT.”

- MATT THAZHMON  
CEO, POWERINBOX



**THE APPLAUSE ADVANTAGE** •• The Applause global community of testers gives you access to a variety of devices, operating systems, carriers and more. This gives you an advantage no amount of lab-based testing can – it allows you to put your app through its paces under the same conditions it will face in the hands of your users.

And with a community as large as ours, no testing requirement is too obscure. Whether you want to test on an older version of a browser or the latest (hard-to-get) device, the Applause community gives you the access you need.

With real world testing coverage from Applause, companies are able to launch apps that work as well in the hands of their end users as they do in the lab.

# TIME FRAME

**THE PROBLEM WITH OUTSOURCING** •• Testing requires fast communication, and with offshoring that is not always what you get. Time zone differences can push questions and answers days apart. If a problem is pushed back and forth, several days or even weeks might pass before a resolution is found.

Some companies push their offshore tester(s) to match more of their own workday hours. However, this often puts offshore testers up late into the night resulting in poor work quality due to exhaustion. And no matter what

hours your testers keep, the team is likely still bound by set hours, making moving quickly even more difficult. The geographical divide of offshoring can make a fast-paced workflow nearly impossible.



**THE APPLAUSE ADVANTAGE** •• Applause has offices and testers around the globe, eliminating the communication lag caused by time zone differences. Companies get a dedicated project manager who is available at all times to answer questions or address concerns. Projects are also assigned a Test Team Lead (TTL) to help address tester questions and keep the work moving smoothly.

Applause also enables the in-house QA manager to contact testers directly through an online platform – greatly improving the communication process. If a bug or survey response seems vague or out-of-scope – or if an urgent issue arises – your TTL will address it or you can communicate with the tester yourself.

Additionally, our testers work on their own hours, meaning your test cycle is not bound by traditional 9-5 schedules. Some Applause customers release a build on Friday and have results waiting for them on Monday or even produce a daily build and have it tested while they're home sleeping. Your 8 hour work day can effectively become 24 hours, and your 5 day work week can become 7 days just like that.

**“WITH A TYPICAL OUTSOURCING FIRM, YOU CAN HAVE 50 CONTRACTED TESTERS SITTING AROUND UNTIL IT’S TIME FOR YOU TO TEST. APPLAUSE HAS TESTERS THAT ARE AVAILABLE 24/7, 365 DAYS A YEAR. BETTER YET, THEY’RE AVAILABLE ON PRACTICALLY NO NOTICE AT ALL, WHICH ALLOWS US TO ESSENTIALLY COMPRESS 50 DAYS OF TESTING INTO A 24-HOUR PERIOD.”**

**- BOB DOUBELL**  
SENIOR TESTER, MET OFFICE



# CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

**THE PROBLEM WITH OUTSOURCING** •• Language and time zone differences can hinder effective communication, but so can the lack of cultural understanding. The daily life, schedules, holiday practices and meaning of words are vastly different from culture to culture. These are all things that can further complicate your work with offshore firms.

Every country's language, culture, currency, taxes, humor, entertainment and standards are different and your testers need to have a deep knowledge of these factors to accurately test your app.

This knowledge is highly specialized and a lack of understanding may result in software containing inaccuracies which can confuse, offend or drive away your users.

“SINCE NONE OF OUR STAFF WERE LOCATED IN GERMANY, FRANCE AND MANY OTHER COUNTRIES WHERE WE WERE OFFERING OUR PRODUCTS AT THE TIME, APPLAUSE WAS AN IDEAL SOLUTION. WE REALLY NEEDED NATIVE SPEAKERS FOR THIS ASSIGNMENT. THESE ARE THE COUNTRIES WHERE WE’RE SELLING OUR PRODUCTS, SO IT WAS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT THE MATERIAL WAS ACCURATE AND MADE SENSE.”

- MARK BEARE

FOUNDING PARTNER, REVIVERSOFT



**THE APPLAUSE ADVANTAGE** •• The Applause global community of testers gives you easy access to native cultural knowledge. Apps can be tested in any language or culture by testers who truly know what they’re observing. Whether your app is designed for the US or Australia, France or Japan, Applause provides testers who are cultural natives to test your app. Selecting a team of professional testers who understand your product and the market it is designed for reduces inaccuracies and ultimately provides a better user experience.

In addition, if you’re releasing your app internationally, Applause can test it across locations around the globe. Customers can run complete Localization and Internationalization testing of their apps, verifying accuracy and context across currency conversions, dates, characters and other trouble areas. Because of our far-reaching model, you can achieve the same level of testing for all your markets without employing multiple companies or sacrificing quality.

# PROJECT RAMP TIME

**THE PROBLEM WITH OUTSOURCING** •• When you need testing coverage, you most likely need it fast. Increasingly, companies are finding that trying to outsource quickly is nearly impossible.

From contract negotiations to salaries to tax forms, the paperwork is endless. Not to mention offshore firms often have to go out and find the people you need for your project, which means added time spent on recruitment and background checks. Alternately, you may have to wait for a testing team to become available. Special requests cost more and require time-consuming (and potentially expensive) recruiting.

“IT’S IMPORTANT FOR US TO HAVE A PRESENCE ON NEW MOBILE PLATFORMS FROM DAY ONE. WITH APPLAUSE, WE WERE ABLE TO START TESTING THE KINDLE APP, FOR INSTANCE, WITH TESTERS ALL OVER THE WORLD ALMOST IMMEDIATELY. MAKING A DEADLINE LIKE THAT WITHOUT APPLAUSE WOULD HAVE BEEN QUITE A CHALLENGE.”

- TIM CARLSON

DIRECTOR OF MOBILE PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT, USA TODAY



**THE APPLAUSE ADVANTAGE** •• With Applause, companies can start almost immediately. Because Applause already has a wide-range of software testing expertise, we find the right testers in the right locations, with the right devices and other specific needs that you are looking for quickly. If we do need to recruit for a special requirement, we enlist our community’s help in filling the gap. The Applause Testing Services Dashboard also allows you to select favorite testers so you can build your dream team for each project.

The flexibility of crowdsourcing has helped hundreds of companies ramp up their testing quickly in order to meet necessary deadlines.

# CONTROL

**THE PROBLEM WITH OUTSOURCING** •• Software companies that contract with an outsourcing firm often find that they have limited visibility into the testing process. If you are comfortable handing over all responsibility to an offshore team you can't see, hear or even contact easily, this may not be a problem. But for the other 99% of us who want to maintain at least some control and visibility into the testing process, an offshoring firm might not be the right fit.

**THE APPLAUSE ADVANTAGE** •• Applause project managers are there to assist you every step of the way. However, it is the Applause customer that calls the shots – with the ability to upload test cases, define the scope of work, add lists of known bugs and review bugs for approval or rejection. For those companies that don't have documentation, Applause can work with you to create it. With Applause, you can have as much or as little visibility and control as you want.

The Applause Testing Services Dashboard was designed to give you an easy-to-consume snapshot of your app's health. Bringing together all facets of app quality, the dashboard lets you see a broad overview of all activities or drill down to get more details about test cycles, bug reports, post-launch analytics and more. Coupled with real-time reporting and automatic pushes to your in-house bug tracking system, the dashboard makes managing app quality easy.

“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.”

- **TIM CARLSON**

DIRECTOR OF MOBILE PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT



# ADAPTABILITY

**THE PROBLEM WITH OUTSOURCING** •• When confronted with sudden changes in their development cycle, companies face an even greater challenge when contracting with an outsourced testing firm. When the scope or direction of testing begins to deviate from the original vision, the outsourcing contract and team does not. To get the new testing coverage you need, you might have to pay extra for a new team, a new project or the expanded or changed scope. This makes it difficult for offshore firms to adapt to your evolving needs. Unless your app development and testing proceed like clockwork every time, exercise caution when considering an outsourcing firm.

Likewise, with outsourcing you are locked in a contract that gives you a set number of testers for a set amount of time. As any team can tell you, development and testing aren't steady, predictable practices. Yet over the years offshoring has never made it easier to scale your efforts to meet the actual, fluctuating needs of your projects.



“ABOVE ALL, WE NEEDED FLEXIBILITY AND THAT’S THE BEST PART ABOUT WORKING WITH APPLAUSE. WE’LL CONTINUE TO USE APPLAUSE FOR TESTING OUR PRODUCTS UNDER REAL-WORLD SCENARIOS.”

**- CHRISTIAN HENDERSON**

HEAD OF TEST & RELEASE MANAGEMENT, NEWS UK

*News* UK

**THE APPLAUSE ADVANTAGE** •• With Applause, companies can alter their testing requirements at a moment’s notice. Because Applause already has a wide-range of expertise, we can easily accommodate changes without additional costs or delays.

In addition, because your test cycles are monitored by an Applause project manager, you can be sure that changes in scope and coverage are implemented quickly. If your test cycle is not going as planned it can be paused, adjusted and restarted quickly and easily. If you need more coverage or more results, additional testers can be added with no hassle.

The flexibility of crowdsourcing has helped hundreds of companies to scale their testing to meet their actual needs. Whether you need a large team to explore your new app or a few testers to perform regression testing on your website, Applause fits your needs, not ink on a contract. Simply put, Applause is designed for present-day software companies.

# TESTING: OUTSOURCING VS. APPLAUSE



## OFFSHORE/OUTSOURCE

- You don't know if your testers are experienced
- Lack of experience shows in poor bug reports
- Test plans are locked in and difficult to change

## APPLAUSE

- Testing in-the-wild provides more valuable results
- Applause testers average 5-10 years of experience
- Testers are trained to only report high quality bugs
- Adjusting test cycles and project scope is easy



- Testers and environment might not reflect your target audience
- Different communication and cultural understandings make usability testing difficult

- Test teams are tailored by criteria to match your audience
- The Applause global community erases the issue of cultural understanding



- To test on-location you'd need an offshore company in every specific location
- Offshore testers aren't necessarily cultural natives

- Applause makes localization testing easy with testers in 200 countries and territories
- With a team for each language or market, companies can run complete L10N testing with the perfect testers



- When a load test is only performed in one part of the world it is not indicative of how your app will perform under real world pressure

- The global community of professional testers can test your application simultaneously from almost anywhere
- Applause offers state of the art simulated, live and hybrid load testing technology and next steps



- Offshore teams most likely do not have security expertise. For that, you need vetted security experts

- Utilizing security experts from our global community, Applause provides a variety of manual penetration testing services and recommendations

# MOVE BEYOND TESTING

**THE PROBLEM WITH OUTSOURCING** •• Offshore firms are one trick ponies. They offer testing services, and sometimes not even all the testing services you need.

But in today's apps economy, testing alone isn't enough. Users have high expectations and the best apps – the apps that win – extend quality past QA and to every segment of the app lifecycle.

Traditional outsourcing isn't equipped to meet the increasing demands of app quality.

**THE APPLAUSE ADVANTAGE** •• While offshoring firms run tests, Applause gives you the tools and services you need to launch high quality apps every time.

By combining access to world-renowned in-the-wild testing services, top app quality tools and post-launch analytics, Applause enables companies to take a 360° approach to app quality – ensuring their users have the best experience possible with every app and every update.

# MOBILE BETA MANAGEMENT

Mobile Beta Management from Applause enables companies to deliver consistently great apps - apps that users love - by putting them in the hands of their most loyal users early, and making it easy to listen to what those users have to say about their experiences. Beta programs powered by Mobile Beta Management from Applause achieve:

**HIGH ENGAGEMENT RATE** •• If you want high engagement rates and valuable feedback, you need effortless end-to-end workflows for your beta participants. It's not just about removing as many barriers as possible between them and you, it's about removing all of the barriers. Mobile Beta Management includes innovative features that drive simple, mobile-optimized workflows at every step.

**HIGH VALUE APP QUALITY DATA** •• Collecting and analyzing participant activity, session data, crash data, user feedback, participant usage, bugs and defects reporting and performance results. Simply

put: Better data drives higher quality products. Real-time insight means your developers can take action immediately.

## MOBILE-FIRST PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES ••

Say goodbye to spreadsheets and emails. With mobile-first workflows that empower beta managers with over-the-air build and NDA distribution, automated session and crash reporting and in-app defect and user feedback, the beta participant experience drives high engagement rates and high value app quality insights.

## UNLIMITED BETA PARTICIPANTS ••

Build custom beta participant distribution groups - without limits. Whether your beta community includes tens, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands or hundreds of thousands, your tools need to scale effectively support a diverse community of beta participants.

## ABOUT MOBILE BETA MANAGEMENT

Learn how Mobile Beta Management can enhance your mobile app testing.

[LEARN MORE](#)

# APPLAUSE ANALYTICS

At the end of the day, your users are the ones using your app and they're the ones you need to make happy. Testing means nothing if your users reject your app. That's why a comprehensive approach to app quality moves beyond testing to include post-launch analytics.

Applause Analytics crawls the ratings and reviews from the Apple App Store and Google Play Store and distills the data into easy-to-consume metrics that show you exactly what your real users think about your app.

## APPLAUSE ANALYTICS PROVIDES INFORMATION LIKE:

- Smart Clusters and Top Issues: See app reviews clustered by commonality, recency and frequency to highlight what your users are talking about. Instead of digging through a laundry list of reviews, you're presented with an easy-to-consume set of clusters. To provide you with even more direction, Applause Analytics specifically serves up the most recent clusters that poorly impact your app as Top Issues.
- App Radar: Ever wonder how your app stacks up against the competition? You can now see where your app is stronger and where it doesn't measure up across 10 key attributes.

## ABOUT APPLAUSE ANALYTICS

Learn how Applause Analytics can enhance your mobile app testing.

[LEARN MORE](#)

# APPLAUSE TEST AUTOMATION

Test automation from Applause is a full-service offering that lets your company enjoy all the benefits of test automation without the difficulties and overhead typically encountered.

**FROM A TO Z** •• Applause builds out and manages your test automation solution so you don't have to. Provide us with your test cases (or work with us to create them), and we'll take it from there. Engineers, framework, devices, maintenance, managed execution...its all included.

**AUTOMATION ENGINEERS** •• An automation solution can only be as good as the people that build it. Our engineers are specialized in mobile/web test automation and have provided solutions for the world's largest companies.

**BEST-IN-CLASS FRAMEWORK** •• A quality team deserves a framework that minimizes maintainance. Whether you are running tests for an iOS, Android, or Web app, the Applause Automation Framework is up to the task.

**DEVICE CLOUD** •• Run your tests on real devices in the cloud, without the scheduling conflicts normally encountered with other solutions. Our cloud is only accessible by Applause Automation customers.

## ABOUT APPLAUSE TEST AUTOMATION

Learn how Automation can decrease test cycle time and improve testing coverage.

[LEARN MORE](#)

# WHAT YOU GET

## WITH OUTSOURCING:

- Homogeneous testers with a similar background
- Inability to mimic real user base
- Limited device accessibility
- Testing in a single location
- No insight into network or connectivity effects
- Limited to a single lingual and cultural understanding
- Limited availability and shared resources
- Likely to produce volume over actionable data
- Testing only - no additional app quality assistance

## WITH APPLAUSE:

- Vetted, experienced, managed testers and diversified testing teams
- Ability to choose custom teams and favorite testers
- Access to experts
- Access to a range of devices, operating systems, carriers and browsers
- Testers in 200 countries and territories that match your exact needs
- Experienced project manager and Test Team Lead to manage test cycles and pre-triage bugs
- Easily adjusted test cycles
- Testing Services Dashboard for insight into the status of testing and the health of your apps
- Real-time communication tools
- Bug tracking system integration
- App quality tools for every step of the app lifecycle



# APPLAUSE<sup>o</sup>

## ABOUT APPLAUSE

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.

## APPLAUSE<sup>o</sup>

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