



The Container Store

– APPLAUSE CASE STUDY –

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CUSTOMER

The Container Store does exactly what it says on the tin. It sells products that store and organize items, with customers able to visit over 80 locations spread across 32 states. Reducing the potential for stress through better organization is what The Container Store does every day.

Since it was founded in 1978, the company has dedicated itself to providing physical solutions to personal and business storage problems, with the Texas-based firm acknowledged as a leader in the specialty retail sector. However, with the growing acceptance of ecommerce within the retail sector as a whole, the firm understands that being online is equally important.

CHALLENGE

The Container Store is known as being the original storage and organization store, so expanding their footprint further into the digital world was a natural evolution to their business. The digital world presents its share of challenges, but it has provided The Container Store with an opportunity to reach new markets and connect with consumers via additional touchpoints.

COMPANY

The Container Store

INDUSTRY

Retail

TESTING TYPES

Manual | Usability

APP TYPES

Web | Mobile

CHALLENGES

- Ensuring seamless app functionality across all combinations of devices, platforms, and operating systems
- Reflecting brand values of neatness and organization in the app with an intuitive design and easy-to-use interface

RESULTS

- Leveraged video reviews of app navigation to receive objective feedback on app design
- Sourced hundreds of testers monthly in the US to ensure customers can easily purchase, browse, and plan projects within the app at all times

According to Brad Schneider, Director of Web Development, the need to integrate mobile into the customer interaction was something they simply could not manage alone.

“When I arrived, about eight years ago, there was not a QA department,” he says. “There were testers on the business side. I would categorize it as strong acceptance testing, but definitely short on resources, not really able to cover the full breadth of development that was going on. We established that department with, I think, four people internally. But then we couldn’t ramp up quickly just by hiring and organic growth and looked into Applause as an option to accelerate that process and provide us a greater capability.”

The rapid evolution of online shopping means that retailers like The Container Store must ensure customers are able to browse and buy when they need — and do so within a seamless digital experience. With the variety of mobile devices and platforms available to the average user, testing a web app across the software development lifecycle often puts a strain on internal QA teams, even more so if there are limited resources available. This is where Applause made all the difference.

SOLUTION

An important consideration in any web app testing process is how it behaves in the real world and it is an accepted fact by developers that an unsatisfactory user experience is not good news. The Container Store may be considered a specialty retailer, but there is an increasing amount of storage and organization solutions available through non-specific portals such as Amazon, ensuring that testing outside the lab must dovetail with internal procedures.

“I think, like anybody else, we’re finding the sheer number of platforms in mobile and then operating systems versions and device variations within each of those,” Schneider says, “I mean, the combinations and permutations of device profiles is just exploding, and it’s only going to get worse. The markets are only going to get more fragmented. Applause gives us that device coverage that we cannot even hope to do internally.”

Knowing that identifying the low-hanging fruit is not the prime consideration allows a managed testing community to concentrate on what the web app is supposed to do. For that reason, having access



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to Applause testers in the wild is, in Schneider's opinion, an invaluable resource that he refers to as a "force multiplier."

"Rarely is Applause looking at stuff for the first time," notes Schneider. "It's usually gone through either our internal QA or a third-party vendor QA. Then it's at the point where everybody's saying, 'Oh, yeah. It's all tested.' Then we use Applause to ensure that and provide more breadth. [Testers are] finding things after it's already had a couple of rounds of QA. When they find something it's truly something that somebody's missed. Either we've missed or our third-party partners have missed. They're not doing a first pass."

RESULTS

"I think the usability stuff has been pretty compelling. I think there's a good value," he says. "Just knowing that there's a lot of eyes looking at something, and they're looking at it not from an internal perspective but presumably from a more fresh set of eyes. I think that's something you can't really replicate."

As the pace of life increases, the economics of retail app development means that consumers are used to a product that makes their lives easier, especially when it comes to reducing clutter. Just being organized can relieve perceived stress; a mantra for the modern world in which effective testing makes it a pleasure and not a chore.



ABOUT APPLAUSE

Applause is the worldwide leader in crowdtesting and digital quality. Software is at the heart of how all brands engage users, and digital experiences must work flawlessly everywhere. With 400,000+ testers available on-demand around the globe, Applause provides brands with a full suite of testing and feedback capabilities. This approach drastically improves testing coverage, eliminates the limitations of offshoring and traditional QA labs, and speeds time-to-market for websites, mobile apps, IoT, and in-store experiences.

Thousands of leading companies — including Ford, Fox, Google, and Dow Jones — rely on Applause as a best practice to deliver high-quality digital experiences that customers love.

Learn more at: www.applause.com