



SoChat

— APPLAUSE CASE STUDY —

“ WE ARE ABLE TO GET A REALLY DISTRIBUTED TESTING APPROACH THROUGH APPLAUSE THAT WE CAN'T EFFICIENTLY DO INTERNALLY.”

LUKENS ORTHWEIN , CEO/CO-FOUNDER

CUSTOMER

Harvard Graduate Lukens Orthwein founded SoChat, a San Francisco-based mobile messaging company, in 2014. Its mission, in this hyper-connected world, is to accelerate the United States into the modern age of messaging. Surprisingly, the U.S. is the last major market that does not use messaging for day-to-day communications. People use SMS for texting, some use SnapChat for photos, or Facebook to share thoughts and connect with old friends, but hardly anyone uses one platform for everything. To contrast this, people in Europe and India use WhatsApp for absolutely everything. SoChat is aiming to differentiate itself from WhatsApp and to make messaging more appealing to Americans.

SoChat's app considers every level of every type of possible digital interaction and how they might be used. A user can add phone numbers through the app, use the location feature to find friends nearby, and utilize Bluetooth to find out who else in the room has the app. Users can send friend requests to keep in touch with people who they just met. The application also vastly expands the use of group chats – “Magic Words” are used to let you utilize a specific function. For example, you can share a specific YouTube video just by typing “youtube” into the text box. SoChat enables users to connect better with anyone they know.

In the messaging business there are, surprisingly, not many players. However, the industry leaders are the big ones: Whatsapp, iMessage, and Facebook Messenger, just to name a few. For a small company like SoChat to succeed against these well-funded Goliaths, its app needs to be unique and flawless.

COMPANY

SoChat

INDUSTRY

Communications

TESTING TYPES

Functional

APP TYPES

Web | Mobile

CHALLENGES

- Ensuring every release is performing exactly as it is designed, regardless of device or location
- Enabling developers to focus exclusively on improving the product
- Maintaining a rapid release cadence while ensuring quality of the product is not compromised

RESULTS

- Discovered and fixed high-impact issues before they were released to the public
- Ensured consistent experience across a wider variety of devices and operating systems
- Enabled developers to move faster and focus exclusively on improving user experience

CHALLENGES

The advantage SoChat has against its competitors is that it can move faster. It can be more agile with releases and immediately turn around improvements based on customer feedback. The disadvantage is that as a company with only 8 employees, everyone needs to use their time as efficiently as possible. With no dedicated QA team, it is difficult to meet the high-quality QA standards that larger companies, who can have up to hundreds of QA employees, can afford. “QA is something we were spending more time on but also something we needed to make more systematized to ensure every shipment was of the utmost quality,” said Orthwein. “We need to use all the advantages we can to match up with the big companies.”

In the messaging industry it is critical for the application to work well across any device and in any location. To thoroughly test the app under a variety of conditions, SoChat would either need to hire an entire QA team, which would be incredibly expensive, or look to a third-party vendor to augment certain QA needs.

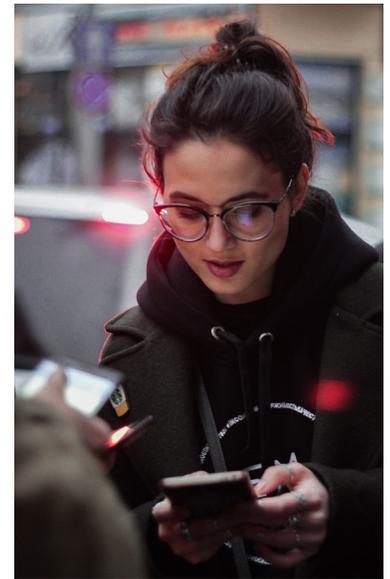
SOLUTION

After vetting multiple vendors, SoChat selected Applause. “The Applause platform allows SoChat to test all over the world, on all kinds of devices: from the low-ends to the newest releases, which we can’t do with just the people in our office testing,” said Orthwein. Compared to other vendors, Orthwein felt that Applause has a more reliable system. “We could lean on Applause to get decent QA results as opposed to a system that might miss a lot of our bugs or have a lot of overhead,” he said.

However, the real differentiator with Applause and why it was the best bet for SoChat is how Applause acts as an extension of the SoChat team. “They take a lot of the cognitive load. Our Project Manager, Josephine, got us up and running easily without us having to wrap our head around the whole system. She just gets stuff set up for us and makes adjustments to whatever we need for that cycle, very quick and easy,” said Orthwein.

RESULTS

Over a six-month period, Applause has identified hundreds of bugs for SoChat, including a number of very critical ones. In one case, the identified issue completely crashed the app anytime a user scrolled too fast. In another scenario, a bug was found that prevented users from sending photos. However, even with these high-value discoveries, SoChat considers this to be secondary compared to the other benefits Applause has provided.



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Applause offers peace of mind prior to new releases. Testing can be done up to the day of the launch. This luxury drastically decreases the number of bugs that get released into production. Not only has this led to increased app store ratings, it has allowed SoChat to make a higher-quality product, which directly led to the ultimate goal of higher user adoption.

“I think it’s inevitable that someone will make Americans catch up with the rest of the world and it’s a question of which product and when, and I believe SoChat will be that platform,” Orthwein said. “And if someone asked me about Applause, I’d certainly give my endorsement. Especially for companies looking to achieve a very high level of quality and integrity in their app, Applause does a great job.”

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ABOUT APPLAUSE

Applause is the worldwide leader in crowd-sourced digital quality testing. Software is at the heart of how all brands engage users, and digital experiences must work flawlessly everywhere. With **highly vetted 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