Starling

COMPANY
VersaMe

INDUSTRY
IoT

TESTING TYPES
Functional

APP TYPES
Mobile

CHALLENGES
- Ensuring two separate mobile applications worked in harmony with on-market hardware device
- Gathering enough quantifiable data during beta trial to ensure app functioned flawlessly upon release
- Guaranteeing non-technical users have smooth experience

RESULTS
- Leveraged Applause community to ensure hardware device was shipped to the correct testers and only useful feedback was received
- Rapidly implemented customer feedback to improve product for launch

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ALEXANDRA YORKE, HEAD OF PRODUCT, VERSAME

CUSTOMER

Research has shown that the more words a child hears before the age of four, the more successful they will be later in life. In fact, according to a study conducted by the Rauch Foundation 90% of brain growth happens before a child is four years old.

With this in mind VersaMe, a San Francisco based start-up, created Starling: a wearable for babies that keeps track of the number of words they hear each day. The device is paired via bluetooth with a smartphone app so parents can keep track of their child's progress. They also receive fun tips on how to best engage with their children.

With less than twenty people in total, VersaMe naturally has a very small QA team. It is up to VersaMe's Head of Product Management Alexandra Yorke to ensure both Starling's iOS and Android apps function properly and remain bug free.

CHALLENGE

First impressions mean everything in the modern app economy. With the Android app in beta and close to GA, Alexandra needed to ensure it functioned soundly upon launch date. "These are parents using the app. We don't want them spending their time trying to

work around a bug," Alexandra said. "We want them engaging with their children, so it is really important to us that they have a smooth experience from the first time they launch the app, onwards."

The size of VersaMe's QA team limited what the company could achieve internally. While the product is not complex, there are a lot of moving parts with the actual hardware device, the iOS app, and Android app all needing to work in harmony.

With Starling already on the market, it was critical that the mobile app was flawless. Alexandra explained, "Customers have already bought the device. They would feel cheated if we delivered a buggy app."

Although the internal staff implemented best practices for testing, VersaMe required a more formidable QA solution. The company needed help to ensure their beta trial would get the necessary feedback to be ready for the day one launch.

SOLUTION

After considering all options, VersaMe determined Applause's Beta Management solution was the perfect fit. This solution removed all the barriers that stood in the way of conducting a successful beta program. On a business level this meant there would be no additional forms for customers to sign and no additional software for customers to download. Applause Beta Management solution also provides concise and granular data, feedback, and directly integrates with VersaMe's existing BTS and CI processes.

Applause's community delivered a unique advantage by placing the beta app in the hands of new parents. VersaMe receiveed feedback directly from testers in it's target demographic, on any device, and in any location.

Testers are paid on a "per unique bug basis." This guaranteed VersaMe only received new and useful feedback. Alexandra explained, "We really like how testers are compensated based on the value of the bug and that only unique bugs are accepted. This promises us that testers will try their best to break the app under a variety of circumstances."

RESULTS

This model has been instrumental to the Android app's development. Through numerous exploratory testing cycles, the Applause

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community found a number of critical bugs that slipped through the cracks.

"There is only so much that our internal team can achieve. Having an additional 20-30 testers has been amazing," said Alexandra. With a seemingly infinite number of ways to explore the app, VersaMe has been able to drastically reduce bugs released into the wild.

While the number of bugs found is easily tallied, the intangible benefit Alexandra has seen from Applause is in the partnership approach taken. "They have gone above and beyond," Alexandra remarked. "We have a hardware device and I thought getting the right people the right pieces would be a logistical nightmare, but Applause has done a great job of keeping track of all the testers and all the moving parts."

VersaMe is on the verge of something truly remarkable. Starling helps parents embrace their roles as their child's first and most important teachers. Parents have a responsibility to help children reach their full potential. With the help of Applause, VersaMe has been able aid in this journey through Starling.

> " **APPLAUSE NOT ONLY HELPS US RELEASE AN EXCEPTIONAL PRODUCT TO OUR CUSTOMERS BUT THE SERVICE HAS GONE ABOVE AND BEYOND AS WELL"**
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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.

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