



Banner Health

— APPLAUSE CASE STUDY —

“OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE CONSUMER-CENTRIC DIGITAL EXPERIENCES THAT MIRROR EXPERIENCES THAT PATIENTS AND CUSTOMERS ARE USED TO IN THEIR DAILY LIVES.”

MARK SCHUMACHER, DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL EXPERIENCE, BANNER HEALTH

CUSTOMER

When you're sick, any problem you encounter with your healthcare provider can seem like an insurmountable obstacle. That's why Banner Health's mission is "making health care easier, so life can be better."

Banner Health, based in Phoenix, Arizona, is one of the largest nonprofit healthcare providers in the United States, employing 50,000 people and providing \$89 billion in charity care to the communities it serves. The system, which began as a chain of hospitals, has evolved into an integrated healthcare system in the Southwest, with more than 400 locations across six states, including hospitals, academic healthcare facilities, clinics, and healthcare centers, some of which are the only inpatient facilities serving rural areas.

CHALLENGE

Banner Health is dedicated to making healthcare easier for its 400,000 members. That means ensuring the healthcare experience users get online is just as seamless as the one they get in person at one of its facilities. However, healthcare organizations often struggle when it comes to providing user-centric digital channels of communication for their patients.

According to research from Nuance, 46 percent of all healthcare patients say their plans still rely on traditional mail. Patients, on the other hand, are used to the digital experiences they get from companies like Amazon,

COMPANY

Banner Health

INDUSTRY

Healthcare

TESTING TYPES

Functional | Omnichannel | Accessibility | Voice

APP TYPES

Web | Mobile | Voice | Smartwatch

CHALLENGES

- Delivering a user experience consistent with mainstream apps
- Understanding patient needs without violating patient confidentiality
- Improving accessibility for all users

RESULTS

- Seamless digital experiences regardless of device
- Accessible designs which benefit all users
- Launched new initiatives on smartwatches and voice-assisted devices

Netflix and UberEats every day. For them, the digital experience they have with a provider is almost as important as the healthcare itself. Patients want digital channels of engagement, including native apps for web, mobile, wearables and voice.

“People are looking for digital means of engagement with their healthcare providers and these digital experiences need to be excellent in order to avoid user frustrations,” said Mark Schumacher, Director of Digital Experience for Banner Health. “Digital issues can destroy customer sentiment and trust in any industry, but especially in healthcare.”

Healthcare organizations face an obstacle when it comes to testing their apps — because the sensitivity surrounding personal information in the medical industry, designing software on par with the applications produced by other industries can be difficult. Patient confidentiality means it’s hard for developers to get a holistic view of users’ digital experience, understand their journeys, and find out why patients bail on digital channels.

To better understand the user experience of its patients, Banner Health’s digital experience team had to change the way it approached testing. Rather than simply meeting internal requirements, the team needed to obtain consumer insights without infringing on patient confidentiality.

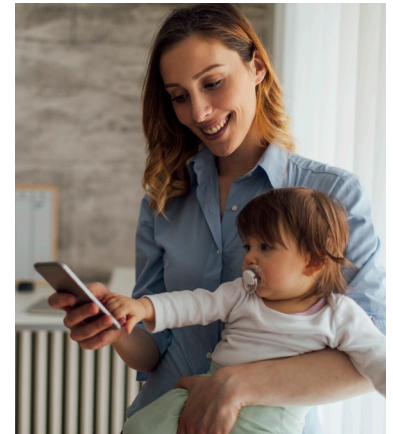
SOLUTION

To make sure patients’ voices were being heard without violating their privacy, Banner Health teamed up with Applause. Applause provided the organization with a group of testers who matched up with its user base.

The testers’ wide variety of devices and testing styles helped Banner Health understand how their users were experiencing native apps across several devices, catching errors the internal team had not, such as screens not appearing correctly on smaller phones.

Testers were also able to help Banner Health’s team understand how patients use their devices — for example, testers took video of their iPhones and Apple Watches side-by-side to show how the two apps interact. They also helped Banner Health’s team pinpoint where users were getting confused.

“We noticed that not everyone connects their iPad to their phone to make phone calls,” said UI/UX designer Rachel Abrams. “Our app had a button you could press to call a nurse. When users came to this part of the test, they were uncertain about whether they could press the button because they didn’t know what it would do.” A small text change on and around the button offered users more clarity.



“TESTERS ARE IN THEIR OWN ENVIRONMENTS, JUST LIKE OUR USERS WILL BE.”

RACHEL ABRAMS, UI/UX DESIGNER,
BANNER HEALTH

Applause integrated with Banner Health's SDLC, providing feedback that allowed the provider's developers to push out changes quickly—often before apps went live in the app store. This feedback loop turned out to be an invaluable asset when it came to improving accessibility for users.

Accessibility is important for all organizations, but particularly for healthcare providers as many patients live with permanent or temporary disabilities. Applause testers and accessibility experts provided feedback that allowed Banner Health to make its apps more accessible for disabled users with every iteration, something which had an unintended consequence: improving the user experience for everyone.

RESULTS

Thanks to Applause, Banner Health has a deeper understanding of the digital challenges and preferences of its patients. This enables them to quickly deliver new or improved features that directly impact the user experience—like a single sign-on that simplifies navigation through the various aspects of the Banner Health app. The team also learned the many ways a patient can voice a request through Amazon Alexa, streamlined its native applications, and improved its complex “Find a Doctor” application.

“Testing has been crucial in both supporting and challenging our assumptions,” said Abrams. “Working with real-time feedback gave us the data we needed to adjust our designs and sometimes our priorities.”

Several features were improved or changed thanks to feedback from the testers. For example, Banner Health's team designed the Apple Watch application with a simple screen featuring two menu items, but quickly learned that users prefer important features on the home screen and not hidden in a folder.

“We're happy to say that our real-world app store reviews reflected the scores we were getting from Applause testers,” said Abrams.

“ AFTER OUR FIRST FEW TESTS, WE REVISITED OUR ORIGINAL CONVERSATION FLOWS TO ACCOUNT FOR ALL THE DIFFERENT WAYS PEOPLE WERE APPROACHING ALEXA AND GOOGLE ASSISTANT.”

RACHEL ABRAMS, UI/UX DESIGNER,
BANNER HEALTH

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