

EBOOK

# ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO CROWDTESTING

APPLAUSE<sup>o</sup>





## THE TRUTH ABOUT CROWDTESTING FOR DIGITAL QUALITY

The word “crowdtesting” evokes all sorts of images and misconceptions: crowds can be large, noisy, and chaotic. That’s a far cry from the focused, controlled approach most organizations apply to QA. Crowdtesting is something of a misnomer. Instead of “crowd” think vetted, custom test teams curated to match your specific requirements in terms of region, language, and device/OS.

If your company takes a skeptical view of software crowdtesting, you’re not alone. You are, however, missing out on an efficient, cost-effective way to test app quality and performance. Examine these five truths about crowdtesting, and see how it can help your team improve quality and speed release velocity.

## 753%

**Research by Hobson & Company found a compelling return on investment from Applause’s crowdsourced testing solutions: a full return on client investment within 1.7 months and a 753% return on investment after 3 years.**

“Driving ROI: The Business Case for Getting Closer to Your Customer Through A Crowdsourced Testing Solution.” Hobson & Company





## NUMBER 1:

### Crowdtesting does not replace in-house quality teams.

Many quality managers think partnering with a crowdtesting firm eliminates the need for their teams — or even their own jobs. In reality, crowdtesting complements in-house QA and extends the organization’s capabilities, without replacing internal resources. Crowdtesting can provide a sense of relief for QA managers — especially those with small teams — by freeing up in-house staff to focus on more strategic tasks.

In a few cases, Applause conducts most of the testing for customers with extremely limited QA resources, but the organization still has a person or team responsible for quality. A far more common scenario for Applause customers calls for crowdtesters to fill gaps or offload repetitive, time-consuming tasks from internal teams.

For example, internal QA teams may focus on functional testing for core user flows, while crowdtesters perform exploratory tests to help product teams better understand how customers actually behave. An organization might use crowdtesters to evaluate devices, networks or operating systems the internal team doesn’t have available. Crowdsourced testing teams can also explore scenarios that can’t easily be replicated in a lab, such as geofencing for gambling apps or streaming media on a roaming network during travel.

Crowdtesting allows organizations to quickly scale to support new product launches or expansion into new geographic regions, without having to hire additional staff. Many QA teams rely on Applause’s crowdtesters to ensure accurate localization and seamless UX when releasing into new markets: testers evaluate translations, whether local times and currencies display correctly, and similar issues that can make or break an international rollout.

**“To have access to hundreds of QA testers without building an in-house lab is a huge benefit. For the cost of one QA staffer, you get to work with hundreds of testers in the wild — there is no way you can get that kind of feedback from one tester on your team.”**

**Mona Soni**

*Director of Engineering, Dow Jones*



## NUMBER 2:

### Not all crowdtesting providers are the same.

Crowdtesting providers vary in specialty, size of the testing pool, geographic and language coverage, and the scope of tests they can perform. Applause pioneered the crowdtesting model in 2007 with uTest, our community of freelance digital experts. With the most experience managing enterprise-scale client projects and the largest global community of testers, we can test across the most devices, mobile and wireless carriers, languages, and geographies. You'll have a primary point of contact to manage your testing projects and a dedicated team working for you behind the scenes to deliver triaged test results directly into your bug tracking system, fitting easily into your existing workflows.

Different crowdtesting providers often focus on specific areas, such as functional testing, security testing or regression testing. Applause [goes beyond](#) just manual functional testing; we also evaluate customer journeys, payments, user experience and acceptance. Some of our testers specialize in certain areas, like accessibility or payments, so we can match you to a group of testers best equipped to address your specific needs or directly mimic your customer profile.

Crowdtesting can deliver an advantage for companies trying to assess the user experience for new customers or those who have specific types of accounts — groups not always readily available through dogfooding. Applause can source testers who have the devices, accounts and memberships you need, as well as those who speak certain languages or live in target locations.

Applause is the only provider able to offer clients a holistic approach to digital quality across both manual and automated functional testing, with our Integrated Functional Testing solution.

**“We rely on Applause to help us with a wide variety of exploratory tests, including streaming quality, mobile applications, user interface, and accessibility. The Applause services have helped us to shape Agile testing and quality engineering practices along our transformation journey, continuously gathering valuable feedback in our Agile product development approach.”**

Michael Krause  
*Agile Coach – Built-In Quality, Swisscom*





## NUMBER 3:

### Different members of the community have different levels of access to data.

Crowdtesting is not a free-for-all where each tester has access to every project. Think of it more like a gated community: One set of credentials gets you into the community, another allows access to common resources, then there are separate keys to get into each home (or test cycle); additional keys may be required for certain rooms or secure locations within.

### Applause always protects our customer information and data:

- » all testers sign an NDA with Applause;
- » customers can mandate that testers sign a client-specific NDA — for certain pre-production projects, testers must sign an NDA before they can access details about the project;
- » all of our community members agree to a Code of Conduct which states that they will not talk about a client or test outside of the platform.

Each uTest community member has access only to the projects they're working on. The Applause community is secure and meets compliance requirements for highly regulated industries, like financial services, media, healthcare, and technology. When necessary, Applause can establish a VPN tunnel for community members to access clients' tests, restricting access to selected participants during specified times. Once testing ends, so does tester access.

### Crowdtesting Business Benefits:

**150%–200%**  
increase in capacity of internal testing teams

**100%–150%**  
increase in number of releases each year

**30%–50%**  
reduction in critical fixes needed and unplanned downtime

**25%–30%**  
acceleration in planned revenue

“Driving ROI: The Business Case for Getting Closer to Your Customer Through A Crowdsourced Testing Solution.” Hobson & Company



## NUMBER 4:

### **Testers do not get extra incentives for reporting duplicate issues, false errors, or bugs that don't matter to your business.**

Applause works with each of our clients to clearly outline the scope for each test cycle. An Applause test team lead reviews all the submitted bugs to verify that they're within the scope of work, reproducible, and properly documented. Bugs that don't meet the criteria get rejected.

Clients can provide a list of known issues outside the scope of tests. Testers neither get credit for reporting these issues nor for finding bugs that other testers already documented. Each member of Applause's uTest community earns a tester rating based on their experience and the value of the bugs they submit. Those with higher ratings get higher payouts and are invited to participate in more test cycles. Testers who consistently report bugs outside the scope of work or duplicate issues earn lower ratings, so they have an incentive to focus on the types of bugs customers prioritize.

Our community is a meritocracy that works well for both our testers and our customers.

**“When we started working with Applause we were concerned that we may get too much feedback from the crowdtesters and the feedback may not be relevant because we already knew of these issues. But we quickly established a process where we would provide a known issues list to our project managers and they would make sure we did not receive that feedback.”**

Simon Berg  
*Agile Program Manager, Swisscom*



## NUMBER 5:

### You can control who tests your digital products and properties.

Customers specify tester requirements. Those criteria can range from using certain devices, operating systems, and network providers to speaking specific languages, living in a particular region, or owning certain types of accounts. Applause verifies that community members meet those requirements, such as through a video that shows someone has the right accent or model car. Applause also offers uTest community members training for specific skill sets. This education prepares testers to meet evolving customer requirements.

Applause also offers a [Bring Your Own Testers](#) option that lets you include employees, friends and family, and other important stakeholders in your tests. You can choose to use known testers you personally select, as well as crowdsourced testers who fill the gaps. Get a holistic view of quality with all test results managed in a single platform.

Finally, customers can flag their favorite testers, typically those who deliver highly valuable bug reports, to invite them to participate in future test cycles.

**“Some testers really stood out, and I really liked the fact that I could identify those testers, and that I could request that those testers be included in future testing cycles.”**

**Marina Gertsberg**  
*Senior Manager Web QA, Autodesk*



The right crowdtesting partner can help companies significantly improve digital quality. Applause goes beyond crowdtesting: get access to the world's largest community of digital experts, as well as world-class software products, an enterprise-grade SaaS testing infrastructure, and a wide range of digital testing solutions. Learn more about how Applause prioritizes exceptional digital experiences for our customers' end users.

**“Once we started working with Applause it was clear that we had the right strategy. Our automated testing strategy combined with crowdsourced manual testing gives us the level of quality that we need.”**

**Andy Wolf**

*Chief Product Officer, Blueport Commerce*





## About Applause

Applause is the world leader in testing and digital quality. Brands today win or lose customers through digital interactions, and Applause alone can deliver authentic feedback on the quality of digital assets and experiences, provided by real users in real-world settings. Our disruptive approach harnesses the power of the Applause platform and leverages a vetted community of more than one million digital experts worldwide. Unlike traditional testing methods (including lab-based and offshoring), we respond with the speed, scale and flexibility that digital-focused brands require and expect. Applause provides insightful, actionable testing results that can directly inform go/no go release decisions, helping development teams build better and faster, and release with confidence. Thousands of digital-first brands – including Ford, Google, Western Union and Dow Jones – rely on Applause as a best practice to deliver the digital experiences their customers love.

Learn more at [www.applause.com](http://www.applause.com)

### **NORTH AMERICA**

100 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Framingham, MA 01701  
1.844.300.2777

### **EUROPE**

Obentrautstr. 72  
10963 Berlin, Germany  
+49.30.57700400

### **ISRAEL**

10 HaMenofim Street  
Herzliya, Israel 4672561  
+972.74.757.1300

**APPLAUSE**<sup>o</sup>