

EDUCATIONAL GAME COMPANY

– APPLAUSE CASE STUDY –

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ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL CONTENT

CUSTOMER

Young children need a variety of academic and social-emotional skills to succeed inside and outside the classroom. That’s why this producer of educational games has a whole-child approach to preparing children for kindergarten and beyond, offering media that supports key developmental areas — from communication and critical thinking skills to literacy and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) learning.

Focused on the belief that all kids should have access to the best educational experiences and that learning should be fun, the organization has a continual commitment to the highest quality of the digital experiences it provides. To do this effectively, developers and QA teams must ensure that its educational games are bug-free and provide the richest customer experience possible.

CHALLENGE

The development team strives to ensure access for all children, with particular attention to a range of accessibility issues among its audience such as color blindness or hearing issues, for example. The organization

COMPANY

Educational Game Company

INDUSTRY

Media & Entertainment

TESTING TYPES

Manual Functional (Test Cases and Exploratory)

APP TYPES

Mobile | Web

CHALLENGES

- Require a large, diverse testbed of devices and OSes to ensure broad access for children
- Speed/turnaround time
- Capacity for high-volume, concurrent testing of multiple platforms
- Lack internal QA resources

RESULTS

- Overall improved QA process. Over half of bugs found labeled as exceptional
- Tested 500 unique mobile devices and 778 unique iOS configurations
- Added two new development cycles, taking them from one game release per week to as many as three
- Improved the quality of bugs found

works hard to ensure its digital media functions seamlessly on the many devices and the related array of operating systems that its audience uses. Users leverage a multitude of legacy devices (such as iPhone 4s), but it's not practical for the QA team to have all those devices on standby, keep them maintained and then conduct testing on each device every week. This combination of variables amounts to hundreds of testing scenarios, something that the game producer was unable to manage on its own.

The organization has tens of millions of plays of its digital games, which have become more popular during the COVID-19 pandemic. The digital content team had a very ambitious go-live schedule for its curriculum-based digital games: an average of one new game per week. It maintains a rigorous production schedule that includes testing and releasing new products, while updating existing products as well.

The weekly games are produced by different developers working on different teams. While all developers use a common platform and guidelines for game development, there is a substantial amount of coordination required.

The games producer wanted to increase efficiency and add development cycles to produce more games, all while identifying high-value bugs. It was important for the content team to define what is out of scope and what is working as designed (WAD) before getting to QA. Many of the WAD bugs were valuable and pertained to the game shell or the website, but were not issues for the game content team.

SOLUTION

Applause provides manual functional testing, which includes exploratory testing, across the educational game producer's weekly game test cycles and functions largely as their QA team.

Because the organization strives to be as inclusive as possible, realizing that many of the children use hand-me-down devices, the testing extends to hundreds of iOS and Android devices and operating systems, some of which are many years old.

"The thing that most strikes me about Applause is how easy and flexible they are to work with. We often reprioritize our testing needs and require a partner that can pivot accordingly, adding at the drop of a hat as release dates for games change. This agility seems to be part of Applause's DNA," said the associate director of digital content.



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RESULTS

Since the start of the engagement, Applause has executed 917 test cycles using 1,708 unique testers, to deliver the vast language and geographic coverage the customer needed, enabling fast and unique scaling. Device coverage is important to the game producer and the partnership with Applause. For mobile alone, 500 unique mobile device configurations and 778 unique iOS configurations were tested. Over half of bugs detected were labeled as exceptionally valuable. For example, the Applause team found an exceptionally valuable bug, where buttons became disabled after taking a photo on iOS.

In addition, working-as-designed bugs can now be more easily examined and vetted by the design team as something to consider in upcoming releases.

The organization has increased game content velocity and testing cycles - from one to three per week. It can now better define what bugs are in scope for QA and has improved its QA process overall. Most importantly, it has enhanced its ability to give children the highest quality digital experiences while maintaining its exceptional standards for education that is fun.

“Working with the Applause team is just a real pleasure. I’ve gotten to know all the folks that we interface with daily over there,” said the associate director of digital content.



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ABOUT APPLAUSE

Applause is the worldwide leader in enabling digital quality. Customers are no longer satisfied with digital experiences that are good enough; they demand the exceptional. The Applause Product Excellence Platform provides the world’s leading brands with the comprehensive approach to digital quality needed to deliver uncommonly great digital experiences across the globe – with highly vetted testers available on demand, a complete and enterprise-class technology infrastructure, multi-point digital quality solutions and SaaS products, and expertise across industries and use cases. This harmonized approach drastically improves testing coverage, reduces costs and speeds time-to-market for websites, mobile apps, IoT and in-store experiences. Thousands of leading companies – including Ford, Google, Western Union and Dow Jones – rely on Applause as a best practice to deliver the exceptional products and digital experiences their customers love.

Learn more at: www.applause.com