



**MICHIGAN
LOTTERY™**

– APPLAUSE CASE STUDY –

“WE WANT TO PROVIDE PLAYERS WHAT THEY ARE LOOKING FOR NO MATTER WHERE THEY ARE. IT’S ABOUT DELIVERING AN OMNICHANNEL EXPERIENCE THAT MAKES THEM A HIGHER VALUE PLAYER.”

SHANNON DEHAVEN, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL OPERATIONS, MICHIGAN STATE LOTTERY

CUSTOMER

People of all ages and demographics are tethered to their mobile devices, so it’s no wonder that the Michigan Lottery bet an online channel would be the ticket to future success. After U.S. state lotteries got the go-ahead to offer online gaming in 2011, Michigan, Illinois, Georgia, and Kentucky were among the first states to unveil iLotteries that complemented existing retail offerings.

Michigan Lottery initially launched online versions of scratch-off game equivalents (Instants Online) in August 2014 and less than two years later (January 2016), the group began to allow players to purchase tickets to its most popular draw games in the digital channel.

CHALLENGE

With online gaming intending to increase sales and appeal to a more digital-savvy audience, Michigan Lottery had multiple priorities to juggle. Not only did its mobile app need to provide a flawless customer experience, but it also needed to provide a seamless complement to offline retailers so as not to cannibalize sales for Michigan Lottery’s 10,000 existing retail partners.

COMPANY

Michigan Lottery

INDUSTRY

Gaming

TESTING TYPES

Functional | Usability

APP TYPES

Mobile | Web

CHALLENGES

- Growing the digital business without cannibalizing retail ticket sales
- Testing production-ready digital offerings and payment processes within the lottery regulations
- Supporting a wide variety of devices and operating systems

RESULTS

- Mobile audience grew by 40 percentage points (to 70% of total) since iLottery launch
- Was one of only six lotteries that showed new growth in FY 2017
- Tested apps and games in production for the first time, including new draw-based offerings

As the Michigan Lottery embarked on its digital diversification strategy, ensuring the quality of its new online gaming platform was priority number one. To accommodate all potential players, the platform needed to support a wide range of devices and operating systems (i.e. iOS, Android, web, and mobile web) while also adhering to the unique requirements of the highly regulated gaming space.

For example, there is a required geolocation functionality since sales have to be made in-state, and a “know your customer” requirement to validate that potential buyers are over 18 and who they say they are.

While the Michigan Lottery had an internal team of QA testers, they could only be tapped to work on pre-production versions of the online products, not full production runs, given strict regulations governing the space. “Lottery staff members are not allowed to play these games – so we can’t go out and purchase a ticket and beta test the process,” said Shannon DeHaven, Michigan Lottery’s Deputy Director of Digital Operations.

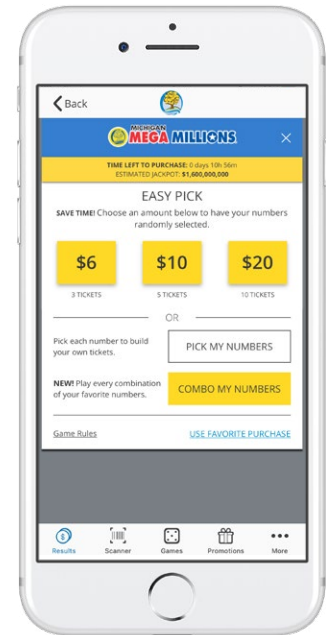
As a result, Michigan Lottery was forced to release new features to the general public and rely on user acceptance testing as their barometer for success. This gave them minimal feedback to triage issues and improve the end product at the desired speed. Michigan Lottery needed a solution that could speed up this feedback loop and give them the confidence to consistently deliver new features at a quick cadence.

SOLUTION

To achieve its desired level of code coverage and account for production validation, Michigan Lottery tapped Applause for functional testing of its new digital properties. Applause provided 20-to-25 testers for each production test cycle, all of whom were Michigan residents physically living in-state and could test the functionality and buying process for both online and brick-and-mortar sales.

The test plan initially covered the online instant games and was later expanded to include bonuses that offered free-to-play games along with draw-based games. Applause testers were instrumental in ensuring these online offerings held up across the wide range of supported devices while helping verify key pieces of functionality.

These functionalities included geolocation, the ability to tap into bonus offers on-site, the shopping cart flow, and the identification verification process. “I felt much more confident in the end product because of the Applause testers,” noted DeHaven.



“ WE WANT TO PROVIDE PLAYERS WITH A GREAT LOTTERY EXPERIENCE NO MATTER WHERE THEY ARE. DELIVERING AN OMNICHANNEL EXPERIENCE HELPS CREATE A HIGHER VALUE PLAYER.”

ANDREA BARNES, DIGITAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SPECIALIST, MICHIGAN STATE LOTTERY

RESULTS

The initial engagement with Applause was a success on several levels. Not only was Michigan Lottery able to thoroughly test its iLottery offerings, but the resulting digital quality gave them confidence to launch a massive three-week marketing blitz in 2016 to unveil the new offerings – including a commercial aired during Super Bowl 50.

Following the initial engagement, Applause was tapped with additional functional testing on new products along with some regression test work. As a result, Michigan Lottery identified key usability issues with the omnichannel experience that it likely wouldn't have without the power of third-party observation.

“Feedback is critical to helping us understand usability challenges. Sometimes when you are working on something, you become so used to how it is supposed to function that there may be gaps that aren't as apparent as they are to new users,” DeHaven explains.

In the years since the launch of Michigan's iLottery, the commission has been able to significantly increase online sales without cutting into their retail success. In 2014, only 30% of Michigan Lottery's audience came from mobile users, but that has shifted to 70% today, including 80% of total online sales.

Eliminating any initial concerns about the mobile app's effect on brick-and-mortar sales, retail sales have shown continual growth over the years, making Michigan Lottery one of only six lotteries in the country showing new growth in 2017 according to La Fleur's.

“MANY PLAYERS ARE VERY COMMITTED TO RETAIL. HOWEVER, HOURS BEFORE A DRAWING IT'S NOT LIKELY THAT PLAYERS WILL GO BACK OUT TO THE STORE TO BUY A TICKET. THROUGH MOBILE, WE CAN GIVE THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO BUY ONLINE AND OBTAIN A SALE THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN MISSED.”

SHANNON DEHAVEN, DEPUTY
DIRECTOR OF DIGITAL OPERATIONS,
MICHIGAN STATE LOTTERY

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 **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.

Learn more at: www.applause.com