ONLINE U.S. BETTING AND GAMING COMPANY INCREASES ODDS OF FINDING BUGS WITH APPLAUSE

CUSTOMER

Every game comes with its own set of rules — some more complex than others. Betting and gaming operators must not only adhere to the rules of the game, they must also comply with the laws governing the areas where they operate. With regulations varying across state and county lines, compliance isn't always a sure bet.

An American betting and gaming company offering sportsbook, daily fantasy sports, horse racing and online casino wanted to ensure that it met all legal operation requirements for all states that it operated in, and that it could quickly and efficiently launch in new states as needed. In addition, it wanted to create and maintain optimal digital experiences for its customers. To do this, it needed to address common processes such as onboarding new players, adding payment options and enabling easy transition from one activity to another.

CHALLENGE

Every state in the U.S. governs online sportsbook and casino games differently. In some cases, there are legal restrictions in different counties or parishes within a given state. Further, as new states approve gambling, they require in-state go-live testing — in pre-live environments, during launch, and post-launch — to ensure successful implementation of online gambling. In addition, ongoing regression testing needs to be done on a regular basis in active markets to validate that new features work correctly.

Our customer, an online betting and gaming company, needed to test geofencing parameters to validate that customers within state borders could register and play sportsbook and casino games. It also needed to confirm that customers could not gamble when they crossed into an inactive border state. Meeting geofencing regulations was just one of the areas where testing was required.

The company also needed to ensure that payment methods — major credit cards, debit cards, bank transfer, PayPal, ApplePay, PayNearMe, Play+, VIP Preferred, MuchBetter — worked seamlessly. Players need to be able to make deposits and withdrawals using whichever legal payment method they prefer, as well as bet up to the maximum bet allowed without restriction from the payment institution

COMPANY
Anonymized

INDUSTRY
Betting and Gaming

TESTING TYPES
Functional | UX

APP TYPES
Mobile (iOS and Android) | Desktop

CHALLENGES
- Ensuring legal compliance with all state gambling regulations
- Sourcing staff to test all feature functionality in all the required physical locations, both inside and outside of state borders
- Improving conversion rates from sportsbook to casino games

RESULTS
- Found significant payment issues: distributing larger promo amounts than intended, inability to confirm deposits, allowing players to withdraw more money than they have
- Ensured that they are operating legally regarding all aspects of state law and have proof for regulators
- Increased conversion from sportsbook to casino through recommended UX and on-screen messaging improvements

APPLAUSE

or method. Any functional friction or poorly designed user experience could lead a customer to switch to the competition.

Another major challenge for the online gambling company was that it noticed a low conversion rate for players moving from sportsbook to online casino. While the company offered players promotions and several ways to use their sportsbook winnings in casino games, there was little conversion, and this was impacting revenue through poor cross selling and, in some cases, customer retention.

SOLUTION

The online betting and gaming company teamed with Applause to get a real-world testing perspective using actual gamblers. Applause sourced, vetted, trained and managed testers to register, place bets and cash out in six different states where the company had a gambling presence. In addition, testers checked their ability to join a paid contest within two distinct distance ranges from state borders — between 2-5 miles and 1 mile — both inside and outside of the borders. In one state, testers visited the physical casino to test in-person registration using two-factor authentication, as required by law.

Applause sourced and onboarded new testers — and currently does so — for each new round of testing for the company to ensure that new casino registrants can sign up without issues. Applause also managed testers to validate deposits and withdrawals. While doing this, testers used payment methods such as PayPal, credit and debit cards, and made bets below the minimum and above the maximum to assess functionality of the app. A particularly important part of the payment testing within the online gambling app is how quickly players are paid out from the time they request a withdrawal, so Applause testers measure the efficiency and accuracy of this process as well.

To gain insights into the low conversion rate from sportsbook to casino, Applause testers conducted functional and UX testing to determine what issues may create friction for users. Testers began by registering in sportsbook, placing bets, winning money and then attempting to convert those winnings into casino games. Testers were then surveyed to understand how easy or difficult it was to transition to casino from sportsbook and what specifics they thought might contribute to issues for users.

RESULTS

With the help of real testers in real markets, the betting and gaming company validated that its geofencing capabilities were working. Testers could not register, play or cash out outside of state borders being tested, and could easily do all these things within the state borders. Importantly, the company now had proof for regulators that it adheres to state laws, hence avoiding significant fines and any brand damage that might occur from the application not functioning in a legal manner.
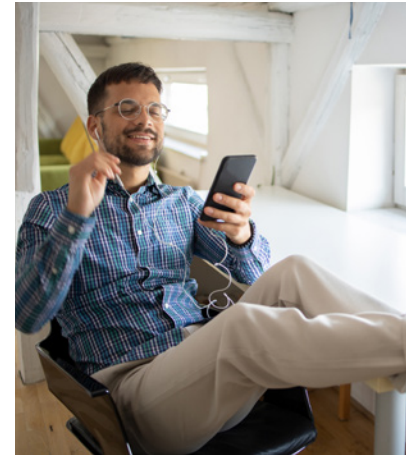
> " THE BETTING AND GAMING INDUSTRY HAS STRICT LEGAL REGULATIONS THAT MUST BE ADHERED TO, AND TESTING TO ENSURE WE'RE COMPLIANT IS CRITICAL TO OUR BUSINESS. APPLAUSE HAS SKILLED TESTERS WHO ARE ALSO REAL USERS OF OUR APP. YOU CAN'T BEAT THAT."

DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Testers identified several significant issues on the payment front. For example, when a player attempted to make a deposit, a blank page was displayed afterwards, showing no confirmation of the deposit. Another bug involved players' ability to withdraw more money than they have. And in another scenario, players who were accessing a promo offer received $50 more than the promo amount. This would have meant a significant loss to the company. There were additional issues involving PayPal as well as certain bank accounts. These discoveries are considered severe, both from the betting and gaming company's perspective and also the players'. As a result of feedback and insights from Applause testers, the company was able to correct these bugs and institute clearer guidance on what payment methods it accepts. This clarification up front in the registration process significantly increased customer satisfaction and reduced the number of customers leaving the brand to play with the competition.

Applause teams identified several functional and UX issues that contributed to low conversion rates from sportsbook to casino. For example, messaging was unclear about how to convert winnings to casino, so users made mistakes, or were hesitant to try due to a concern around losing funds. In addition, there were difficulties actually transferring relevant information and funds from sportsbook to casino. With these actionable insights, the betting and gaming company knew what steps to take to remedy the issues, and of course, Applause would test the process again after changes were applied.

By partnering with Applause for its testing needs, the online betting and gaming company not only receives assurance across the many areas that require testing, but it also has the additional knowledge and benefit of testing with experienced bettors, well-versed in what makes a good UX. The company uses Applause to test 24/7 during the week and weekends — and importantly — during important betting events and games. Applause regularly tests hundreds of games that require the full spectrum of functional testing ranging from registration to game play and payment/transaction validation. With Applause's community of experienced testers, devices and OS configurations, testers can test any conceivable combination of these three variables, leaving no scenario unchecked.

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