



USA TODAY

– APPLAUSE CASE STUDY –

“ THE TESTERS AND TEST LEADERS I WORKED WITH WERE ALWAYS THINKING OUT OF THE BOX. THE ISSUES THEY FOUND WERE EXTRAORDINARY.”

MAJID MOTEVALLI, SENIOR TEST ENGINEER, USA TODAY

CUSTOMER

With media outlets vying for eyeballs, providing engaging content has become more than war of words. Understanding what readers want and when they want it is priority number one for the majority of global media organizations, especially considering how daily consumption has evolved with the use of mobile devices.

In simple terms, the business of news delivery has evolved. Since its launch in 1982, Gannett-owned USA Today has maintained a constant presence at the top of the national news industry, much of which can be attributed to its ability to distill events into easy-to-digest content. This format is perfect for the digital age where news never stops breaking, and it ensures that news-centric apps must be able to take this in their stride.

CHALLENGE

The challenge for app developers within a news organization is to make sure that content delivery keeps pace with what hundreds of thousands of users want to absorb. This inevitably means that all news-related apps must go through a rigorous testing process before live launch. According to Majid Motevalli, a senior test engineer at the USA Today, this was why Applause was brought into the equation.

COMPANY

USA Today

INDUSTRY

Media

TESTING TYPES

Functional | Usability

APP TYPES

Mobile | Web

CHALLENGES

- Overcoming the testing limitations imposed by the rapid media delivery cadence
- Expanding coverage to adjust for the influx of new devices and operating systems
- Releasing new products in pace with customer demand

RESULTS

- Drastically reduced the delivery time of tester feedback
- Improved the quality of feedback to more easily reproduce found bugs
- Sped up the release of product and feature delivery to improve overall UX

“It gave us the opportunity to test our application on different layers and was very consistent,” said Motevalli, who first worked with Applause’s testing community in 2012. “The other thing was the testers and test leaders I worked with were pretty knowledgeable and were always thinking out of the box. We’ve been seeing very good results and the issues they found were extraordinary.”

Prior to Applause coming on board, Motevalli found that QA within the organization was often limited by the level of dedicated testing that could be allocated to a particular app. At the same time, the number of devices that were flooding the market meant that test cycles could be affected, leaving the app itself prone to bugs and potentially unsatisfactory user experiences – a scenario that ultimately made investment into a third-party tester the logical step to take.

SOLUTION

Applause immediately yielded results for USA Today and helped streamline the feedback process. The level of detail in the reports was of particular value.

“They gave us a better idea of how to fix bugs as well as documentation like steps, videos, and screenshots. It was very helpful and helped us to stabilize our application,” notes the engineer, adding that the ROI was “reasonable compared to hiring the actual manpower.”

Besides the cost saving from leveraging Applause, there were other advantages. A national media organization such as USA Today doesn’t only report news, and while the majority of consumed content may relate to ongoing events, users inevitably want a wide variety of apps from a single source.

A quick glance through the individual apps offered by the company demonstrates that it provides constantly updated information on sport scores, pop culture, stock prices and travel. There is even an app that provides the reader with a daily crossword, an interesting feature when considering that, according to the Pew Institute report, gaming makes up 32% of daily mobile use.



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RESULTS

For Motevalli, that level of demand and need for updated apps fits perfectly into the ongoing relationship between USA Today and Applause.

“In the long run, if we need to test a new feature, Applause actually can, let’s say, create a small scope, send it to users, and a day or two later deliver the results,” he says. “It was a big time- and money-savings. We tried to introduce the platform also to other groups [within the company] as well. We showed them this is how it works and you can get your result back in a very fast manner.”

It may not fall into the category of breaking news, but in terms of app testing and delivery, the crowdtesting model is ultimately a mirror to the daily rituals of the mobile generation.

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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