" WE LEARNED A LOT ABOUT USABILITY FROM HOW THE TESTERS FROM APPLAUSE ARE APPROACHING THESE APPS AND ARE USING THESE APPS VERSUS OUR INTERNAL TESTERS."

CHRISTIAN SCHMID, SENIOR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY ENGINEER, BMW

CUSTOMER

Automakers have long pushed engine capabilities and performance as the prime reason for purchase, but it is the in-car technology and mobile apps that are increasingly important. Simply turning the key and hitting the road is no longer enough. Driving needs to mimic the lifestyle of the person behind the wheel.

Over the last decade or so, the increase in mobile tech has been responsible for numerous app-related innovations within a wide range of vehicles. There has been a demonstrated rise in the number of new cars that now include popular apps as standard.

For nearly 100 years, the German firm has been responsible for developing not only iconic vehicles, but also perfecting features that take the drive to the next level.

CHALLENGE

Most leading manufacturers are already racing to bring the hottest apps to their dashboards, meaning BMW needs to make the most of its resources. While the company operates a dedicated R&D department in Silicon Valley, there are test locations all over the world that create partnerships with local app developers—all of which

---

COMPANY
BMW

INDUSTRY
Automotive

TESTING TYPES
Functional | Usability

APP TYPES
Web | Mobile | Connected Cars

CHALLENGES
- Access to older, unmodified vehicles
- Complexities of integrating with third-party mobile apps that were not designed for in-car usage

RESULTS
- Avoided costs associated with maintaining large test vehicle fleet
- Confirmed capabilities on cars not originally designed for detailed in-car app framework
- Actionable usability feedback improved how customers interface with third-party apps
- Gained coverage beyond typical customer use cases

APPLAUSE°

are orchestrated by BMW Senior Advanced Technology Engineer Christian Schmid from his California base, as part of the bigger BMW picture.

"When we approach a partner—let's say Pandora—we work with them closely and identify what features are in their app," Schmid says. "For example, which features would we like to show in the vehicle? It's usually a subset of features because we don't want to put any distraction on the driver. We only want to really offer the most important features of an app."

What sets the BMW-related apps apart is the fact that the app architecture runs in the UI layer of the car, with the coding team creating the interface between operating systems as opposed to the app developer.

Most of the vehicles that carry this system are sold across the world, and there was a BMW requirement to test apps on vehicles that may not have been originally developed with that level of in-car app framework.

SOLUTION

There was no need more apparent than one to test apps in real world conditions with real BMW and Mini drivers, especially considering the generic challenges faced by all global companies. According to Schmid, time differences and language barriers are one thing, but Applause was not only able to provide testing services but also something extra.

"Our development process within BMW is set up to always test the latest and greatest technologies in the vehicle and not hold onto older platforms," Schmid notes. "That's been a big benefit of working with Applause is that we don't have to hold on to all of the existing vehicle platforms."

There was also the small matter of having enough vehicles available to test. Research labs are not known for having enough space to keep or maintain a full complement of older cars on standby, a factor that Schmid admits was another key reason for bringing aboard a managed tested service.

> " A BIG BENEFIT OF WORKING WITH APPLAUSE IS THAT WE DON'T HAVE TO HOLD ON TO ALL OF THE EXISTING VEHICLE PLATFORMS."
>
> **CHRISTIAN SCHMID,** SENIOR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY ENGINEER, BMW

"By using Applause, we were able to get access to existing customers of our vehicles," he said. "We know   they have real production vehicles that aren't modified. Those are really reference. That's really reference hardware and software that we can test against."

At the same time, Schmid had access to a community of in-thewild testers that—on occasion—went above and beyond in terms of feedback, with one individual taking an app designed for racing enthusiasts to a local track and testing it in actual race conditions.

"It was very interesting to get the findings and even get a video of how he used the app on the track," Schmid says. "We do it at BMW, but it's harder to orchestrate a test session on the racetrack."

RESULTS

BMW has always prided itself on being the ultimate driving experience, and for millions of people this has certainly been the case. However, as mobile tech integrates more seamlessly into every aspect of life including driving, it is apps that will elevate the experience. And effective testing is what moves that into a higher gear.

"You always see it from the same perspective," notes Schmid. "It was very interesting to see what feedback we got as Applause testers represented a customer."

> " *ONE INDIVIDUAL TOOK AN APP DESIGNED FOR RACING ENTHUSIASTS TO A LOCAL TRACK. "IT WAS VERY INTERESTING TO GET THE FINDINGS AND EVEN GET A VIDEO OF HOW HE USED THE APP ON THE TRACK"*
>
> **CHRISTIAN SCHMID,** SENIOR ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY ENGINEER, BMW

ABOUT APPLAUSE

Applause is the worldwide leader in crowdtesting and digital quality. 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