

Tapulous: Test Test Release



Testing Projects @ a Glance

- Testers: 10+ (varies on release)
- Geographic Coverage: Global
- Testing Type: Functional, Exploratory
- App Type: Mobile
- OS: iPhone

Customer Spotlight

- Location: Palo Alto, California
- Industry: iPhone Games
- Company Size: 20 employees (10-person dev team)
- Methodology: Agile

It took less than two years for [Tapulous](#) to conquer the iPhone with Tap Tap Revenge. In doing so, they quickly became both a fan favorite and the envy of mobile app companies worldwide.

There was definitely some luck involved, said Director of Engineering Jess Kahn, but their success has been anything but a fluke. The Dartmouth grad, who spent ten years at Apple as a software engineer, credits their good fortune to a combination of talented personnel, calculated execution and impeccable timing.

Of course, there were plenty of challenges along the way. Like other mobile app companies, Tapulous would have to find an efficient way to consistently test their latest versions. With tight deadlines and limited in-house resources, using standard testing methods would ultimately prove to be an exercise in futility.

“We wanted to avoid falling into the trap of **testing ourselves**,” said Jess. “Otherwise, it’s just another task piled on to an 80-hour work week. And managing an **offshoring firm**, for a company our size, was totally out of the question.”

This case study will demonstrate why Tapulous turned to [uTest](#) for their mobile app testing needs. Along the way, we will cover the results of their exploratory and functional test cycles; the role of uTest’s project manager; the limits of beta testing and more.

Tapped Out: The Limits of Beta Testing

“Our target users are teenage boys with no formal tester training,” explained Jess. “So as beta testers, they are likely to give us defects that don’t contain much detail. They tend to point out nuances with the in-game experience – timing issues, high score discrepancies and things like that. It’s certainly valuable feedback, and we are lucky to have it, but unfortunately it’s not a substitute for professional testing.”

Since offshoring was “out of the question” Jess would need to find a way to ensure testing coverage that would not burden her in-house resources any further. And with another version of Tap Tap Revenge schedule for release in the weeks ahead, she would need to find such a solution quickly.

“I decided to spend a day doing research,” said Jess. “And it didn’t take me long to find [uTest](#). They were headquartered in the US, and didn’t require us to spend much time or money to get started, so we gave it a shot.”

No Time to Waste: Getting Started With uTest

After signing up, Tapulous was immediately assigned a dedicated project manager who would introduce them to the uTest platform and procedures. In preparation of their initial exploratory testing cycle, their uTest PM assisted them in uploading testing requirements by OS, device, tester experience and other criteria.

"It only took us about a half day to get started with uTest," said Jess. "There's no way we could have done this in-house. Not with our headcount and certainly not with our testing matrix."

As for their matrix, it was particularly important for Jess to expand their testing coverage by device – a task the uTest platform made incredibly easy via a database that is constantly updated.

"What I really love about uTest is that they can help us test on devices we don't have in-house," she said. "Everyone in our office always has the latest and greatest iPhone devices, so we've been able to discover lots of bugs that would have otherwise gone unnoticed."

Tap Tap: High Scores, High Praise

*Tap Tap Revenge was the first game to get to #1 on the App Store and the most popular game for all of 2008.

* "Amazing. The new version of the app is so much better, especially when you get to 8x. It's so much fun."

* "Tap Tap Revenge 3 is an update to remember. Big name artists, chat rooms, all new UI, and finally the rumored 'Replay' button."



(Left): "With more than 15 million downloads, Tap Tap Revenge is by far the most popular game on the iPhone and iPod touch. Tap Tap Revenge 3 is the first major game to tap into the App Store's new in-app commerce capabilities to offer a catalog of great music from top artists."

www.tapulous.com

Multi-Player: The Role of uTest's Project Managers

"uTest's project management team has played an enormous role in our success," said Jess. "They are available on IM at all hours of the day and they are always there when you need them."

As the constant point of contact, uTest's project managers are there to assist customers with every step of the testing process. This includes – but is NOT limited to – tasks such as:

- Tester selection/communication
- Defining requirements/test case creation
- Bug-tracking integration
- Bug approval/rejection

"No matter what type of notice I give in advance, uTest is always ready to go," said Jess.

Continue reading...

Tap Tap Results

During their initial exploratory test cycles - each lasting anywhere from three days to a month - testers were asked to search Tap Tap Revenge at their own discretion. This step is common for new uTest customers, as it allows testers to familiarize themselves with the application before more in-depth testing is performed.

The next step for Tapulous was to perform functional test cycle, where the uTest community would test specific features of their application. As a result, Jess was able to compile a 'known bugs' list and work towards resolving a variety of critical issues before their next release.

"Could we have found these bugs ourselves?" asked Jess. "Yes, but we don't have the time or a team to do so as efficiently as the uTest community. As our applications progress, so too does our team of testers. In fact, I don't think we've lost a tester yet."

Although Jess plans on hiring an in-house testing manager, she said one of their duties will be to act as the primary liaison with uTest. Indeed, she sees uTest as a major part of their success moving forward.

Next Steps

Interested in learning more about how uTest can compliment *your own* testing efforts? Here are a few relevant links to get you started:

- [How It Works](#)
- [Pricing Information](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Testing Project In-Depth

Release Duration: 3 days

Testing Scope:

- Multiplayer (Online) mode
- Post-game screen, in all modes, contains correct information
- Functionality in offline mode

Custom Requests:

- Use 5 testers (UDID Limitation)
- OS version 3.0 and 3.1 3G and 3GS connectivity with emphasis on the 3G

Functionality to be Tested:

- Tracks from Store Section
- Options Menu
- Tapulous Profile:
 - o Performance
 - o Post Game
 - o Online Play
 - o Challenge a Friend
 - o Advertisements

In their own words...

On the status quo of mobile testing:

"We wanted to avoid falling into the trap of testing ourselves. Otherwise, it's just another task piled on to an 80-hour work week. And managing an offshoring firm, for a company our size, was totally out of the question."

On testing coverage:

"uTest's project management team has played an enormous role in our success. They are available on IM at all hours of the day and they are always there when you need them."

On getting started with uTest:

"It only took us about a half day to get started with uTest. There's no way we could have done this in-house. Not with our headcount and certainly not with our testing matrix."

*- Jess Kahn
Director of Engineering, Tapulous*