



Q2 2010 Bug Battle Report:

## The “Check-In” Challenge

### Bug Battle Basics

The uTest Bug Battle is a quarterly app testing competition, where software professionals from around the world compete to find bugs and rank today’s most popular applications. Previous Bug Battles have focused on [browsers](#), [search engines](#), [social networking sites](#), [e-tailers](#) and others. Complete details are at [www.utest.com/bugbattle](http://www.utest.com/bugbattle).

In Q2 of 2010, participants tested the web *and* mobile applications of the leading check-in services. They were given ten days in May to report the most interesting and severe bugs, and to rank these applications based on geo-location accuracy, social media integration, friend connectivity, status recognition features and ease-of-use – with nearly **\$4,000 in prize money** at stake for those who submitted the best bugs and feedback.



### The Results

In all, 300+ testers from 35 countries participated in the weeklong competition – reporting a total of 870 bugs.

Overall, Foursquare had the least reported bugs (177), followed by Gowalla (316) and then Brightkite (377). While Foursquare ranked highest in most categories and had the best usability feedback (see page 2), Gowalla received the highest score in the important category of location accuracy. Brightkite trailed the other check-in services in most categories, but came in a close second place for ease-of-use, which was ranked as the most important category.

#### *Ease-Of-Use Is Most Important*

The Bug Battle for check-in services came down to ease-of-use (e.g. simple navigation, intuitive UI, clean interface), with almost half of all respondents (46%) selecting it as the most important criteria for choosing a check-in service. Foursquare performed best in this area with a top-two box score (those rating it as “excellent” or “good”) of 59.4%, followed by Brightkite (a close second with 57.3%) and then Gowalla (44.7%).

#### *Location, Connecting With Friends & Social Integration*

Location accuracy was the second most important selection criteria, with 24% of respondents choosing it. Connectivity with friends (15%), social media integration (8%), opportunities to receive special deals/coupons (5%), and ability to earn status/prestige through badges or stamps (2%) received the remaining votes.

#### *Deals & Coupons*

Disappointed with the lack of opportunities to receive special deals for check-ins, testers gave this category an average top-two box score (rating it “excellent” or “good”) of 28% across all three apps – a historically low score.

#### *Privacy & Security*

The impact of check-in services on personal privacy and security took on a prominent role in this study. 80% of respondents responded “Yes” when asked if they were concerned about how location-based check-in services could impact their personal privacy and safety. Nearly half of respondents (49%) chose “privacy and security concerns” as the top reason they do not use check-in services more often (see pages 3 and 5 for complete charts).



## How They Stack Up (based on survey respondents):

### Ease-Of-Use:

1. Foursquare
2. Brightkite
3. Gowalla

### Location Accuracy:

1. Gowalla
2. Foursquare
3. Brightkite

### Opportunity To Earn Deals:

1. Foursquare
2. Gowalla
3. Brightkite

### Status Features:

1. Foursquare
2. Gowalla
3. Brightkite

### Friend Connectivity:

1. Foursquare
2. Gowalla
3. Brightkite

### Social Media Integration:

1. Foursquare
2. Brightkite
3. Gowalla



## Foursquare

With first-place rankings in five out of the six survey categories – including the all-important ‘ease-of-use’ – Foursquare was the undisputed leader in this Bug Battle. Testers reported a total of 177 bugs, which was also the lowest number among all the check-in brands. More than half (52%) of the bugs were reported as functional defects, with GUI (23%) and technical (25%) rounding out the totals. Additionally, bug severity for Foursquare was rather mild, with only 7% of the bugs considered to be ‘showstoppers’ or bugs in need of immediate attention.

### Common positive feedback from the testing community:

- “The look and feel of this app is amazing. It’s very sleek and the color palette fits perfectly. Nothing is overly loud or dull.”
- “Foursquare location accuracy is amazing. Navigation is very easy to access and is usable for a newbie also. Social networking integration for Twitter, Facebook etc. is helpful for end-user to get in touch with his / her friends and locate them.”

### Common negative feedback from the testing community:

- “I would suggest adding a "SEARCH" field to the “Products and Companies” module, as there were only suggestions given by the application and none that I was able to search for myself.”
- “For security reasons, the site should include a session time-out feature.”

### Featured Foursquare Feedback

“I like their integration with international cities (and translation to their native language). The maps are clear and accurate to the location of your site. However, one issue was the apparent lack of connectivity with the Blackberry App. Aside from that, the only real problems I observed with Foursquare stemmed from validation in the forms, as well as a few broken links. What I liked most about Foursquare is the fact that they actually had an introduction video of what Foursquare is about. Bonus points for this! Fix those minor issues, Foursquare, and you’re well on your way to being the leader in this space!” – **Glory, Canada**



## Gowalla

A strong showing in ‘location accuracy’ (1<sup>st</sup> place) and runner-up in half of the categories – including ‘opportunities to earn status’ and features for ‘discovering/inviting friends’ – was enough to earn Gowalla the silver medal in this quarter’s competition. Participants discovered a total of 316 bugs (14% ‘showstoppers’) – which is somewhat explained by the fact that Gowalla was judged to have the most robust mobile functionality. In terms of bug type, 25% of the issues were reported as technical defects, with functional (55%) and GUI (20%) rounding out the totals.



### Common positive feedback from the testing community:

- “The layout of the main areas of the app are thoughtful, and the scrolling and transitions are smooth and quick. I found this app to be the best in terms of ease-of-use. Highly recommended.”
- “A beautiful interface, compelling features (both useful and fun) and the data was very well organized. The best in the social geo-location space. Love that we can add pictures, unlike Foursquare. The pins/buttons/items are also really awesome.”

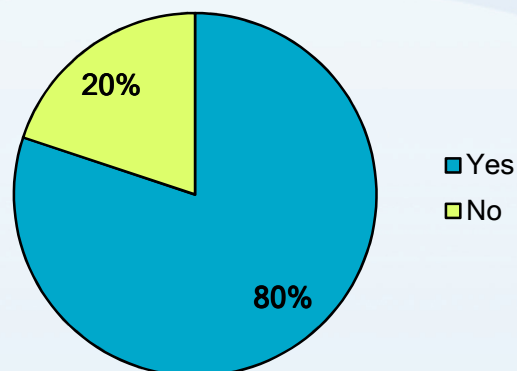
### Common negative feedback from the testing community:

- “The word ‘Gowalla’ in India means ‘Man who takes care of cows/goats and milks them.’ Thus, the response by users in India is *probably not* what was intended by the company.”
- “Error handling is not robust. In several instances, invalid form inputs did not yield a specific error that helped the user identify the problem. For example, during signup, if the user does not check the privacy policy and terms of use checkbox, an error message is rightly thrown, but the user is not asked to correct this input.”

### Featured Gowalla Feedback

“The Gowalla app and web interface themselves are easy on the eyes, and venues get their own snazzy icon depicting what type of establishment it is. I feed my Gowalla check-ins to Facebook, and having an image that catches attention in a cluttered news feed matters. The user can see everyone who has checked in at particular venue and how many times. Gowalla is accessible via a variety of mobile platforms, which is a great advantage for its users.” – **Mike, United States**

### KEY QUESTION: Are You Concerned About How Check-In Services Could Impact Your Personal Privacy & Safety?





## Brightkite

Despite placing last in four out of the six categories – and despite the fact that it had more bugs than any of the applications (377 bugs, 14% ‘showstoppers’) – Brightkite was not far behind Gowalla in terms of overall scoring. The application fared very well in ‘ease-of-use’ (2<sup>nd</sup> overall) and was considered by many testers to have a strong user interface. In terms of bug type, 23% of the bugs reported were reported as technical defects, with functional (54%) and GUI (23%) rounding out the totals.



### Common positive feedback from the testing community:

- “Brightkite has a strong and user friendly interface, clear navigation settings and a nice color palette. I think Brightkite is among the best check-in applications.”
- “I think the "opportunities to receive special deals or coupons" option is a good suggestion to incentivize check-in activity. Terrific application!”

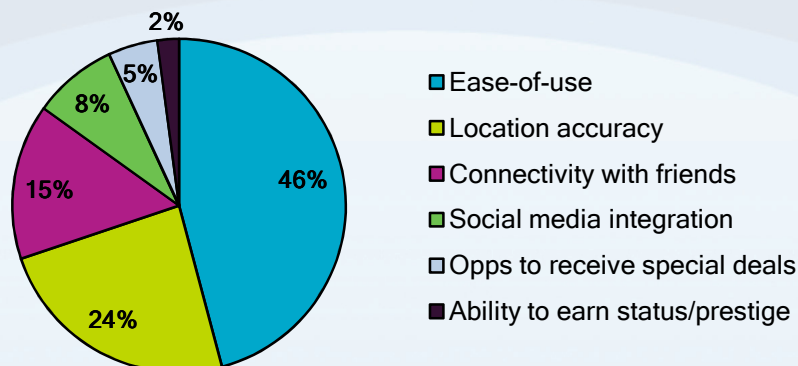
### Common negative feedback from the testing community:

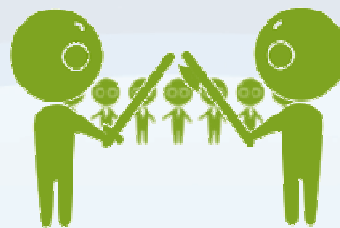
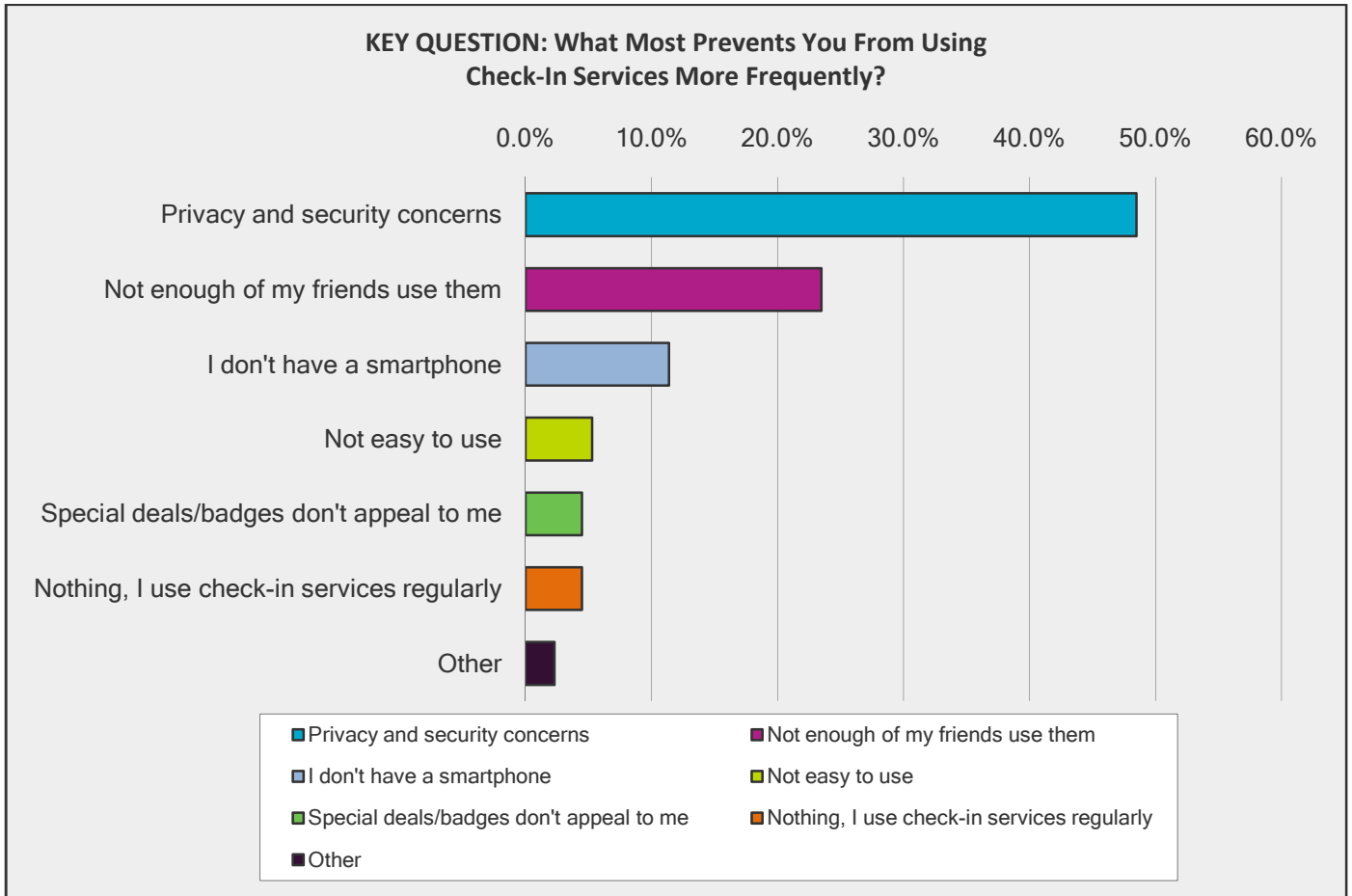
- “The login/setup procedures in connecting to Facebook were not clear. There were several steps that had to be repeated, which can be a little frustrating.”
- “There are session leaks; Android users are locked out because of a broken link; there are integration problems with Yahoo and Twitter at times; and it's even XSS friendly (which is not good). I believe once Brightkite irons out these issues, future users will feel more secure to use this site.”

### Featured Brightkite Feedback

“Brightkite really impressed me. It had a clear interface with robust validation. The color scheme is effective and features are placed in such a way that it is easy to navigate quickly. Integration with other social networks is pretty cool and helps the end-users update in other portals as well. However, a little bit of concentration on security issues would make this application stand in a more credible position against its competitors.” - **Santhosh, India**

**KEY QUESTION: Which Check-In Service Attribute Is Most Important To You?**





### About uTest

uTest is the world's largest marketplace for software testing services. The company provides real-world testing services through its community of 25,000+ professional testers from 164 countries around the world. More than 1,000 companies – from startups to global software enterprises – have joined the uTest marketplace to get their web, desktop and mobile applications tested.

More information can be found at [www.utest.com](http://www.utest.com) or the company's Software Testing Blog at [blog.utest.com](http://blog.utest.com).