# TL TAPLYTICS

# Success Story: How Houseparty Keeps Users Consistently Engaged Through A/B Testing

**Houseparty** is a face-to-face social networking app built around close friends connecting in the moment through mobile and desktop. Houseparty has a user base of 20+ million. Users spend an average of 60 minutes a day chatting in the app with an average of 23 friends.

## Their Goal: Incrementally Improve The Houseparty App

In 2018, Houseparty planned to evolve how their app looked and functioned. However, they didn't want to introduce sweeping product changes all at once because doing so could cause unpredictable fluctuations to their key metrics. Instead, they wanted to roll out small changes incrementally so they could see the impact of each update and reduce the risk of negatively impacting the user experience.

Before they could get started, they needed a way to run a large volume of targeted A/B tests and understand how each change was impacting usage across the app. (Previously, they were relying on complex calculation models that weren't directly tied to usage data to determine if updates were having a positive impact.)

"We would make changes, and see some metrics go up and some go down. But we wouldn't be able to pinpoint a fix because we didn't have the specific metrics on each element," says Jeff Needles, Head of Business Operations and Analytics at Houseparty.

## Their Strategy: Consistently A/B Test App Changes Before Release

Houseparty leveraged Taplytics' targeting capabilities to run hundreds of tests on specific user sets and optimize their app through weekly experiments. This helped them rapidly iterate on everything in their app—from copy and graphics to new features and user onboarding flows—without negatively influencing their key metrics.
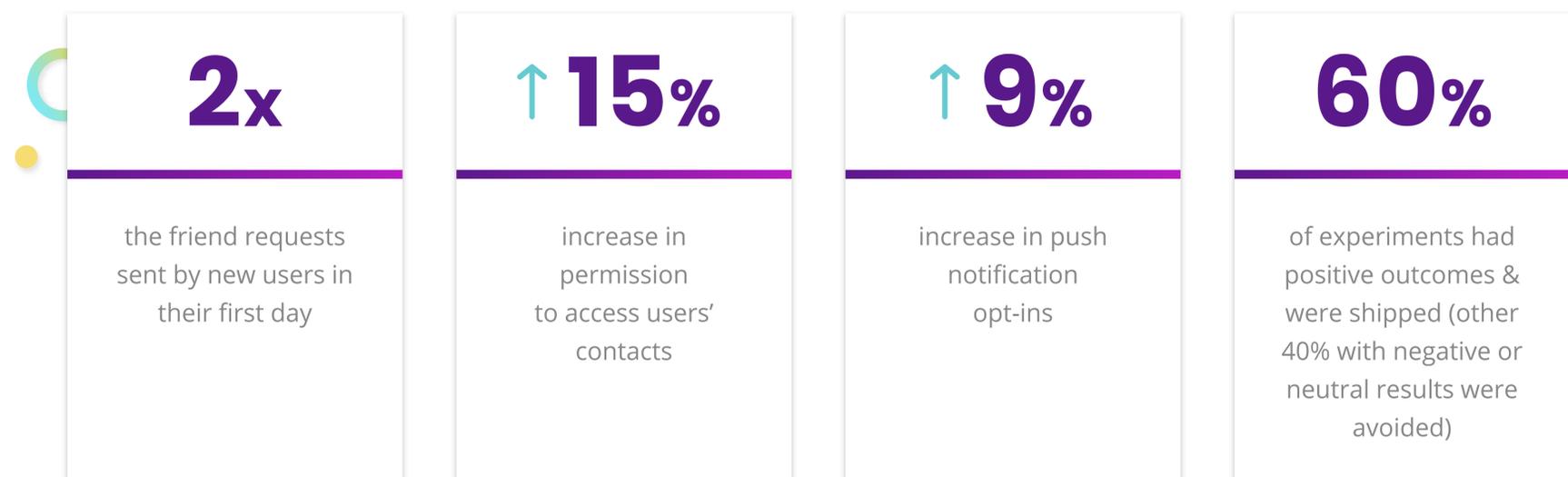
Houseparty could also now determine if things like holidays, user connectivity issues or other external events were affecting activity levels. "Before Taplytics, when we rolled out new features without testing them, we weren't sure if changes in engagement levels were because of those updates, or because of something else, since our testing was built on time-based comparisons," says Jeff. "Now, those anomalies are accounted for since all users in an experiment are randomly distributed between buckets whether they are impacted by the event or not."

*"Now, when we make changes in our product, we can clearly understand the impact on the entire user experience."*

**Jeff Needles**
Data & Analytics

## Their Results: Better User Onboarding & Adoption Rates

| **2x** | ↑ **15%** | ↑ **9%** | **60%** |
|---|---|---|---|
| the friend requests sent by new users in their first day | increase in permission to access users' contacts | increase in push notification opt-ins | of experiments had positive outcomes & were shipped (other 40% with negative or neutral results were avoided) |

## Houseparty's Experimentation Process

**1. Improve the onboarding funnel.** Houseparty went through multiple iterations of their onboarding funnel. They experimented with push notification permissions, number of friends added, and other behaviors that lead to higher rates of long-term usage and engagement.
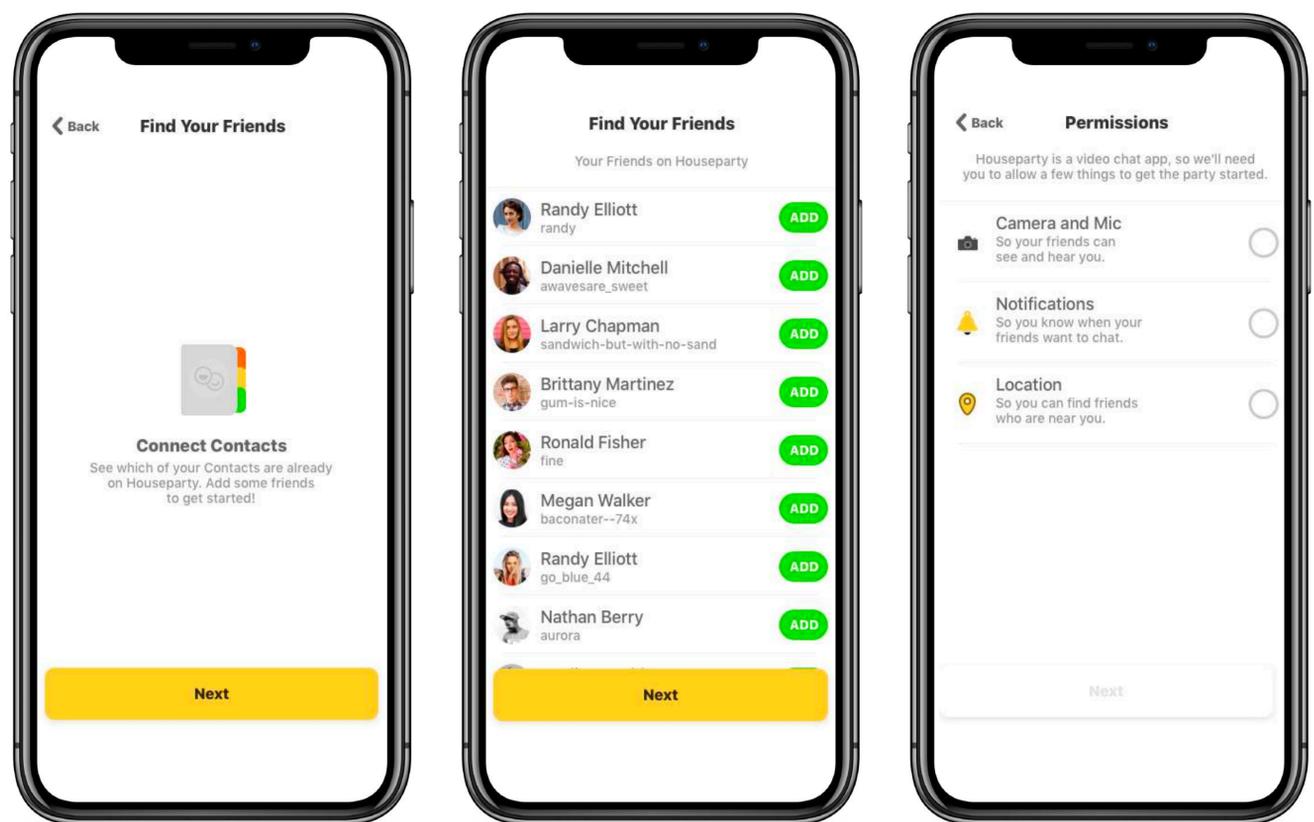
By running more tests and gathering data, Houseparty created an optimized version of their onboarding. "We ended up with a net benefit of improved retention and improved activation," says Jeff.

**Before:**
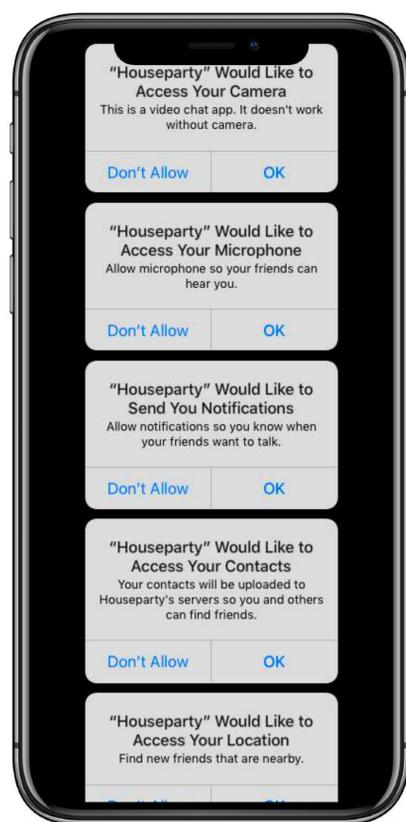
**After:**

The app would ask for permissions without any context. Users were more inclined to hit "Don't Allow" out of habit.

Users are given a message before the opt-in pop-up occurs so they understand why giving access to their contacts is important.

After users opt-in, finding friends already using the app is made easy.

Permissions for push, camera, mic and location access are streamlined into a checkbox list to make onboarding shorter.

**2. Drive feature adoption & retention with targeted testing.** Houseparty analyzes experiment data to see how changes impact certain users. They may base this on new vs. old users, country or device. "We'll also do tests where we restrict people based on only new users if we don't want to compare them to older users," says Jeff. This has helped them strategize ways to increase engagement with certain features among specific subsets of users.

For example, they've tested how they surface friend suggestions, and changed the timing and messaging of those requests based on how long someone has been using the app. They've also experimented with sending tutorials to users in their first few weeks if they aren't using a certain feature, like adding contacts or connecting their social media accounts.

**Before:**
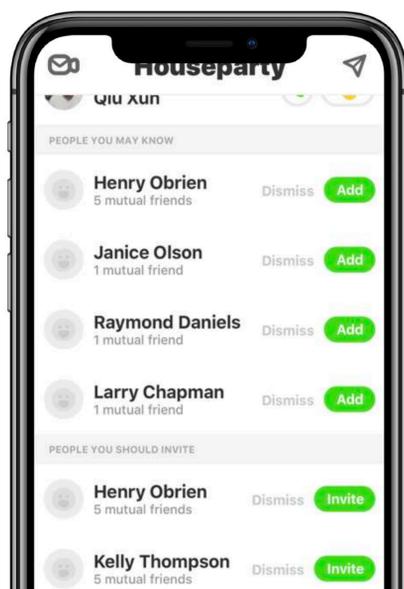
**After:**

A simple, vertical list of friend suggestions. (Users that add more friends are often more engaged.)
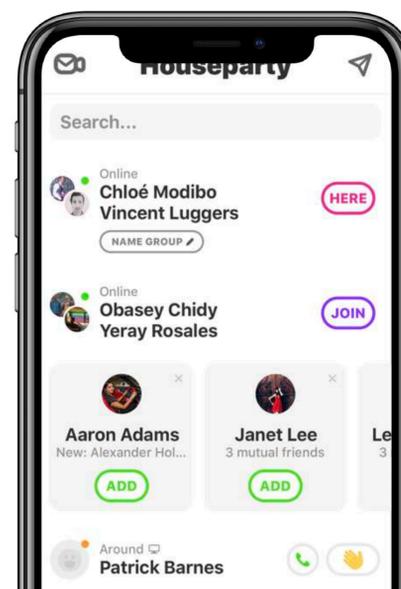
The friend suggestion list is horizontally embedded into the list of users' existing friends so it takes up less space and is more likely to be scrolled.

**3. Roll out new features thoughtfully.** The Houseparty team has used Taplytics' targeting capabilities to release significant updates to specific markets before launching to their entire user base. This way, they could see how users interacted with new features before releasing it to all users.

"Taplytics helps us make decisions like what product features to keep or kill. We couldn't move as quickly as we do without it," says Jeff.

They've also tested the timing of how and where they introduce new features. "We'll test something as small as should this notification pop up after three seconds or five seconds or 10 seconds?'" says Jeff.
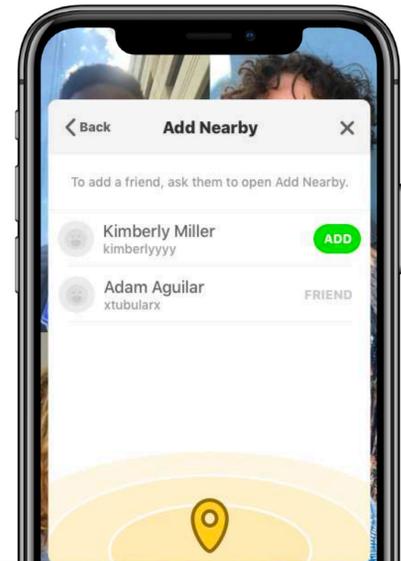
Houseparty rolled out their "Add Nearby" feature in the North American market first to gain insights from their largest user base before releasing worldwide.

## What The Team Is Saying About Taplytics

"With Taplytics, it's so easy to set up experiments and bucket users. It's lowered our inhibitions around testing."

**Jeff Needles**
Data & Analytics

"The Taplytics framework allowed us to implement hundreds of experiments in various platforms, and learn and iterate faster than ever before."

**Mor Sela**
Mobile Engineering Manager

"Thanks to Taplytics, we can gather experiment data to better inform our decision-making."

**Kimberly Kalb**
Head Of Marketing

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