

BEGINNERS GUIDE TO MOBILE APP ENTREPRENEURSHIP

-A MILLION DOLLAR GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

An estimated \$189 billion is expected to be generated from global mobile apps by the year 2020. This speaks volumes about the lucrative mobile app business where more entrepreneurs are looking to capitalize on. So how do you consistently move your startup from the bottom to the top of the game.

Here is an in-depth guidelines on how to make millions with your mobile app.

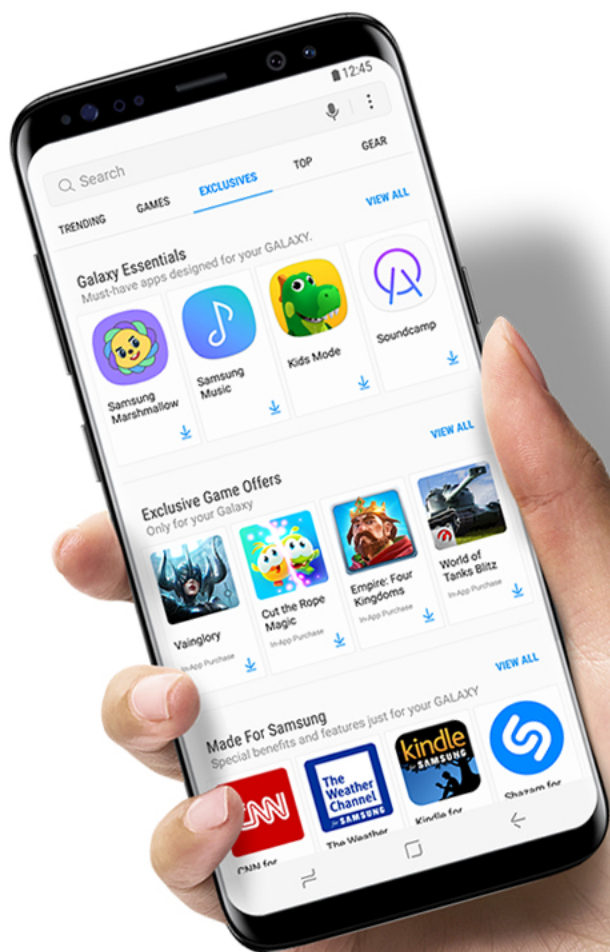


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WHY DO YOU NEED AN APP FOR BUSINESS?

The widespread popularity of mobile apps has seen more and more small-sized firms developing their own apps. If you haven't developed or adamant to do so, here is why you should have an application.



Increase visibility

According to Statista, 49.7% of web page views (globally) were made via mobile gadgets in 2017. Therefore, as a vibrant business entrepreneur, it is crucial that you tap into this opportunity. By having your own mobile app you enable more visitors and customers to access your business.

Promote your brand

Are you a startup company? Well, you can swiftly publicize your brand by developing a user-friendly mobile application. By creating awareness, you attract more and more people to your brand. Remember, your app is a platform where users can purchase your products or services.

Win big in marketing

With the myriad of users accessing their smartphones or tablets, it is easy to market your product via mobile optimization. This entails providing all services such as sales, promotions, new products and even discounts on your app.

Customer loyalty

What's a better way to convert your frequent customers to loyalty ones through mobile apps? The beauty with this is that you get to monitor user activity and keep track of loyal customers. Here, you can use these numbers to market your app.

Foster customer engagement

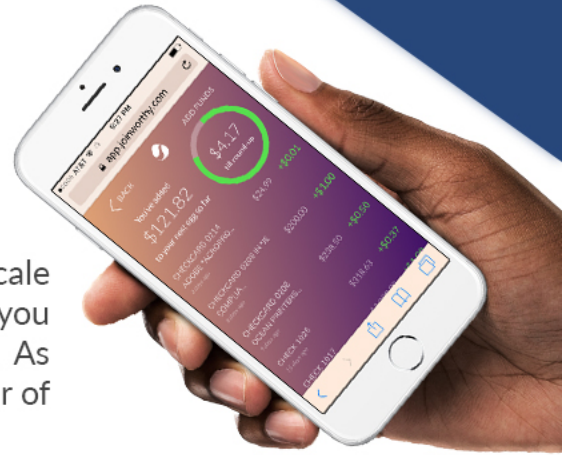
To enjoy fluent and real-time customer interaction, it is recommended that you work out a unique mobile app. Here, you get feedback from your users especially on what's good or bad about your product. This is regardless of the form of business you specialize in.

Improve competitive edge

As highlighted earlier on, more enterprises are shifting to mobile optimization. This implies that the market is highly competitive. So to be ahead with your competitors, it is fundamental that you develop a mobile app.



CAPITAL INVESTMENT ON YOUR MOBILE APPLICATION



Do you endeavor to see your app business scale to the next level? If this is your goal then you have no alternative but to invest seriously. As you embark on app costing, there are number of ways to go about it.

- **Use your own funds-** if you are well off then you can make use of your money to invest on the app. The benefit with this is that you do not have to meet any requirement to secure the funds. Nonetheless, you should be proactive to attain the desired returns.
- **Borrowing loan-** here, developers can approach financial institutions such as banks to get some cash. This loan can be used to develop a unique mobile application. Nonetheless, you will have to meet certain qualifications and guidelines to be granted with the loan.
- **Partnership-** since you have an idea but still require some financial assistance, a partner can come in handy. By laying out your plan and having a repayment strategy, app owners can benefit by having a partner onboard.
- **Crowdfunding-** this concept has been around for quite a while now and is greatly beneficial for startups. Capital is raised by many individuals each contributing small amount for the kitty. It is often done via the internet. Some of the successful crowdfunding platforms include the likes of Kickstarter, RocketHub, and Indiegogo.

Platform to develop apps

It is fundamental for app developers to evaluate the platform where to place their app on. Currently, Google Play store and iOS App Store are the top avenues when it comes to app marketing.

To be successful with the platform, you must be conversant with top coding languages such as HTML 5, Objective C, Swift, and Java. So how do you determine the most suitable platform? Well, you need to carry out some background check on the certain parameters. This encompasses;



- **Target user base-** guided by optimization metrics, startups should easily tell which platform is accessed by the users. If a majority of them prefer Google Play Store, then this should be the destination for launch.
- **Type of app-** are you investing in a gaming, shopping or business app? For instance, gaming apps perform exemplary well on Google Play Store compared to iOS.
- **Revenue-** if you are looking to make quick cash then the Android platform will do you good. But for long-term profit, Apple store is leading platform with better revenue margins.

APP DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Conceptualization and highlighting the company's goals

Just like any other business venture, formulation of mobile apps requires you to conceptualize. Take your time to brainstorm and think through what you want your app to be about. By scrutinizing the goals, targets, and objectives of the company, you are in a better position of developing your app. If you encounter challenges, then you can consult app development experts for guidance.

Additionally, you should consider using the Unique Value Proposition (UVP). This technique boosts in coming up with an original application that is outstanding in the lucrative market. How does it work? Well, it involves analyzing other existing applications in the market to prevent instances of duplication.

Thorough market research

Almost zero percent of successful app entrepreneurs have gotten this far without in-depth research. So what are you supposed to research on? Basically, get to understand how similar apps fair on the market. Read through some of the success stories and failures to have a feel of what to expect. Do not shy away from trying out some of the apps in the market and analyze how they function.

Ensure you take notes on the information retrieved for it will guide you throughout the business venture and growth.

SWOT analysis

You should outline the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the app. Basically, the strengths are the pros that shape up the app whereas the weaknesses are the missing links which need to be resolved. In-app business, opportunities and threats include technology advancements.



As an opportunity, it can come via new inventions especially those that favor the functionality of the app such as accessibility and payment modes. On the contrary, if your app is out-of-date then you are in trouble. Calls for you to take action and avoid being absolute.

Research on competition

Never assume that you are on the field alone. On the contrary, you are in a neck-to-neck competition with other brands and companies all interested in having a piece of the pie. As a wise entrepreneur, check around and see what strategies your competitors are using. Also look at the technology, marketing platform and mistakes made.

Since it is a healthy competition, part of your counterparts' affairs has meaning to you too. However, it should be stated that this step does not entail illegally obtaining documents or information as it may land you in deep trouble.

App design

In this phase, you are anticipated to draw and come up with a unique design for your mobile application. Some of the steps used include;

Wireframing- in a nutshell, a wireframe is a visual representation of the mobile app intended to be developed. This blueprint will help to showcase; space distribution, content prioritization, actions performed and linkage between different app screens.

When properly done, the wireframe will be able to highlight;

- Page element
- Categories
- Prioritization of content
- Features of visual branding
- Available actions

Developing a prototype- A prototype or minimum viable product (MVP) is used to give the first target users to scrutinize the app. Here, you are only supposed to include the basic features that make the app. The feedback on the prototype should paint a clear picture of what to expect after launch. You can use tools such as Marvel and Invision to help out with creating a prototype.

App testing

To avoid being the laughing stock in the block take a step back and test your application before launch. Thousands of app developers are anxious to release their app to the world but end up flopping miserably. Instead, run your app to test various metrics, features, and functionalities to ascertain they are at peak performance.

Types of testing

Mobile applications require to undergo rigorous testing. Some of the tests conducted include;

1. Usability testing can be undertaken by checking metrics such as;

- **User friendliness/ UI/ UX-** the ease of navigation and flow of content on the app greatly affect user experience on the app. Where more users are receptive and satisfied the more profit the profit realized. To attain this, ensure that the application incorporates simple designs and flow of content. Chronological alignment and fluidity which interests more users on the mobile application.
- **Engagement rate-** so are your users responsive to your mobile application? Have users vibrant and active on the app for more revenue.
- **User retention rate-** how long do users have the app installed before un-install? Or how long do they use before abandonment? By analyzing this data, app entrepreneurs can project the expected income. Apart from this, the information is crucial in introducing interventions to improve the retention rate.
- **Bounce rate-** the bounce rate explains the number of users who visit and exit the app without any interaction. This is tabulated by calculation of the average number of bounces across all of your app pages divided by the total number of visits across all of those pages within the same period.

2. App functionality testing

Does your app perform the intended purpose? To confirm this, you can perform functional testing. This will tell the projections of the app's success in the market. If there are some loopholes then you can adjust and update newer versions.

3. Testing for compatibility and device fragmentation

The smartphone market is oversaturated with different mobile handsets and software thus forcing developers to apply fragmentation. Basically, mobile device fragmentation refers to the process of developing different versions of the application for compatibility purposes.

In certain scenarios, you will realize that some devices are running on older versions while the rest are new versions. Below is some explanation on other instances,

- **Varying hardware sets-** parameters such as connectivity options, processing speed, output mode and memory size greatly influence fragmentation.
- **Software diversity-** the contrast in operating systems such as Nokia OS, Apple OS, Android and Mobile Linux calls for different releases of apps for compatibility.
- **Divergent features (full versus short)-** startups need to conceptualize whether the app will be available on both full and short versions. Essentially, the features in light versions are few and are less detailed whereas the full-blown version encompasses all the salient features in the app.



PRE-LAUNCH STRATEGIES

Understand your buyer persona

A proper pre-launch will require that you evaluate the end user targeted by your mobile app. This will determine whether your product fully addresses the problem felt and more so the intended purpose.

Study your competitors

Once again, you have to do some background check on your competitors to get some pointers. These encompass, keywords used, target audience, response and feedback, loopholes in their products among others. From here you know whether you can capitalize on.

Plan for the release date

For a successful app launch, you must do some planning on the release date. This should take into consideration whether other major companies are doing their release on the same date. The last thing you would wish for is to be overshadowed by other launches. Moreover, you should consider the stakeholders involved in the app to synchronize with their schedules.

Once you have set the date then you have a clear target at the back of your mind.

APP MARKETING STRATEGIES TO INCREASE DOWNLOADS

Apparently, the success of the app development venture is highly influenced by the marketing strategies incorporated. So how do you spread the word to users? Here are the top strategies you can use to increase downloads

Use of visuals

One of the most preferred strategies is the use of app screenshots. These should encompass a template of the main features available and navigation controls. Moreover, demo videos can be edited and released to woo the users. Simple guidelines, application, and images can tend to convert more users', especially undecided ones.

Reaching out to media outlets

If you are unfamiliar with the working of social media then you're missing a lot. Social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook, WeChat and Instagram offer a free global marketing avenue. Here you can tag, send posters, share links and messages to friends to drive more traffic to your startup.

Additionally, you can befriend and familiarise yourself with online bloggers, reviewers, and mainstream media personalities. Given the prowess and numerical advantage of these identities, it is easier to broaden your market.

Create podcasts

Basically, podcasts are video or audio content created for subscribed users. This is the new platform that is quite easy to create. According to a research by Edison, there are 67 million listeners on a monthly basis.

Nonetheless, you will have the task of finding users on blogs, websites to study your target clientele.

App store optimization

To attract more visitors to your mobile app, you must optimize your app on the app store. This is fundamental because it is from here that users can download your application. Some of the areas to optimize include; app name, icon, use of keywords, localization and ratings and reviews.



Creating a landing page

This is arguably one of the best strategies to market your app. Why is it the case? Well, it is credited for driving more people to your app. At the end of the day, more people will download your mobile application. Nevertheless, key features and information about the app should be available on the landing page. Otherwise, visitors will not easily grasp what your application is about.

Popularizing the app

As part of creating a buzz around your app, you should run promotions and ads. This will entail sending emails and the use of social media to push your product. By using tools such as analytics it is quite easy to convert more users and generate more revenue.

MONETIZATION APPROACH/TECHNIQUE

1. In-app purchase/ mobile commerce- what's a better way increase the cash flow that hosting business transactions. Statistics indicate that 42% of mobile users transact on their smartphones daily. This trend is only gaining more momentum hence we need to tap into this opportunity.
2. Activities such as online shopping, advertisement, and banking allow you to benefit indirectly. Subsequently, users operating on this platform are thrilled and satisfied by the ease of transaction.
3. Email sales and marketing- despite the growing popularity of social media and other online services, mobile users still stick to emailing. That said, startups have it easy strategizing to push for their product via emails. By using tools such as analytics it is quite easy to convert more users and generate more revenue.
4. Promotions and Advertisement- adverts are one of the most income generating channels for app owners. To allow ads to display on your interface you should steadily come up with a fixed price for these services. As you regardless, whether your app is 'pay to access' or free it is viable to get revenue here.



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