



User Acquisition for mobile Apps

Editor's note



Hey there! Thanks for your interest in user acquisition for apps. First off, let's clear one thing up: you're not alone. Even the best app developers can struggle to bring in new users. As amazing as your app may be, it's true—users don't just show up on their own. Marketing is essential, like it or not!

That's why we've gathered some of the best tips and tricks from the app developer community to help you out. We bet you're familiar with some of these already, so feel free to skip past those and focus on what's new. We're here to help you get results as quickly as possible.

Chances are, though, you'll find a few ideas here you haven't tried yet. Each tip comes with a quick rundown so you can decide if it's worth testing out. Plus, we'll give you the right keywords and sources to help you dive deeper when you're ready.

This guide is constantly evolving with feedback from the community, so if you discover a new user acquisition method that's not included, drop me a line!

Cheers!

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Wait List

I admit - it may be too late for our first tip, but we think it makes sense and have written it down here for the sake of completeness, because you can use it during the planning phase for your next app: Plan ahead.

The problem: Many app developers first build an app and then look for the right users for it. This is tedious and cumbersome. If you ask for interest in an app, you can test the market even before you write the first line of code.



The Tip: Build a landing page and wait list early

On a landing page, you can use mockups and text to describe your app in order to arouse interest. Then give website visitors the opportunity to pre-register. This way you can collect email addresses of people to whom you can then send the link to the app store as soon as the release is available.

You can set yourself a target like: "I'll start working on the app when I have 1,000 interested people." Just remember that only a part of your wait list subscribers will actually download your app. A wait list subscriber is not automatically a paying app user. The point here is to get an idea of the basic level of interest.

You distribute the link to your landing page on social networks and to people who have the problem you are solving with your app. To do this, you need to understand your target group very well. You can find tips on this in our section on the topic

Pro-Tip: Send Updates

Don't wait until the app is released, but send your leads an update from time to time. This not only stimulates anticipation for the app, but also conveys the feeling of being emotionally involved in the development story.
Keyword: coding in public.

Pro-Tip: Build a pre-paid waitlist

One way to validate interested parties is to create a paid waiting list. For a fee, you can use the product free of charge for life. This hurdle shows you who is REALLY interested in your app.

Resources:

- Landingpage builder: [App Landing Page](#) – create an iOS app landing page with Jekyll. Just edit the config file, add screenshots and deploy.
 - Newsletter: [Mailchimp](#)
 - SEO Basics: [Semrush Blog](#)
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User interviews

This tip is actually a no-brainer, but I also neglected it for a long time.

The problem: Many app developers build the app they want for themselves, i.e. the one that meets their own needs. But people are different in their habits and motives. If you want to build an app for the masses, you have to take that into account.

➔ **The Tip:** Talk to the people who have the problem that your app solves and listen carefully to how they have solved their problem so far (and why this solution is not satisfactory), what they have already tried and what they would like to see. I promise you that many things are exactly as you assumed, but there will always be interesting aspects that will help you to redesign your app so that you have less churn and to market your app in such a way that you appeal to the ideal target group. You can find these people either among your users or via social media.

Pro-Tip: Be sure to conduct the interviews in person or via video (instead of via text or using a questionnaire), because people tell more than they would type. Record the conversations and maybe even have an AI summarize them for your internal documentation. This saves an enormous amount of time.

Use the insights from the conversations to adapt your marketing messages (keyword ASO) and better tailor the app to the needs of your users.

Resources:

- **?** These are the interview questions I use to talk to our customers. Feel free to adapt them to your product or app.
 - Do you remember, where did you learn about [app]?
 - What convinced you to actually install [app]?
 - What problem does [app] solve for you?
 - Which feature do you use most often and why?
 - What would be the biggest disadvantage if you could no longer use [app]?
 - How many time do you spent with [app] in a typical day?
 - What is the biggest challenge in your everyday life that [app] helps you with?
 - What improvements or new features would you like to see?
 - What frustrates you most about [app] at the moment?
 - Would you recommend [app] product? Why (not)?
 - What frustrates you most about your [problem] at the moment?
 - What Social Media Platforms do you use most? (helpful for marketing)
 - What are the most important sources for topics around [problem]?
 -  Tool for Transcriptions and summary: [fireflies.ai](#) (ask your interview partners for consent!)
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Analytics

We might be a bit biased, but usage analytics is an essential marketing tool for app developers, providing insights into user behavior, engagement patterns, and in-app activity. By understanding how users interact with an app, developers can make data-driven decisions to enhance user experience, boost retention, and attract new users. With these insights, app developers can optimize their marketing strategies, improve the app itself, and ultimately drive user acquisition.

Define Key Metrics and KPIs

- Focus on the metrics that align with your app's goals, such as active users, session length, retention rates, or conversions. These key performance indicators (KPIs) help prioritize improvements that make the app more appealing to new and existing users.

Identify User Segments and Personas

- Group users based on their behavior, preferences, or demographics. This helps tailor marketing efforts to specific segments and craft personalized messages, increasing the likelihood of attracting similar users.

Track Onboarding and Funnel Metrics

- Analyze the onboarding process to see where new users drop off. Streamlining and improving this experience can prevent early abandonment and increase user retention, leading to a better foundation for user acquisition.

👉 Great resource for everyone publishing a **health** or **fitness** app. Jacob Rushfinn, (author of the [Retention.Blog](#)) shares the onboarding flows, paywalls, and prices for the Top 25 grossing Health and Fitness apps and the price localizations for 15 countries [here](#).

👉 Learn everything about Funnel Analytics with TelemetryDeck here:

How to extract funnels from your analytics data

This is a quick overview on how to create funnels, or click-stream funnels, using the TelemetryDeck Query Language.

📄 <https://telemetrydeck.com/docs/tql/funnel/?source=freebie-user-acquisition>



Analyze Engagement Patterns

- Look for common behaviors among active users, such as frequently used features or session timings. Use this data to emphasize popular features in marketing materials, which can appeal to potential users.

Optimize Based on Churn Data

- Review analytics on users who stop using the app (churn) to identify patterns. Addressing common pain points and making improvements based on churn data can reduce drop-offs and improve retention, making the app more attractive for new users.

Leverage A/B Testing

- Test different versions of app features, designs, or calls to action. By using A/B testing, you can determine what works best for engagement, ultimately creating a version of the app that appeals to the broadest audience.

👉 Learn everything about A/B-Testing with TelemetryDeck here:

A/B Testing

♥ Helping developers improve their apps with immediate, accurate and private analytics.

📄 <https://telemetrydeck.com/feature/ab-testing/?source=freebie-user-acquisition>



Monitor Acquisition Channels

- Track which marketing channels (organic search, social media, ads) bring in the most valuable users. This helps allocate resources to the best-performing channels, optimizing acquisition efforts.

Use Analytics to Support User-Driven Development

- Let user data guide the development roadmap. By prioritizing features that users frequently engage with, you improve the app's appeal, making it easier to attract similar users.

Measure and Celebrate Milestones

- Keep an eye on usage milestones, such as reaching a new daily active user count. Celebrating and sharing these achievements can create excitement and social proof, which supports user acquisition efforts.

👏 Celebrating achieved goals, patting yourself on the back - that's something that many people forget to do in everyday life (we take it upon ourselves). A good way to celebrate a milestone is a post on social media: "Hey, I've now cracked the 1,000 Monthly Active Users mark!" If you tag @TelemetryDeck in a post like this, we'll share your success with our followers. We promise!



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App Store Optimization (ASO)

ASO has slowly becoming just as complex a topic as SEO, so we can only skim the surface here, but we've compiled some fantastic advice from the community that we're sharing here.

Categories

In the Apple App Store, categories play a crucial role in organizing apps, enhancing discoverability, and improving user experience. When publishing an app, selecting the appropriate category is vital for reaching your target audience effectively.

Best Practices for Selecting an App Category

1. **Align with Your App's Core Functionality:** Choose a category that accurately reflects your app's main purpose. Misclassification can lead to poor user experience and may violate App Store guidelines. Source: <https://developer.apple.com/app-store/categories/>
2. **Understand Your Target Audience:** Consider where potential users are likely to look for an app like yours. Understanding user behavior can guide you to the most appropriate category. Source: <https://developer.apple.com/app-store/categories/>
3. **Analyze Competitors:** Research similar apps to see which categories they are listed under. This can provide insights into user expectations and help you position your app effectively. Source: <https://www.gummicube.com/blog/app-store-categories-are-you-in-the-right-category>
4. **Evaluate Category Popularity and Competition:** Some categories are more saturated than others. For instance, as of the second quarter of 2024, gaming apps constituted approximately 12% of all iOS apps, making it a highly competitive category. If your app fits multiple categories, selecting a less crowded one might enhance visibility. Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/270291/popular-categories-in-the-app-store/>

5. **Adhere to App Store Guidelines:** Ensure your app complies with Apple's App Store Review Guidelines, which cover aspects like safety, performance, business, design, and legal requirements. Non-compliance can result in rejection during the review process. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IOS_app_approvals
6. **Utilize Subcategories When Applicable:** If your app is a game, you can select up to two subcategories to define it further, aiding in more precise user targeting. Source: <https://developer.apple.com/app-store/categories/>
7. **Optimize App Metadata:** Incorporate relevant keywords in your app's title, subtitle, and description to improve searchability. However, avoid keyword stuffing and ensure that all information is pertinent and accurate. Source: <https://developer.apple.com/app-store/search/>

Pro-Tip: Don't spend time on generic keywords, but give it a try. „Gaming“ is bad. „Parenting“ can be interesting. Source: Ariel from Appfigures in his [Twitter Live](#) from October. 30, 2024

App Store Pre-Orders

Offering your app for pre-order on the Apple App Store is an effective strategy to generate anticipation and secure early user engagement before the official launch. This approach allows users to view your app's product page and place orders ahead of its release, ensuring automatic download upon availability.

Understanding App Store Pre-Orders

The pre-order feature enables developers to publish a limited version of their app's product page on the App Store, allowing users to pre-order the app before its official release. On the release date, the app automatically downloads onto the devices of users who pre-ordered it, accompanied by a notification.

- **Eligibility:** Pre-orders are available for brand-new apps that have **never been published** on the App Store. This feature is applicable across all Apple platforms, including iOS, macOS, tvOS, and watchOS. Source: [Apple Developer](#)
- **Configuration:** Developers can set up pre-orders in App Store Connect by selecting the app version, navigating to the "Pricing and Availability" section, and choosing the pre-order option. The release date must be set between 2 to 180 days from the pre-order publication date. Source: [Apple Developer](#)

Best Practices for Implementing Pre-Orders

1. **Finalize App Store Listing:** Ensure that your app's metadata—including the app name, subtitle, description, icon, and screenshots—is complete and optimized before initiating the pre-order. This preparation is crucial as users will base their pre-order decisions on this information. Source: [Appradar](#)
2. **Set an Appropriate Pre-Order Period:** A pre-order period of 4 to 6 weeks is recommended to build sufficient anticipation and accumulate a substantial number of pre-orders. This timeframe allows for effective marketing and outreach efforts. Source: [Apptamin](#)
3. **Communicate Release Dates Clearly:** Clearly specify the expected release date on your app's product page. If there's a possibility of changes, avoid including the exact date in your marketing materials to prevent user confusion. Source: [Apple Developer](#)
4. **Engage in Pre-Launch Marketing:** Utilize various marketing channels such as social media, email newsletters, and press releases to promote your app during the pre-order phase. Highlight the benefits and unique features of your app to generate interest and encourage pre-orders. Source: [Appradar](#)
5. **Monitor and Analyze Performance:** Use App Store Connect's analytics tools to track the performance of your pre-orders. Analyze metrics such as the number of pre-orders, regional distribution, and source types to refine your marketing strategies and optimize the app's launch. Source: [Apple Developer](#)

Pro-tip: Pre-Orders give you a 7-day-boost in both the App Store and the Play Store. App updates don't profit from pre-orders at all. If you want to boost an existing app, In-App Events are a more effective option. Source: Ariel from Appfigures in his [Twitter Live](#) from October. 30, 2024

Keywords

This topic is of particular interest to app developers. That's why we've taken the time to put together some resources to help you choose the right keywords. Because every app developer I talk to on a regular basis confirms this: organic growth is the best growth!

Example: "For Chibi Studio, our main acquisition source is organic through the App Store..." – Guilherme Rambo

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|---|---|
| <p>Chibi Studio Avatar Maker</p> <p>Elevate your Home Screen aesthetics with a touch of kawaii: ChibiStudio brings the charm of anime right to your Home Screen with our exclusive chibi widgets, including the delightful 'Chibi Calendar'! Imagine your favorite chibi avatars and anime-style characters enlivening</p> <p> https://apps.apple.com/us/app/chibi-studio-avatar-maker/id1135307199</p> |  |
|---|---|

In a nutshell: In the App Store, keywords are terms that users input to find apps. Apple allows developers to specify keywords in a dedicated 100-character field within App Store Connect. These keywords, along with those in your app's title and subtitle, help Apple's search algorithm index your app appropriately.

Best Practices for App Store Keywords

1. **Conduct Thorough Keyword Research:** Identify terms that potential users might use to find an app like yours. Utilize tools such as App Radar or Appfigures to discover relevant keywords and assess their search volume and competitiveness. Source: [AppRadar](#)
2. **Prioritize Relevance and Specificity:** Choose keywords that accurately reflect your app's core functionalities and unique features. Avoid generic terms that are highly competitive and may not effectively target your intended audience. Source: [Search Ads](#)
3. **Check competitors' keywords:** After creating a list of potential keywords, the next step is to search for each of these keywords in the US store and analyze the top 10 applications. Find a detailed step-by-step guide on our blog.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>7 steps to improve your ranking in the App Store</p> <p>Learn how to improve the positioning of your app in the App Store with a clever combination of relevant keywords.</p> <p> https://telemetrydeck.com/blog/aso/?source=freebie-user-acquisition</p> |  |
|---|---|

4. Optimize the Keyword Field:

- **Use Commas to Separate Keywords:** List keywords separated by commas without spaces to maximize the 100-character limit. For example: `fitness,workout,exercise,health`. Source: [AppFigures](#)
 - **Avoid Redundancies:** Do not repeat keywords already present in your app's title or subtitle, as the search algorithm already considers them. Source: [AppFigures](#)
 - **Exclude Irrelevant Terms:** Avoid using special characters, plural forms, or stop words (e.g., "the," "and") that do not enhance searchability. Source: [AppFigures](#)
5. **Leverage the App Title and Subtitle:** Incorporate primary keywords into your app's title (up to 30 characters) and subtitle (up to 30 characters) to improve search rankings. Ensure these elements are concise, descriptive, and compelling. Ariel from Appfigures also emphasized this point in his [Twitter Live](#) from October. 30, 2024. There is huge potential for optimization here! Source: [Apple Entwickler](#)
 6. **Monitor and Update Regularly:** ASO is an ongoing process. Regularly analyze your app's performance and user behavior to refine your keyword strategy. Stay informed about market trends and adjust your keywords accordingly to maintain and improve your app's visibility. Source: [AppRadar](#)

Reviews

User reviews and ratings are pivotal components of App Store Optimization (ASO), significantly influencing an app's visibility, credibility, and user acquisition potential. Positive reviews not only enhance your app's ranking in search results but also build trust among potential users, leading to increased downloads.

Understanding the Impact of User Reviews on ASO

App store algorithms consider user reviews and ratings as key factors in determining an app's ranking. High ratings and positive feedback signal quality and reliability, prompting the algorithm to position the app more prominently in search results and category listings. Conversely, negative reviews can adversely affect rankings and deter potential users. Source: [Rplg](#)

Best Practices for Leveraging User Reviews to Enhance User Acquisition

1. Encourage Positive Reviews:

- **Simplify the Review Process:** Implement in-app prompts that allow users to rate and review your app without leaving it, reducing friction and encouraging participation. Source: [Pubscale](#)
- **Prompt Users at Optimal Moments:** Timing is important. Request reviews after users have experienced a positive interaction with the app, such as completing a task or achieving a milestone. This timing increases the likelihood of favorable feedback.

Tip: Here's how to prompt users for a review:

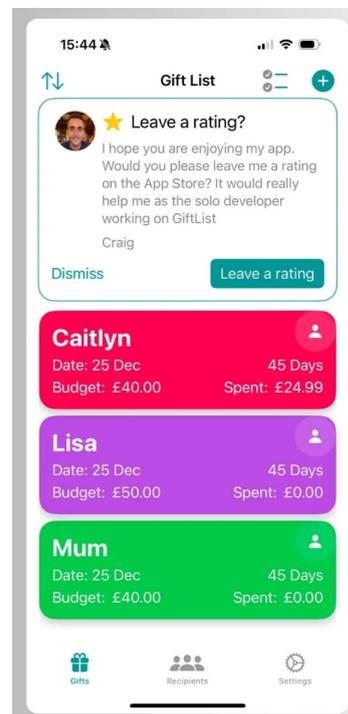
How to ask the user to review your app - a free SwiftUI by Example tutorial

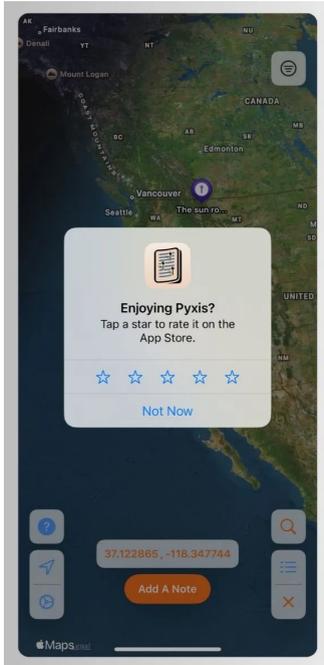
Learn Swift coding for iOS with these free tutorials

<https://www.hackingwithswift.com/quick-start/swiftui/how-to-ask-the-user-to-review-your-app>

Examples from our customers:

Craig switched from the default dialogue to custom text that asks for a review and has seen a huge jump in reviews from this. He shares a screenshot from his app [Gift List](#).





Armen shares the review dialog from his app Pyxis.

Armen implemented the following strategy for when the `requestReview()` function is called:

- The function is only called when paid users are using the app. This is quite straightforward because the paid users are likely to leave a review that's close to 5-stars over free users, or at least a more constructive review.
- The function is called when the user saves a location or modifies a saved location. This ensures that the rating dialog only shows when a user has engaged with the app in a meaningful way i.e. press of a button with an intent.

💡 In summary, the review only shows for users that are on a happy path and are likely to leave a review that's not a 1-star review and will have a better intention of leaving a meaningful comment.

2. Respond to Reviews Constructively:

- **Address Negative Feedback Promptly:** Engage with dissatisfied users by acknowledging their concerns and providing solutions or updates. This responsiveness demonstrates commitment to user satisfaction and can mitigate the impact of negative reviews. Source: [AppTweak](#)
- **Express Gratitude for Positive Feedback:** Thank users for their positive reviews to foster loyalty and encourage continued engagement. Source: [AppTweak](#)

3. Analyze Review Content for Insights:

- **Identify Common Themes:** Regularly assess reviews to detect recurring issues or feature requests, guiding future app improvements and updates. Source: [AppFollow](#)
- **Utilize Sentiment Analysis Tools:** If you have lots and lots of reviews, you might want to use tools to gauge overall user sentiment and prioritize areas for enhancement. Source: [AppFollow](#)

4. Showcase Positive Reviews:

- **Highlight Testimonials in Marketing Materials:** Feature favorable user reviews in app descriptions, screenshots, and promotional content to build trust and attract new users. Source: [AppTweak](#)

By actively managing and leveraging user reviews, you can enhance your app's reputation, improve its ranking in the App Store, and attract more users through organic discovery.

Localization

App localization is the process of adapting your application to meet the linguistic, cultural, and technical requirements of a specific target market. This involves translating content and adjusting various elements to align with local preferences, thereby enhancing user experience and expanding your app's global reach.

We have a whole webinar on this topic, which you can watch on YouTube. In it, app developer Cihat shares his tips and tools on the topic of localization.

Localization Best Practices for Mobile Apps

Daniel meets Cihat Gündüz aka Jeehut, author of localization tools such as BartyCrouch, RemafoX and TranslateKit. We talk about why localizing apps is not only great for your business, but also a great equalizer in making your app more accessible. Cihat and Daniel are

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xgMpmEJYAFc&t=2s>



- 1. Improved Visibility in Local App Stores:** Localizing app metadata, including the app title, description, keywords, and screenshots, can greatly enhance visibility in regional app stores. By using keywords in local languages and dialects, your app is more likely to appear in search results, giving it an edge over non-localized competitors. Localized content in the app store also signals to the platform's algorithm that the app is relevant to a particular region, potentially boosting rankings in that area. Source: [AppTweak](#)
- 2. Higher Conversion Rates:** Studies show that users are more likely to download an app if the app store page, screenshots, and description are in their native language. Localization helps bridge language and cultural gaps, making users feel more comfortable and confident in downloading your app. A localized app description, images, and keywords ensure that users fully understand the app's value, making them more likely to download and engage (App Radar). Source: [AppRadar](#)
- 3. Enhanced User Trust and Credibility:** When users see that your app is localized in their language, it builds trust and gives the impression that your app is dedicated to serving them. This can be especially important in markets where users may feel cautious about engaging with international brands. Including region-specific testimonials, reviews, and case studies in app descriptions also reinforces credibility, as users feel that the app is popular and trusted in their region. Source: [Adjust](#)
- 4. Localized Marketing Campaigns:** Localization allows you to adapt marketing campaigns to fit local customs, holidays, and events. By creating region-specific promotions, social media ads, and email campaigns, you can target users in a way that feels familiar and engaging. For instance, creating promotions during local holidays or events can increase app visibility and relevance, helping attract new users who feel a stronger cultural connection. Source: [Business of Apps](#)
- 5. Adapting User Onboarding and In-App Content:** Localizing the onboarding process is crucial for user acquisition, as it ensures new users feel comfortable navigating and understanding your app from the start. By tailoring tutorials, tips, and in-app messages to reflect local nuances, you make it easier for new users to get started, reducing churn. An onboarding experience that reflects local languages and norms improves user experience, leading to better initial retention rates. Source: [Gridly](#)
- 6. Boosted Organic Growth through Word-of-Mouth:** When users feel a strong connection to your app because it reflects their language and culture, they are more likely to recommend it to friends and family. Organic growth, fueled by word-of-mouth recommendations, is often one of the most effective forms of user acquisition, particularly in regions where trust and local relevancy are paramount. By fostering strong community engagement in local languages and responding to reviews, users feel valued, and word-of-mouth recommendations become more common in local communities. Source: [AppFollow](#)
- 7. Improved Paid User Acquisition Campaign Performance:** Localization also benefits paid campaigns by increasing ad relevance scores. Ads in the native language, showing culturally relevant visuals and copy, are more likely to have higher click-through rates (CTR) and lower cost-per-acquisition (CPA). Users are more responsive to ads that feel personalized to their cultural context, resulting in improved ad effectiveness and a stronger acquisition pipeline in each region. Source: [Adjust](#)
- 8. Access to Untapped or Emerging Markets:** Many regions, especially emerging markets, have a high demand for apps in local languages. Localizing for these markets allows you to reach a larger audience with less competition, as fewer apps are likely to be available in their native language. By making the app accessible in underserved languages and regions, you can reach a wider audience, often with less competition, and establish a strong presence in new markets. Source: [Lokalise](#)

Screenshots

A key component of ASO is the strategic use of app screenshots, as they provide potential users with a visual preview of your app's features and functionality. Effective screenshots can significantly influence a user's decision to download your app. Some other stats: 50% of users only look at the first 3 screenshots, and 60% take less than 3 seconds to decide.

1. **Highlight the Problem you are solving:** You might be proud of some of the features you built, but its more important to talk about the solution to the problems, that your app solves. This is especially relevant when it comes to the first screenshots. Check out this great example by [Teo](#).
2. **Use High-Quality Images:** Utilize clear, high-resolution images that accurately represent your app's interface. Avoid pixelation or blurriness, as these can deter potential users. Source: [Moburst](#)
3. **Incorporate Captions and Descriptions:** Add concise, informative text overlays to explain the context of each screenshot. The texts on your screenshots must be so intuitive, simple and easy to understand that EVERYONE can understand them immediately. Source: [PreApps](#).
4. **Maintain Consistent Branding:** Align the design elements of your screenshots with your app's overall branding, including color schemes, fonts, and style. Consistency reinforces brand identity and professionalism. Source: [Moburst](#)
5. **Sequence Screenshots Logically:** Arrange your screenshots in a logical order that tells a compelling story about the user experience. The first two screenshots are particularly important, as they are immediately visible in the app store search results. Source: [Builder.ai](#)
 - a. Run experiments on which screenshot is your first. Source: [Teo](#)
6. **Localize for Different Markets:** If your app is available in multiple regions, localize your screenshots to reflect the language and cultural nuances of each market. This personalization can enhance user connection and increase downloads. Source: [Adapty](#)
7. **A/B Test Different Variations:** Experiment with various screenshot designs, sequences, and captions to determine which combinations yield the highest conversion rates. Continuous testing and optimization are key to effective ASO. Source: [Admiral](#)

Example for a successful A/B-Test:

<https://x.com/MaartenBorsje/status/1854223499591573603>





Tool for App Store Screenshots: [Picasso](#)

Case Studies — Picasso

This is a collection of experiments run on App Store Product pages through the Product Page Optimization tool in App Store Connect. Only the screenshots are updated using Picasso.

 <https://www.picassoapp.ca/case-studies>



Picasso is a powerful developer tool that can help take the headache out of making App Store screenshots. On top of supporting all Apple platforms (and some Android platforms), Picasso will help you localize your screenshots in a couple of clicks (integrating with Fastlane screenshots!), run experiments on different screenshot variations, and upload your masterpieces directly to App Store Connect in minutes. Picasso also has a ton of designer tools to help get you started, like templates, color palettes, and smart duplication. Join thousands of other developers who are saving time on their screenshots today!

Search Ads (AppStore)

The Problem: Search ads initially seem to be an obvious solution to the problem of user acquisition. But in practice, for many app developers it feels like they are *setting money on fire*, as Guilherme Rambo summarized it so well. Others state, that Search Ads bring mostly low quality results aka users, that don't stick.

So let's take another look at the basic strategy for placing search ads to see, if we can make your campaigns more successful.

1. Strategic Campaign Structure:

- **Organize by Keyword Themes:** Segment your campaigns into distinct types such as Brand, Category, Competitor, and Discovery. This organization allows for targeted bidding and performance analysis. Source: [Apple Suchanzeigen](#)
- **Utilize Ad Groups Effectively:** Within each campaign, create ad groups that focus on specific keyword match types and audience demographics to refine targeting.

2. Effective Keyword Selection:

- **Comprehensive Research:** Identify relevant keywords that potential users might use to find apps like yours. Tools like App Radar can assist in discovering high-performing keywords. Source: [AppRadar](#)
- **Implement Negative Keywords:** Exclude terms that are not pertinent to your app to prevent irrelevant ad impressions and optimize budget allocation. Source: [Apple Suchanzeigen](#)

3. Ad Creative Optimization:

- **Develop Compelling Ad Variations:** Create multiple ad variations to test different visuals and messaging, ensuring they align with user intent and preferences. Source: [Apple Suchanzeigen](#)
- **Leverage Custom Product Pages:** Design custom product pages that highlight specific features or content, providing a tailored experience for different user segments. Source: [adesso](#)

4. Budget and Bid Management:

- **Set Appropriate Bids:** Determine maximum cost-per-tap (CPT) bids based on the value of each keyword and its potential return on investment. Source: [AppRadar](#)
- **Monitor and Adjust Budgets:** Regularly review campaign performance and adjust daily budgets to allocate resources effectively across high-performing keywords and ad groups. Source: [Apple Suchanzeigen](#)

5. Continuous Performance Analysis:

- **Track Key Metrics:** Monitor impressions, tap-through rates (TTR), conversion rates, and cost-per-acquisition (CPA) to assess campaign effectiveness. Source: [AppRadar](#)
- **Iterate Based on Data:** Use performance data to refine keywords, adjust bids, and optimize ad creatives, fostering continuous improvement in user acquisition strategies.

Adopt a new Feature

Guilherme shared an exciting tip with me on how to attract new app users, which surprised him. It's almost a stroke of genius. Guilherme used the then new feature App Clips for his app Chibi Studio.

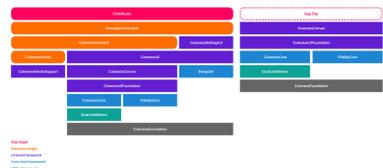


Do you remember? App Clips are mini-apps for quick tasks, letting users access a feature without downloading the full app. They're triggered via NFC, QR codes, or links, ideal for things like payments or reservations.

Guilherme's experience was that he was simply curious about this new feature that was introduced in iOS 16, so he tried it out in his app, even though it didn't add any obvious increase in value. After he shared his experience with developing App Clips on Twitter, many people were exposed to his app for the first time, because they were into the feature on a technical level. Even big new websites picked up the topic and used Chibi Studio as an example to link to in their articles. The whole story is in his blog post:

Turning the ChibiStudio canvas into an App Clip for iOS 14 | Rambo Codes
 Gui Rambo writes about his coding and reverse engineering adventures.

<https://rambo.codes/posts/2020-08-29-turning-the-chibistudio-canvas-into-an-app-clip>



Pro-Tip: Adopt new features as soon as they come out and talk about your findings. Many other developers around the world probably have the same questions and are very happy if they can learn from your experiences. This increases the visibility of your app.

Word of mouth

Word of mouth (WOM) is a powerful marketing strategy for app developers, leveraging user recommendations to drive organic growth. When users share positive experiences, it builds credibility and trust, making others more likely to try the app. It's particularly effective because people trust personal recommendations over ads or branded content. To trigger recommendations, we advise you on these 6 steps:

1. **Focus on User Experience and Quality:** That's a no-brainer, but a little reminder never hurt – a well-designed, reliable app encourages users to share it naturally. Ensure seamless functionality, regular updates, and engaging features that make users want to talk about it.
2. **Encourage Sharing with Built-In Social Features:** Include easy options for users to share achievements or content from the app on social media. For example, add shareable progress badges, in-app milestones, or customizable graphics users can post.
3. **Implement a Referral Program:** Offer incentives, like discounts or in-app rewards, to users who refer friends. Make referrals easy to access and track, and provide appealing rewards for both the referrer and new user.
4. **Ask for Reviews and Testimonials:** Politely prompt users for app reviews after positive experiences within the app. High ratings and positive reviews improve credibility and inspire others to download.

Pro-Tip:

1. **Engage Users and Build a Community:** Create spaces where users can interact, like a social media group or a forum. Engaging with users directly encourages brand loyalty and word of mouth, as users feel connected and valued.
2. **Leverage Influencers and Early Adopters:** Do things that don't scale, onboard your first users manually and talk to them and learn about their problems. Identify influential users who love your app and encourage them to spread the word. This can amplify reach and credibility through trusted sources.

Social Media

Social media is a highly effective marketing strategy for app developers, providing a direct channel to engage with potential users, share updates, and showcase app features. With the right approach, social media can help build a community around an app, boost brand awareness, and drive downloads.

Choose the Right Platforms: Focus on platforms where your target audience is most active. For example, Instagram and TikTok are great for visually engaging apps, while LinkedIn might work better for professional tools.

Share Regular Updates and Milestones: Post about new features, version updates, and user milestones to keep followers informed and engaged. It shows that the app is evolving and encourages users to check back frequently. [#CodingInPublic](#)

Showcase App Features Visually: Use screenshots, videos, and tutorials to demonstrate key app features and show how it benefits users. Short, engaging videos work well for demonstrating functionality and are especially effective on platforms like Instagram and TikTok.

Engage with Your Audience: Respond to comments, host Q&A sessions, and post polls or stories to build a sense of community. Engaging content not only keeps current followers interested but also encourages shares, boosting organic reach.

Utilize User-Generated Content: Encourage users to share their own experiences and content with the app. Reposting this content creates social proof and makes the app feel more relatable and authentic. Ideas for [#Shareables](#) [here](#).

Leverage Paid Ads: Use targeted ads on social media to reach potential users with specific demographics and interests. Many platforms offer app install ads that link directly to app stores, optimizing for downloads.

Run Contests or Giveaways: Host social media contests or giveaways that require users to download the app or share it with friends. These campaigns can create excitement, increase followers, and drive downloads.

Partner with Influencers: Collaborate with influencers or micro-influencers in your app's niche. Influencers can introduce your app to their followers, providing a trusted recommendation that can encourage downloads.

Startup Directories

Startup directories are platforms where app developers can list their applications to gain visibility, attract early adopters, and drive downloads. These directories, such as Product Hunt, BetaList, and AngelList, are frequented by tech-savvy users, investors, and industry influencers looking to discover new, innovative apps.

1. **Choose Relevant Directories:** Select directories aligned with your target audience and app niche. For example, Product Hunt is great for general tech users, while BetaList focuses more on early-stage

startups.

2. **Optimize Your Listing:** Craft a compelling description, highlight key features, and use visually appealing screenshots or videos. Clearly communicate your app's unique value proposition to make it stand out.
 3. **Time Your Launch Carefully:** Launch on directories when you're ready to handle feedback and potential growth. Ensure the app is stable and functional, as a poor first impression can harm your reputation.
 4. **Engage with the Community:** Many startup directories have active communities. Engage with users who leave comments, answer questions, and participate in discussions to build relationships and foster trust.
 5. **Encourage Early Users to Leave Feedback:** Ask users who find your app through these directories to share feedback or reviews. Positive testimonials on these platforms can attract more users and lend credibility to your app.
 6. **Focus on the Pain Points:** Sometimes it is more advisable not to post the link to your product directly. Focus on the pain points that your app solves and write about them in your blog. Links to blog articles are better accepted in some communities.
 7. **Leverage Social Proof and Metrics:** Highlight any achievements, like user milestones, notable investors, or awards, to boost credibility on your listing. Startup directories often allow you to showcase metrics that prove traction and success.
 8. **Promote Your Directory Listings:** Once your app is listed, promote the listing on your social media and in newsletters to increase visibility. Getting more eyes on your listing can lead to more votes, comments, and ultimately downloads.
 9. **Monitor and Act on Feedback:** Many users on startup directories are open to providing constructive feedback. Use their insights to make improvements to your app, showing that you value user input and iterate quickly.
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Reddit Communities

Reddit can be a powerful marketing channel for app developers, offering access to niche communities and engaged users. Subreddits allow developers to connect with users interested in specific topics, providing opportunities for organic promotion, feedback, and awareness.

1. **Work on Your Post Karma:** Build karma by sharing high-quality, relevant content in popular Subreddits, like r/AskReddit or r/todayilearned, where upvotes are common if your content resonates. Post useful, interesting, or humorous content that fits the community's tone, and be consistent, as karma-building takes time. Engaging in niche Subreddits related to your app's area helps build trust among future users. Avoid low-effort posts or clickbait, as they can lead to downvotes. Also, respond thoughtfully in popular threads, as comments can earn substantial karma too.
2. **Find Relevant Subreddits:** Identify Subreddits that align with your app's niche or target audience. For example, an app for productivity may benefit from r/productivity, while a gaming app could find a community in r/gaming.
3. **Engage Authentically:** Reddit users value authenticity and are quick to spot (and downvote) overt self-promotion. Contribute meaningfully to discussions, answer questions, and avoid promoting the app in every post. Building trust in the community is key.
4. **Follow Subreddit Rules:** Each Subreddit has its own guidelines regarding self-promotion. Check the rules before posting, as some communities restrict or prohibit app promotion. Ignoring these rules can result in removal or banning from the Subreddit.



Tip from the Community: A lot of Subreddits have a day of the week or something like that, where you can advertise your App. Keep an eye on that.

1. **Offer Value Before Promotion:** Share insights, tips, or relevant content related to your app's focus before promoting it. For instance, if you have a fitness app, contribute helpful fitness tips. This builds credibility and primes the audience for a future introduction to your app.
2. **Ask for Feedback:** Reddit users often provide honest, valuable feedback. You can share your app in relevant Subreddits (where allowed) and ask for constructive input, especially if it's a beta release. This can help refine the app and show you value the community's insights.
3. **Run AMAs (Ask Me Anything):** Hosting an AMA can be an effective way to share your app's story, gather interest, and engage with potential users directly. Choose a suitable Subreddit and be transparent, open, and responsive to questions.
4. **Leverage Reddit Ads:** If organic promotion is limited by community rules, consider using Reddit Ads. Ads can be targeted to specific Subreddits, allowing you to reach niche audiences without violating self-promotion guidelines.
5. **Monitor Feedback and Mentions:** Use tools or search filters to track mentions of your app across Reddit. Engaging with users who discuss your app can build a positive reputation and make users feel heard.



Personally, I am testing the new tool [redreach](#), which helps you monitor mentions and helps you discover the relevant post to comment on.

Bundle Sales

Bundle sales are a marketing tool that works especially great for developers of Mac apps. By offering multiple apps or in-app content together at a discounted price, developers can appeal to a broader audience and incentivize purchases.

But beware, this method has lost some of its effectiveness in recent years. While bundle sales were super effective 10 or 15 years ago, today it's more of a marketing tool to make a few extra dollars. However, it is no longer so effective that it is the only marketing strategy for your app. So think wisely about how many resources you want to invest in bundle sales.

1. **Create a Thematic Bundle**
 - Group apps or content that complement each other or target the same audience. For example, a fitness app could bundle with a meal-planning app to create a health-focused package. This approach increases perceived value for the user.
2. **Offer Meaningful Discounts**
 - Ensure the discount is attractive enough to motivate users to choose the bundle over individual purchases. Highlight the savings in the bundle's title or description to make the value clear.
3. **Collaborate with Other Developers !**
 - Partner with developers in your niche to create a cross-promotion bundle. This expands your reach to their audience, providing mutual benefits in user acquisition and brand exposure.
4. **Leverage Limited-Time Offers**
 - Create urgency by offering bundles for a limited period. Limited-time discounts encourage faster decision-making and capitalize on users' fear of missing out (FOMO).

5. Promote the Bundle Across Channels

- Use email marketing, social media, and in-app notifications to advertise the bundle. Highlight the bundle's value proposition and target users who are already engaged with one of the included apps.

6. Analyze User Behavior Before Creating Bundles

- Use analytics to understand which apps or content users often purchase together. Design bundles based on this data to increase the likelihood of appealing to your audience.

7. Optimize the Bundle Page

- Create an eye-catching product page for the bundle with high-quality visuals and clear descriptions. Use testimonials or reviews to increase trust and highlight user benefits.

8. Highlight Bundle Exclusivity

- Offer exclusive content or features only available through the bundle. This creates an additional incentive for users to purchase.

9. Monitor Bundle Performance

- Track metrics such as sales volume, conversion rates, and revenue. Use this data to refine future bundles, ensuring they align with user preferences and maximize returns.

10. Use Bundles to Encourage App Ecosystem Adoption

- If you offer multiple apps, bundles can encourage users to engage with your entire ecosystem. This can lead to increased loyalty, cross-app usage, and long-term retention.

By using bundle sales strategically, app developers can attract new users, boost revenue, and improve visibility in app stores. Bundles not only increase perceived value but also create opportunities for collaboration and cross-promotion, making them a versatile tool for growth.

Final thoughts

Congratulations! You're now armed with a toolkit of smart, effective strategies for mobile app user acquisition. From tapping into the power of social media and leveraging Reddit's niche communities to getting creative on startup directories and mastering the art of karma-building, you've got every angle covered. And let's not forget the importance of top-notch ASO, eye-catching screenshots, and the holy grail of marketing—good old-fashioned word of mouth!

I want to cite some wisdom from Jim, developer of [Whiteboard](#) a drawing app for kids: *Have patience. Results take a lot of time and effort. There is really no way around having to do the work. It will require a lot of work no matter what. But if you can develop a patient approach to the work, it will really help. It's easy to get frustrated when things take so long, but we all only have limited control over the outcome of our efforts. We have far more control over our effort and attitude.*



Your feedback means a lot! Got a strategy we missed in the guide? Send it my way, and I'll make sure to add it in the next update. I'd also love to see your screenshots and examples—especially if you've got some data to back them up!

Cheers,

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