A Guide for Businesses: How to Create Apps

The Magora's App Guide is our one-stop shop for app development, marketing, monetization, maintenance and expansion.

If you need an understanding of both the general technical principles of development and the business-related factors of mobile apps, you have only but to read through this guide.

Before you invest your time, energy and resources, you should have a plan that is going to be the roadmap you use throughout your project. This section will lay out all the points you need for that plan.

Let's Start at the Beginning

Label Your App

The bard had it right. What you name your application is important, and for a variety of reasons. When you think about how to create app names, you'll realise it's a lot like creating a company name or domain. Keep it short, simple and smart (No more than 25 characters).

Users search a term, rapidly scroll through a few dozen or so apps at most, and download one, maybe two, they think are worthwhile. You are under tremendous pressure with application development, so keep some key principles in mind:

- Give a sense of what you are selling. "Coolflightz4eva" is bad for many reasons, but especially if you are in the metallurgical industry. Customers should have some sense of what you are. Otherwise, you get skipped.

- Flattery gets you nowhere. Label anything "The Best App in the World", and you won't even make it into the App Store.

- Don't get confused with anyone else. The last thing you want is someone with the same or almost the same name. You'll get traffic you don't want and miss the traffic you do.

- No one likes a thief, so be careful you don't use any terms you don't have the rights to, like "Uber for X". Best case is a strongly worded email; worst case is legal action.

- Make sure you have a vowel or two. If you can't pronounce it easily, you get no word of mouth and no voice searches, so don't miss these important markets.

- People like action. Try and create a verb so that users associate your product with what you do.

Business Side of Things

Setting Up Your App For Success

Unless you have decided to build your own app just for kicks, you want to make sure you treat this like a proper business, which means paperwork, preparation and planning.

- **Create a web presence.** Blogs, website, YouTube channel, etc. are all good ideas for many businesses, but this is marketing and should be treated seriously. Strong communication with consumers means you get found,

downloaded and paid, so make sure people know about you and can find you and about you easily.

- **Integrate**. Whatever internet channels you are using, make sure they are connected with each other. When someone watches your video, give them a link to your site. When someone visits your site, be sure there is a link to the App Store, or Google Play, or whatever marketplace you know your customers will use.

- **Use the power of the press**. A good press kit is a PR and marketing dream, because it gets your name out there. You should have the full extent of your resources available always, so you need:

    - Your company's story

    - Statistics

    - A sales pitch

    - A reputation (Reviews, client lists, and awards)

    - FAQ

    - Logos, screenshots and videos (only high-quality!)

    - Contact information

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If You Build it...

App Architecture And Development
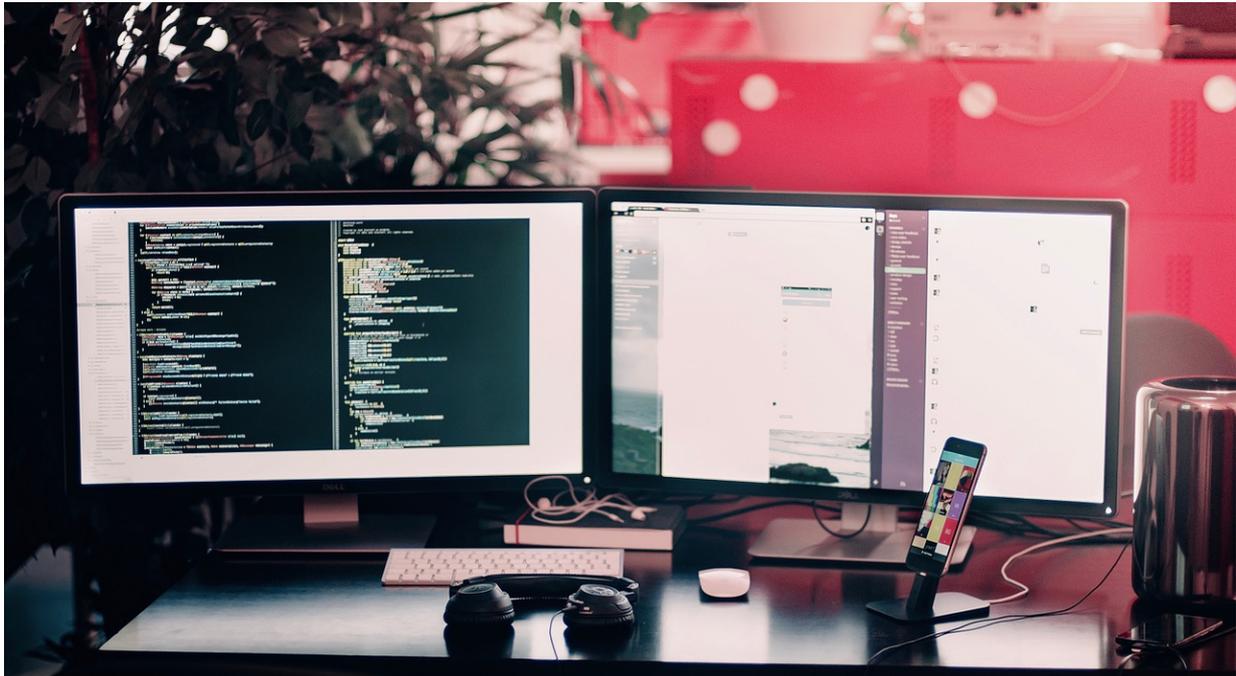
Trying to cover the enormous scope of software development is impossible in great detail on just one site. We do suggest as a starting point for technical features that you visit the Apple Developers and Android Developers pages. The purpose of this guide is to give you the big picture of app development and show you where that technical expertise can fit in.

- Know your enemy. You are most likely not the only app developers in your industry. If you are first to go mobile, you have the unique advantage of minimal competition, but you can rest assured it will manifest itself soon. If you come later to the game, your advantage is your ability to see the ups and down in your competitor's strategy and then craft your own accordingly. Always pay attention to what others are doing, because in this rapidly developing field, you must stay dynamic.

- Choose your weapon. The Android/iOS war wages on, and both have their merits. The fact of the matter is, for those only going with one platform initially, choose iOS. iOS app development is easiest to monetise and the most secure. However, treat this like any business. You should conduct market research and confirm your target audience is not an exception to this rule.

- Don't go for the same as everyone else. You never want to copy and paste someone else's app and change the colour scheme. Every developer knows his own app, which means your app design needs to reflect the unique realities and goals of your company. The cookie cutter approach is a losing, short-sighted strategy.

- Start with an MVP. A Minimal Viable Product is the point at which your product is operable. This allows you to quickly get to market and react to feedback and market forces to fine tune your application and ensure happy users.

- Never forget the fine-toothed comb. A good app designer tests at every level. Really, every step. The tediousness you might feel from this pales in comparison to what it would mean to have to go back and fix something later down the line.

- Stay current. Your competition won't stay the same, and operating systems will change frequently, so you have to closely monitor updates and developments to understand how they impact your app. By staying fresh, you may even impress Google and Apple, which could get you featured, a sort of holy grail in terms of getting attention and downloads.

- *International businesses: The most active markets you may not have considered are China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Korea. User experience is fickle, and seldom translates easily, so when you create applications to branch out to foreign users, think about more than translation. Here localisation and understanding local culture, usage and support will go a long way towards your software working well overseas.

Consider Your Next Words Carefully

Keywords And SEO

One of the great blues musicians once said to play each note like it costs you money. When you think that way, you find yourself much more discerning about what goes into your song. Keywords have the added bonus of actually costing money, so that lesson holds absolutely true here.

- Know your audience. People's search habits vary depending on a large number of factors. Compartmentalise by demographics so that you have categories of keywords for different ages, socioeconomic groups, nationalities, and so on for app marketing.

- Keep tabs on the competition. This will be a common trend. See what keywords your competitors are using in descriptions, articles and other texts. If you find terms lead quickly to your competition, avoid them, as it will be an uphill struggle to unseat them. Use the autocomplete to see what is already directed somewhere and try something less common instead.

- Go to the source. The methods employed by Google in their search engine are the ones to follow, as they set the trend. You can use the Google Keyword Tool to test your keywords, identify alternates and find the best combinations.

- Don't go for gold every time. Competitive keywords are always attractive, but most companies end up invisible because they have put all their eggs in that basket. What you might try instead is investing in lower search keywords, which you can then dominate in the rankings.

- Stay active after building an application. What is competitive one day is often not so the next, and vice versa. Keep an eye on things to avoid unpleasant surprises.

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- Are you a construction company? "ABC Construction". A spare parts retailer? "Parts4Cars". Obviously these are a bit simple, but the concept is too: put your keyword in the title.

- How good is your title? You have to hook them in the first 25 characters, and you only have about 230 characters, so don't waste them. "Free"? The App Store or Google Play already say that. Repetition? No way. These sites are monitored, and not by dummies. They can tell when you're just trying to throw everything to see what sticks. Make it natural if you want to stay.

- Use the title for a brief description. So, "ABC Construction: Building Renovating Exceeding Expectations"

- UPDATE: Keyword optimisation now recognises singular/plural pairs, so just use the singular version and save yourself the duplication.

App Name & Company Name
App Rating
Icon
App Preview
Screenshot
Description
What's New
Legal Entity Name
Category
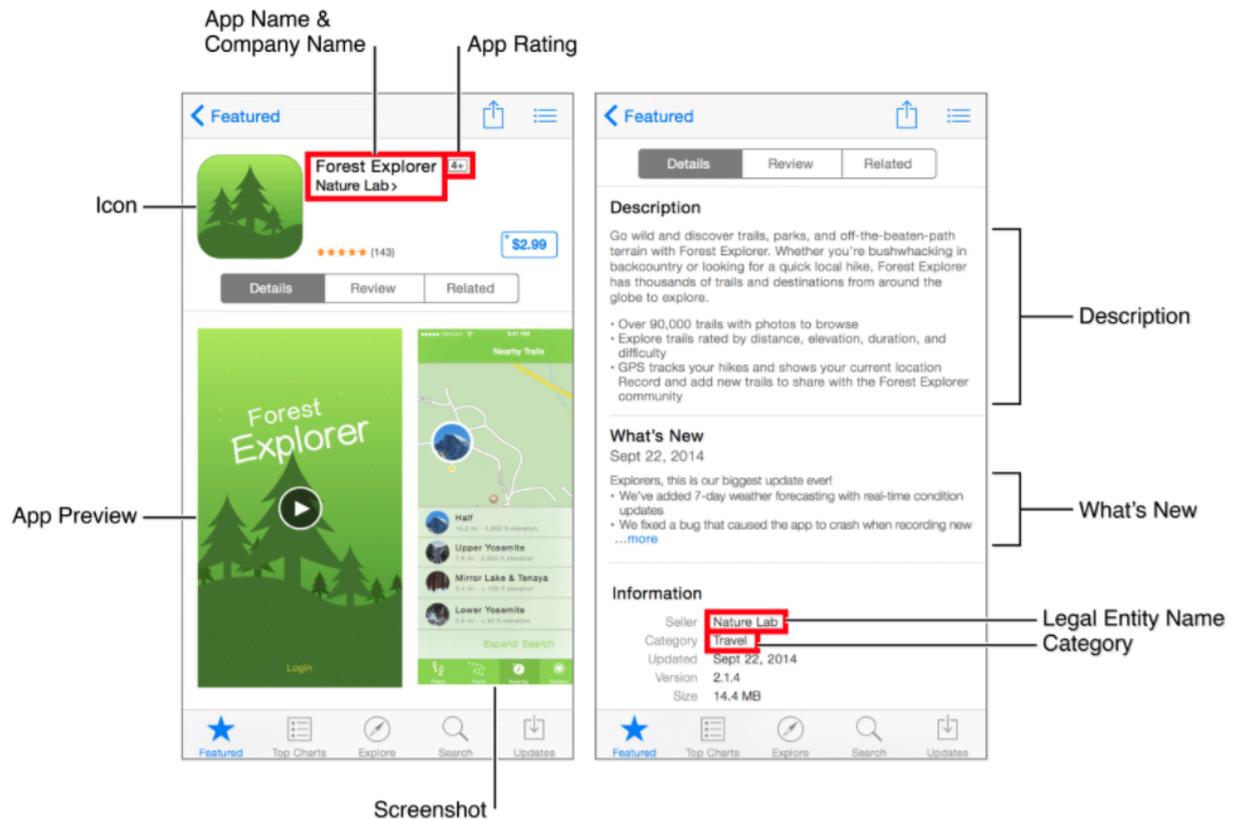
The App Store Has A Few Other Specifications:

- The "Keywords" section: 100-character limit on your optimisation booster

- Don't waste you space on throwaway words like "in", "or" and "the". When in doubt on this, think of title case: if you wouldn't capitalise it, don't include it.

- Use EITHER a comma OR a space to separate words.

- The App Store doesn't recognise phrases, only individual words, so "best business" is the same as "best, business". Google does. Think about that when choosing which is the best solution for you.