

A Guide for Businesses: How to Create Apps

Learn how to push the freshly created application on the App Store and Google Play.

Getting On The Top Shelf

You've laid the groundwork, hopefully with one of the best designed apps out there, and it is time to pat yourself on the back. But only once, because there is so much work left to be done. You have a product, and if you've followed our steps, it should be a great one, but that mobile application development is not the end of things by a long shot.

Now you face the realities of the digital marketplaces: The App Store and Google Play. Similar, but yet so unique. Let's learn how to do what the industry calls App Store Optimisation (ASO), utilising a number of factors, such as download and usage statistics, internet chatter and Search Engine Optimisation, to make your brilliant app a rising star. Never forget that the strength of your launch and downloads decreases with each click the user must make, so initial impressions are crucial to your success.

The Look and Feel

Visual Branding Tips



We process images far more quickly than we do text, so before you begin writing, think about how you are graphically representing your company. You're going to need an icon and some screenshots (2 to 8 + 1 video on Google Play / 1 to 5 + 1 video on the App Store for each optimised device). If you haven't yet, make sure the creative folks are on board, because you will need them!

- Be unique. How many fishing apps do you think have a picture of a fish in their logo? It's logical, but it makes them white noise in the crowd. The best app design requires you to be clever in the branding too, but not so clever no one gets it. Here the audience is important to consider. As a basic example, think how well a red icon might do in Chelsea, or a blue one in Holloway. It's a simplified version of a more complex fact that different audiences react differently to different visual stimuli.
- Come out guns blazing. Your first images have to intrigue, because without that interest, you won't see anyone flipping through to the next ones.
- We don't have long attention spans, so videos should be between 30 and 120 seconds. Showcase the app with a demonstration, because that's what you are selling. Instead of talking heads, use voiceovers to guide users while they get to see your app in action.
- Quality is king. Any icons or photos you have that you aren't proud of, you should lose. Invest the time or the money to get a high-quality, professional set. Make sure they adhere to branding guidelines of the App Store and Google Play as well. It would be an awful shame to invest and make an app visually stunning, only to find that the results didn't comply.

Getting in the Right Group

Selecting Your App's Category



The first step when uploading to either store: what kind of app is this? Educational? Financial? Business? Productivity? All of the above, of course, but, unfortunately, we can only pick one. Well, which one do we pick? Depends if you want to be at the bottom of the competitive group, or top of a less competitive one. At the end of the day, if you are the bottom, it doesn't matter which group you choose, because then no one will find you.

- Once you have picked, what do you need to think about? The term users are searching for.
- Is it in your title?
- Is it relevant?
- How many times has your app been downloaded? Rated?
- What's your average rating at the moment?
- How many sites are linking to you?

The Big Text Block

Descriptions That Get Attention

The App Store has these added features, perhaps because the 'Description' section does not factor into the ranking system as it does for Google Play. As a result, these instructions are geared mainly towards Android Apps, but their lessons are valuable for all.

- Formatting is basic in Google Play: Underline, Bold, and Italics. You can change the font colour and cut and paste HTML characters.
- Formatting is Spartan in the App Store: Uppercase and asterisks (*).

Break your description into two pitches: short (3-5 lines) and long. The short is immediately visible, while the long requires them clicking in.

Descriptions That Get Attention

- Don't muddle your words. A concise account of what your app is, why it is special, and how it helps.
- Avoid repetition. Use compelling, unique words to show tangible results and make sure they feel confidence your app is the path to their success.
- Finish with a call to action. Now that you have them excited, remind them they need to download to get started.

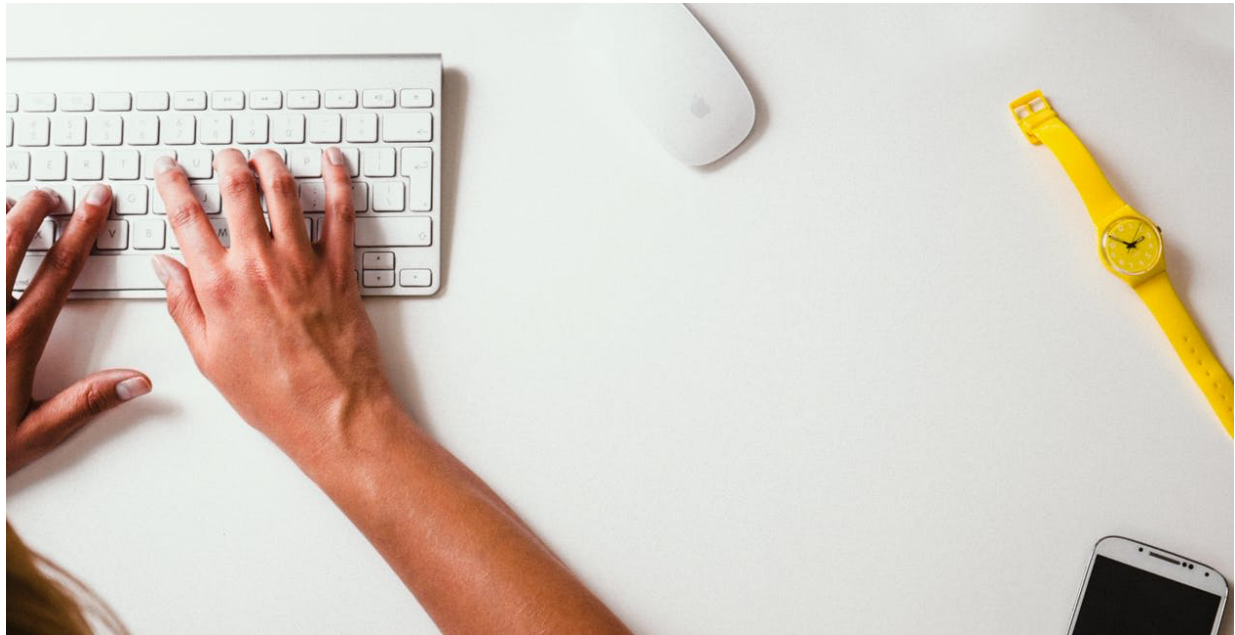
The Long Section

You have them intrigued, so now seal the deal.

- Make sure it's natural. Your users won't react well to perceived spam, so make sure your keywords don't jump out because of bad grammar or awkward constructions.
- Get endorsements. Once they think people other than you are confident in this product, they have more faith in what you have promised.
- Always plan for a rainy day. People are going to complain and are going to need help, so get ahead of the ball and address their concerns with suggestions, troubleshooting and avenues to support.
- Invite your audience to speak. Ultimately, they decide how well you do, so their input will allow you to course correct.

Be a Better Writer

Successful Methods To Improve Text

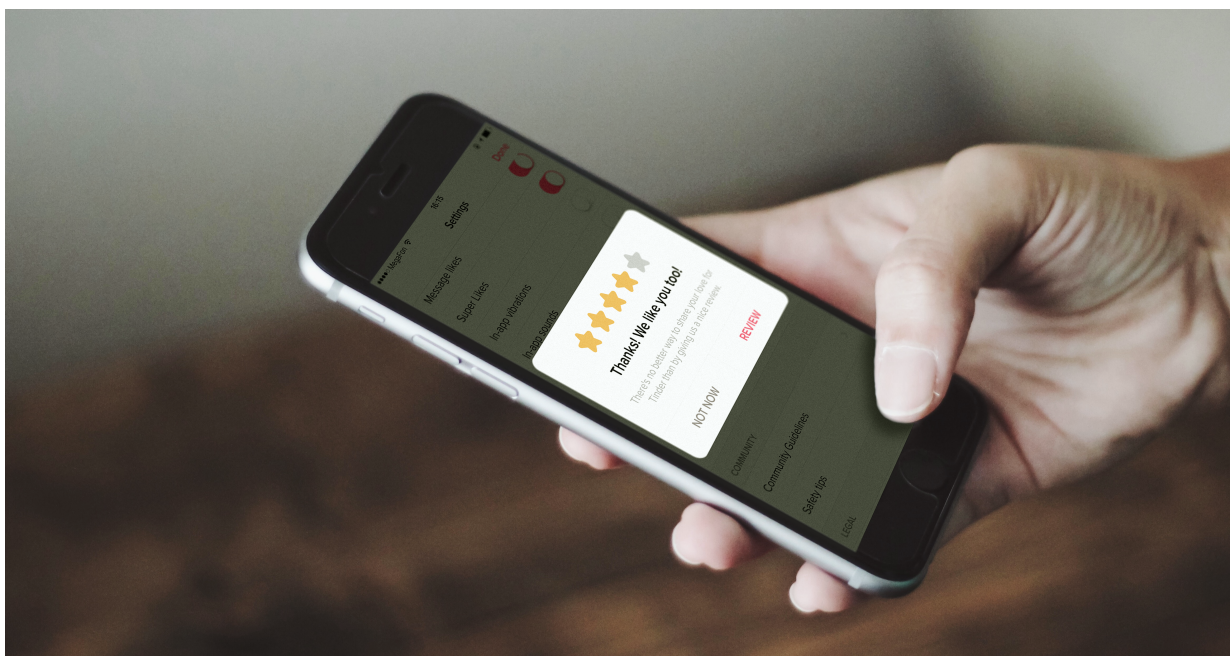


- What gets people on board? The fact is, whatever your app does, people are talking about it somewhere. Find that dialogue and own it. Read everything you can. Find what your audience has to say, because then you are no longer crafting some eloquent cry from a soapbox, but an answer to your target audience's concerns.
- Of course, don't underestimate the value of good, old-fashioned market research either. As the story goes, a cake batter company in the mid 20th century could not understand why people were not buying their product. They surveyed some folks and found a consistent concern, the gist of which was "It's too simple. If I serve this, people will think I'm too lazy to cook." Ever since then, you must crack your own egg into the mix. The point is, sometimes only users can show you the right way to go.
- Learn to pitch and persuade. People are sceptical of new things, but you need their trust. How do you gain it?

- Stay on message, reminding them why they are looking at your app and how it helps.
- Use testimonials to say, “Look what great things people are saying! They can’t all be wrong.”
- “You’re missing out!” or “Everyone else loves it” can be helpful, as people don’t like to feel left out.
- Be specific. Let your target audience know you know who they are. People prefer to belong to an elite group of users.
- Never settle. You may be the world’s greatest wordsmith, but, just as in every aspect of these projects, you have to keep moving, updating and refining. Think of it as a chance to experiment and continue to get to know your audience.

Rave Reviews

How To Encourage Reviews And Rankings Of Your Application



We live in a digitised world, which means comments are everything. A phone or web app without any gains zero trust from potential users, so you have to make sure you get useful, positive reviews. Until you have five, your application won’t even display any rating or reviews.

- Don't be afraid to have some friends and family review. It's like the way restaurants put money in the tip jar at the beginning of the night to encourage others to do the same. Many people don't want to be the first, so get the ball rolling yourself.
- Build the question into your own app. We've all found ourselves confronted with a request to rate an app after using it for a while, and here there is a bit of an art in finding the right moment to do so. Too soon and a user will not have had time to appreciate what you offer, or fully understood how the software functions, which can lead to bad reviews from dissatisfied or confused reviewers. Be sure not to pester anyone who doesn't want to review though, because that will only result in annoyed reviews, driving down your score..
- Build a release valve for dissatisfaction. Many complaints in reviews are the result of no way to complain otherwise. One bug in a great app solution would not leave most users to rate it poorly, but an inability to get support or communicate those problems will. Make yourself available with a link to send a support request, to social media outlets, or to forums. Then answer quickly. Speed is key, and a canned "Thank you. We are looking into this and we will get back to you soon." will go miles farther than silence. Keep this correspondence and analyse it as you would other outlets, because it will prove useful when it comes time to upgrade.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** You CANNOT bribe reviewers for good comments in any way. No money. No in-app benefits. Nothing. If you do, that is game over, so don't even begin down that path