How to Build a Stellar App User Acquisition Plan

INTRODUCTION

So you've created an app. The hard part is over, right? Wrong. As we've seen from research, the app space is a fickle (and vast) one. Millions of app creators are vying for a piece of the market, and in order to have a chance at success, you need to have a solid acquisition plan in place on how you're going to grow your user base.

While this concept seems pretty straightforward, there are many things to consider when building out your app acquisition plan, and these considerations can be the difference between success and failure. Doing your research ahead of time will make for a much smoother launch, and help you to wrap your head around the many moving pieces of a strong campaign. So what exactly are the elements of a successful app user acquisition plan? Read on to find out.

Know Your Audience

If you only read one sentence of this eBook, it should be this one: **In order to have a successful app, you need to become your target audience.** Understanding your target audience is essential to not only your app user acquisition plan, but to your app's success in general. For example, if your app is a travel app you wouldn't create the same campaign for a jet-setting corporate traveler as you would for an exploratory backpacker, right? That same logic holds true for your app acquisition plan.

So how do you go about not only deciding who that audience is, but fully understanding them? Consider the below your personal guide to doing just that.

Start by asking yourself: **What value does your app provide?** Now, **WHO is the user who will most benefit from your app?**

When you think about who your audience is, make sure you get granular with it.

What to avoid: Males age 23-39 who love cars.

That's a great start, but you're just scratching the surface. Use the below as a sample of questions you need to know about your target audience in order to make a complete profile:

Target Audience Profile Questions

- **Age:** It's very possible your app may have multiple age-groups associated with it. If so, narrow in on the different scenarios or popular features for each to ensure you're appealing to them in the right way.

- **Location:** Are you targeting city dwellers, suburbanites or does it not matter? Keep in mind that a young working professional from NYC is going to have a very different day-to-day than someone upstate. Also, you might have different marketing strategies or offers for different locations based on your business plan.

- **Day-to-day behavior:** Speaking of day-to-days, what does your target audience's day look like? Are they students or working professionals? Do they have a car or rely on public transportation? Are they into fitness or are they foodies?

- **Interests:** How does your target audience like to pass their time? Concerts? Gym? Bar-hopping?

- **How your app benefits them:** What value does your app add to their lives? Does it help them complete a task? Entertain them? Keep them organized? Make sure you understand exactly how your app adds value to your target audience's life.

Understanding the ins and outs of your target audience is critical to the success of your acquisition plan. Once you've figured out your target audiences, the next question is, how do you get them to download your app? The mobile app industry is highly saturated, so you need to be able to hone in on your potential app users with your ads. Casting a wide net with your ads and hoping for the best is a bad strategy to have. Your app isn't going to appeal to everyone, so why advertise to everyone? Instead, focus in on audiences who are most likely to use your app to ensure you get the most bang for your buck in terms of ROI.

Most importantly, advertising to a highly-targeted audience will help make your app "stickier" through stronger retention rates and lifetime values. Your acquisition plan shouldn't be focused around just acquiring new users, but acquiring quality users who will find long term value in your app.

Reach Your Audience Organically

Once you identify and fully understand the target audience you're going after, it's time to reach them. How do you do this? By going where they are. The first part of your strategy should include how you do this by utilizing organic channels.

Don't expect one tactic to work. If you want your app to succeed, you need to have several forces working together for you at the same time, so that you put yourself in the best position to be discovered. The first place to start is by considering the organic channels and tactics that will reach the right users. In this section, we tackle five tactics all brands should be using.

1. A Soft Launch

If you haven't launched your app yet, you should consider a soft launch. A soft launch or beta test, will grant you extremely valuable insights into initial app reception and performance without releasing it to the masses. That way, you have the ability to optimize accordingly to better prepare it for full release. A few soft-launch best practices to consider:

- Ensure your target audience is largely represented
- Have a place for 'testers' to congregate and discuss the app (this can be a physical meet-up or an online forum)
- Consider running two types of beta testing: a technical one and a marketing one. A technical beta test is where users are distinctly looking for bugs and snags, whereas a marketing test is geared toward user experience.

SoftLaunch Tip: **Some developers choose to soft-launch to a smaller (but still targeted) audience in a different country, such as a US-based app launching in Canada. This gives you the ability to gain legitimate feedback from a smaller population that is still similar to the app market in the US.**

2. Social Media

The beauty of knowing your target audience is the ability to play in their space. Make sure you have a presence on some of the main social channels your audience is on. Create handles for your app and begin following key publications and influencers within your respected industry. In addition, start having an active voice on social media and join the conversation to start organically acquiring followers and creating a buzz about your app. Be sure to keep in mind your brand's voice and tone while doing so.

Social Media Tip: **Use Crowdfire. <u>Crowdfire</u> understands the importance of user engagement, which is precisely why their entire business model is designed around tapping into deep insights about your followers on Twitter and Instagram. They aim to give you a holistic picture of your followers, and breakdown who to follow based on those who are highly engaged and vice versa.**

3. Forums

Forums are another great place to join the conversation because your audience goes there to actively share knowledge. You can use different forums, like Reddit, Android Central, or Mac Rumors, to introduce your app and solicit honest feedback about it, and how you can improve. Forums are unique in that they allow you the rare opportunity to directly connect with your audience, and truly understand where you can fill in any gaps with your app.

Forums Hack: **This will vary by industry, so do your research and identify a minimum of three popular and trusted forums where you can begin making your app known. Don't forget about Subreddits which can get highly targeted based on location, industry, and other factors.**

4. Local & National PR Campaigns

Complementary to the <u>Inbound Marketing</u> strategy, strong press coverage about your app can also do wonders for your App Store listing since part of your ranking has to do with the number of installs over the past few hours as well as the past few days. For example, when Boston MBTA tracker app ProximiT was first launching, owner Randy reached out to relevant local press who published articles about the app and drove a large influx of users to their App Store profile. As a result, ProximiT broke into the top 100 apps for the Navigation category, driving yet even more installs.

Key takeaway? Don't overlook the importance of PR to your app's success. Doing some local PR campaigns allows you to create much needed buzz around your app, and ensure the right people in your community know about it. Initiating various PR campaigns will allow you to tap into various local and national channels who have a wide and impactful reach in getting the news about your app out to your audience.

1. **Press Release:** If your app was recently launched, draw up a press release with key information about it and blast it out to the local media. Remember that they get dozens of press releases daily, so ensure yours is attention grabbing and succinct. Tap into your network to see if you have any media connections to boost the chances of getting picked up.

2. **Bloggers:** Don't underestimate the power of blogs. Blogs can be a driving force in promoting new apps and acquiring new users. One of the most successful examples of app blog promotion was Uber and Barstool Sports back in 2013. Uber tapped into their core audience by having Barstool create native content on their extremely popular blog. As a result, Uber's acquisition cost fell over 70% in just 5 weeks after the launch of the campaign. Reach out to several bloggers that your target audience follows and see about implementing a similar campaign for your app.

3. **Partnerships:** Take the notion of teaming up one step further than bloggers by partnering with local businesses that complement your app. For example, if you have an app that is sports related, partner up with a minor league team or even a local sporting goods store for an event. Consider running several of these partnerships around your local community to boost brand recognition. Aligning yourself with trusted brands in your community will also boost your credibility.

PR Campaigns Growth Hack: **You should have a targeted list of people to reach out to in the community based on their industry and core interests. For example, reaching out to the local tech community or key members of your respective industry is a smart way to not only boost your chances of getting featured, but to begin fostering relationships with important people within your local community.**

Actionable Takeaway:

1. Timing is important. Having a lot of buzz around your app all at once can do wonders to its App Store Ranking, so plan accordingly when implementing a PR strategy

5. App Store Optimization

Another part of user acquisition that should never be overlooked is app store optimization. Currently, there are over 1.5 million apps in both the Android and Apple app stores and that number continues to climb. If you want a chance at being discovered via an app store, you must optimize accordingly.
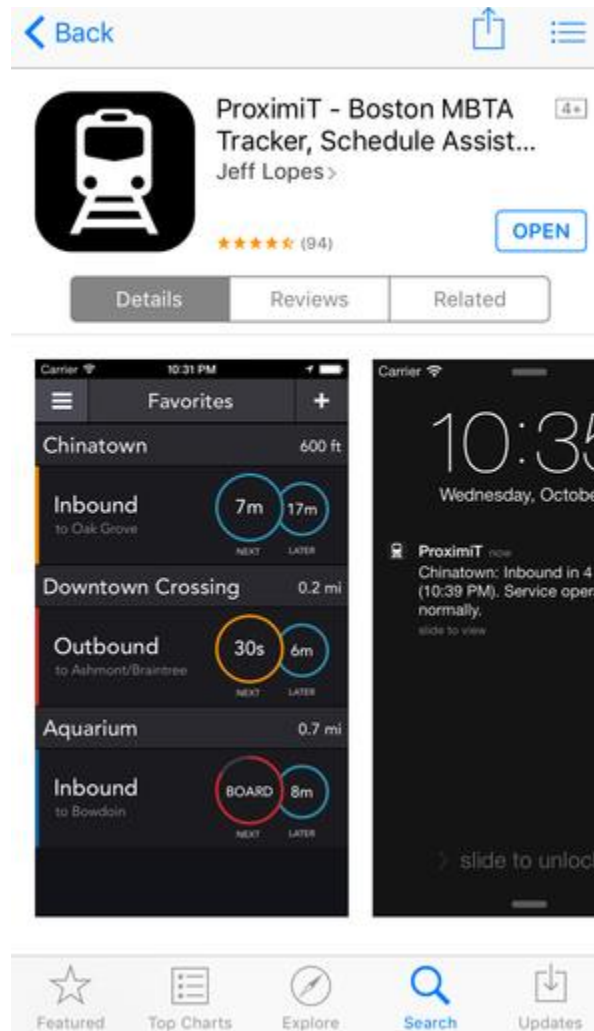
- **App Name:** Make sure to include your brand name and a couple of your most relevant keywords for search. Keep it fairly short though, so as not to look spammy. ProximiT was originally launched as "ProximiT: MBTA Subway Assistant" and later was updated to "ProximiT: Boston MBTA tracker, Schedule Assistant, and Proximity Alerts for the T." The reason for the change? To boost organic search through more targeted, relevant keywords. The result of the change? A 70% spike in downloads, and an App Store ranking increase by 30+ places.

Takeaways:

1. Try to include several targeted keywords in your app name to give it a better chance of discovery

2. Use keyword tools such as SensorTower to figure out which keywords are worth using based on competitiveness

3. Remember that you only have 100 characters in iOS to attract users to your app, so choose wisely to position your app for success

- **Description:** Include a clear and concise description about the functionality of your app and lead with your strongest points. You only have 255 characters to grab a person's attention before they have to click-through, so make sure within those character limits you clearly define your functionality, any key features, and credibility you've received. Users searching the store should quickly understand the value-add of your app. For example, Vine's app store description clearly defines their value-add, and focuses on the benefits its app provides to the user while keeping it short and sweet and incorporating a bulleted list for easy reading.
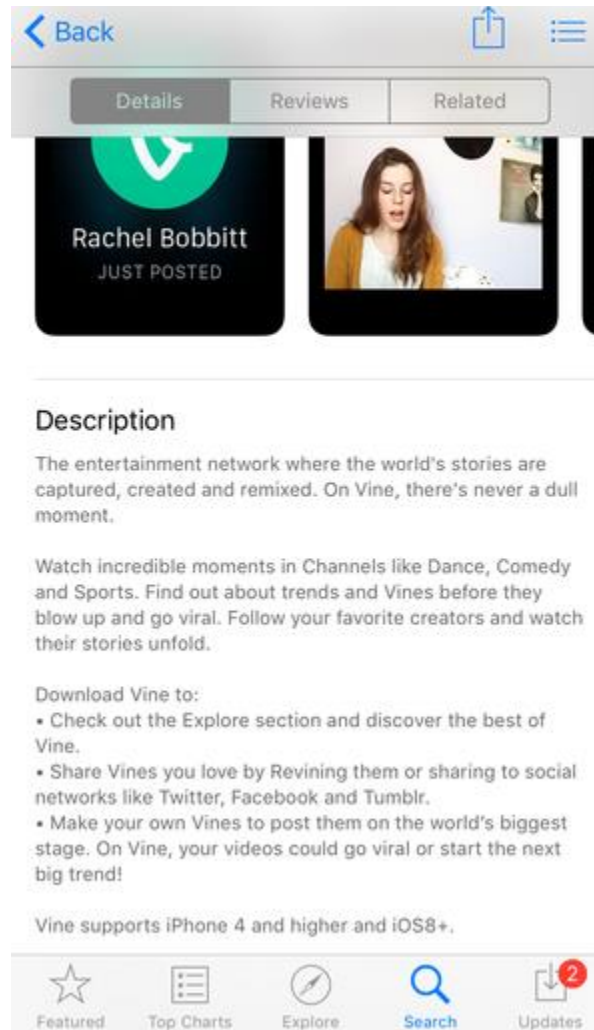
Takeaways:

1. Know the character limit (255) of your profile page before users are forced to click "more" and make the most of it

2. Entice users to download the app by showcasing your value to them through key features and functionality. Make it sexy

3. Follow in Vine's footsteps and use a bulleted list to call out defining features. Users are much more likely to read and digest features in this format

4. Tell people what makes your app different, and infuse your brand personality into your description

- **App Icon:** You app's icon is your branding to the world so don't overlook its importance. Make sure that it's unique, clean, and aesthetically pleasing. It should capture the essence of your app. Though seemingly small, icons are powerful engagement tools that can attract or detract users based on look and feel alone.
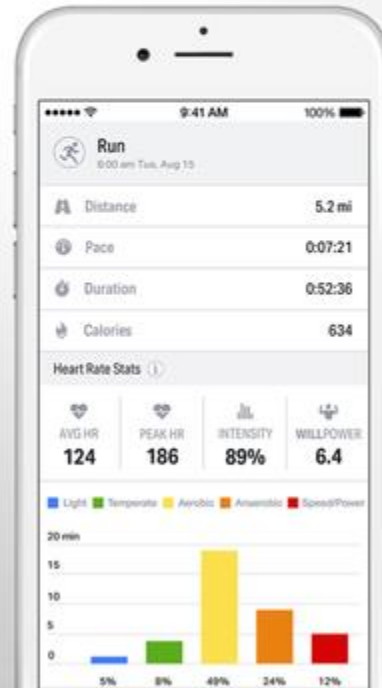

Takeaways:

1. Use a unique symbol that will represent your brand as well as standout in the app store sea. You want your app icon to be as distinctly recognizable as possible, and to encompass not only the essence of your brand but it's functionality as well. When someone sees your icon they should be able to understand what it does

2. Simplicity is king. Your app icon should be sleek yet have a minimalist design approach so it doesn't look too busy and appears clean and professional

3. Using a single letter to represent your icon is more encouraged than using full words. Remember that this is an icon, not an ad

4. Choosing the right color scheme can help your app stand out amongst the competition. Just ensure that the color scheme is aesthetically pleasing

5. A/B test two icons via your ad campaigns to identify which is rendering higher engagement rates

- **Design:** Since app users expect a top-notch experience, use the app store's design section to show off the user interface. Be sure to choose images that really showcase your app's best features, but that also easily outline the workflow (i.e. how a user moves through your app). For instance, Under Armour's new Record app does a great job at weaving feature sneak peeks and task call-outs together for a compelling app overview:
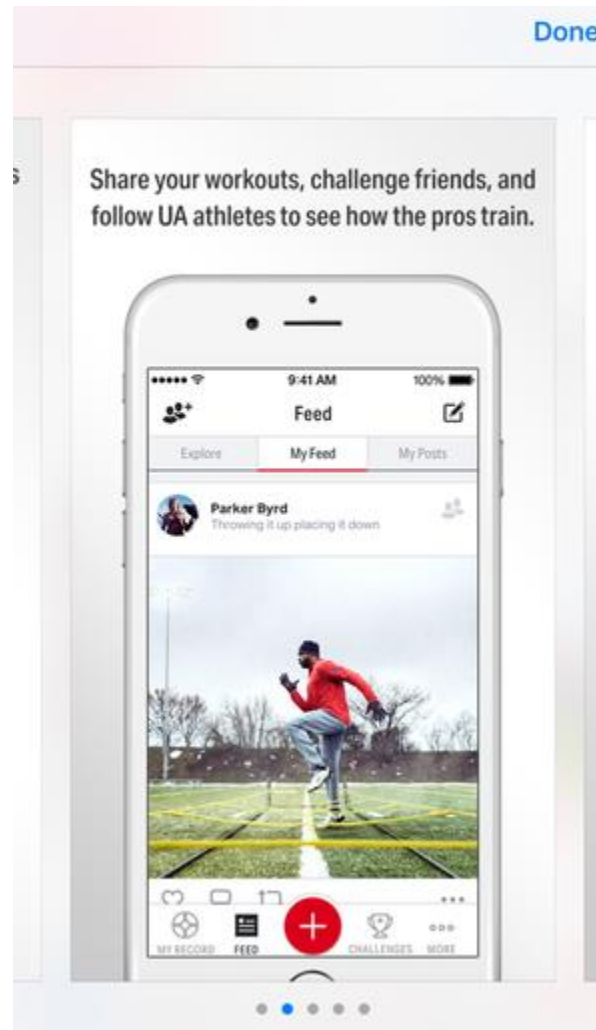
Done

Track any kind of workout,
from hot yoga to running.

Run
6:00 am Tue, Aug 15

Distance 5.2 mi
Pace 0:07:21
Duration 0:52:36
Calories 634

Heart Rate Stats ⓘ

AVG HR PEAK HR INTENSITY WILLPOWER
124 186 89% 6.4

■ Light ■ Temperate ■ Aerobic ■ Anaerobic ■ Speed/Power

20 min
15
10
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5% 8% 49% 24% 12%

Measure and analyze the four major factors in how you feel: sleep, fitness, activity and nutrition.
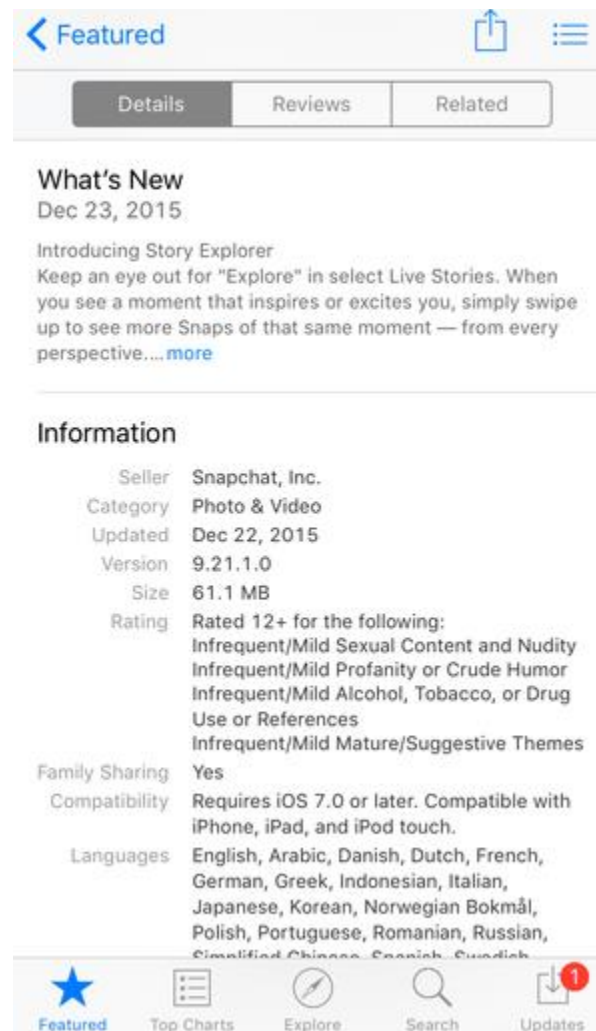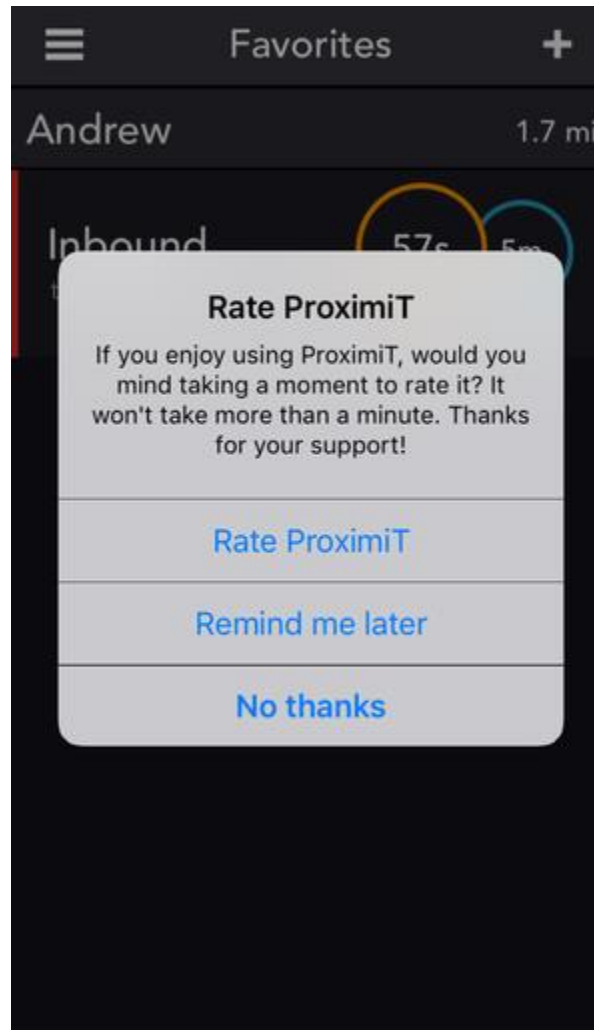
Takeaways:

1. Include key feature screenshots with a brief description of the functionality so users clearly understand your app's purpose and capabilities

2. Use crisp imagery that clearly maps out app use cases and screen flows

- **Updates:** Each time you update your app, you need to include release notes and a bulleted description of the update. This will not only refresh your app store activity, but will show app users that you are committed to continually optimizing your app. For example, SnapChat keeps their app store profile refreshed with a "What's New" section that highlights feature updates and improvements. The "What's New" section is listed right below the Description making it easy to find.

Takeaway:

1. Updating your app store profile with <u>release notes</u> whenever you make updates to your app not only boosts your SEO, but will show users that you are actively making improvements to your app based on their feedback

- **Ratings:** Positive ratings are extremely important to boosting app-store placement. However, it can be difficult to get users to rate your app. That's why it's important to have a strategy in place that focuses on getting your most loyal users to rate your app. ProximiT launched a "Rate My App" campaign by narrowing in on users who were likely to rate the app well, taking into consideration the frequency of their interactions with the app.
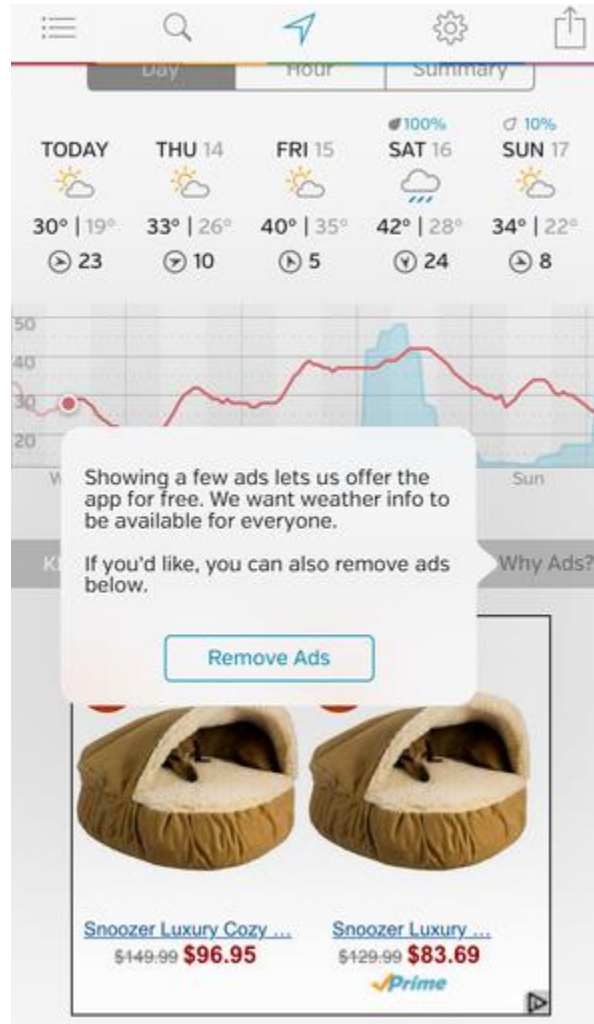
Actionable Takeaways:

1. The more people who rate your app positively, the more visible you will be in app stores
2. Target users who will most likely rate you well, taking a look at key conversion events they have taken within your app as well as the frequency of use (30+ sessions)

3. Consider launching an <u>in-app rater</u> and only directing those users who would rate you positively to the app store

- **Pricing:** Another difficult but important decision is the cost of your app. Whether or not to charge for your app depends on various factors ranging from brand power to industry. If you are an enterprise brand looking to engage with your audience on mobile, consider making your app free. While you won't enjoy direct financial gains from your app, your company will ultimately enjoy a revenue boost thanks to its positive impact on customer retention. There are still <u>ways to turn a profit</u> through in-app purchases and ad revenue. One cautionary tale on having targeted ads in your free app: it can cause a higher churn rate if not executed properly. The Weather Underground forecast app does a great job at letting users choose ads or not, by offering a free version and a premium with no ads. It's important to note since we're talking acquisition here, that a free app can accumulate more users faster than an app that comes with a price tag.

Actionable Takeaway:

1. Take into consideration how your app monetization strategy will affect your user acquisition. While free apps tend to attract more users, they could be lower quality and churn faster than those who were willing to pay for your app. More insights can be found here

- **Inbound Marketing:** The more organic search you can drive to your app listing, the better. Consider creating a website for your app and creating relevant content. If done well, this should drive organic pageviews to your app's listing and help boost your ranking (and app downloads!).
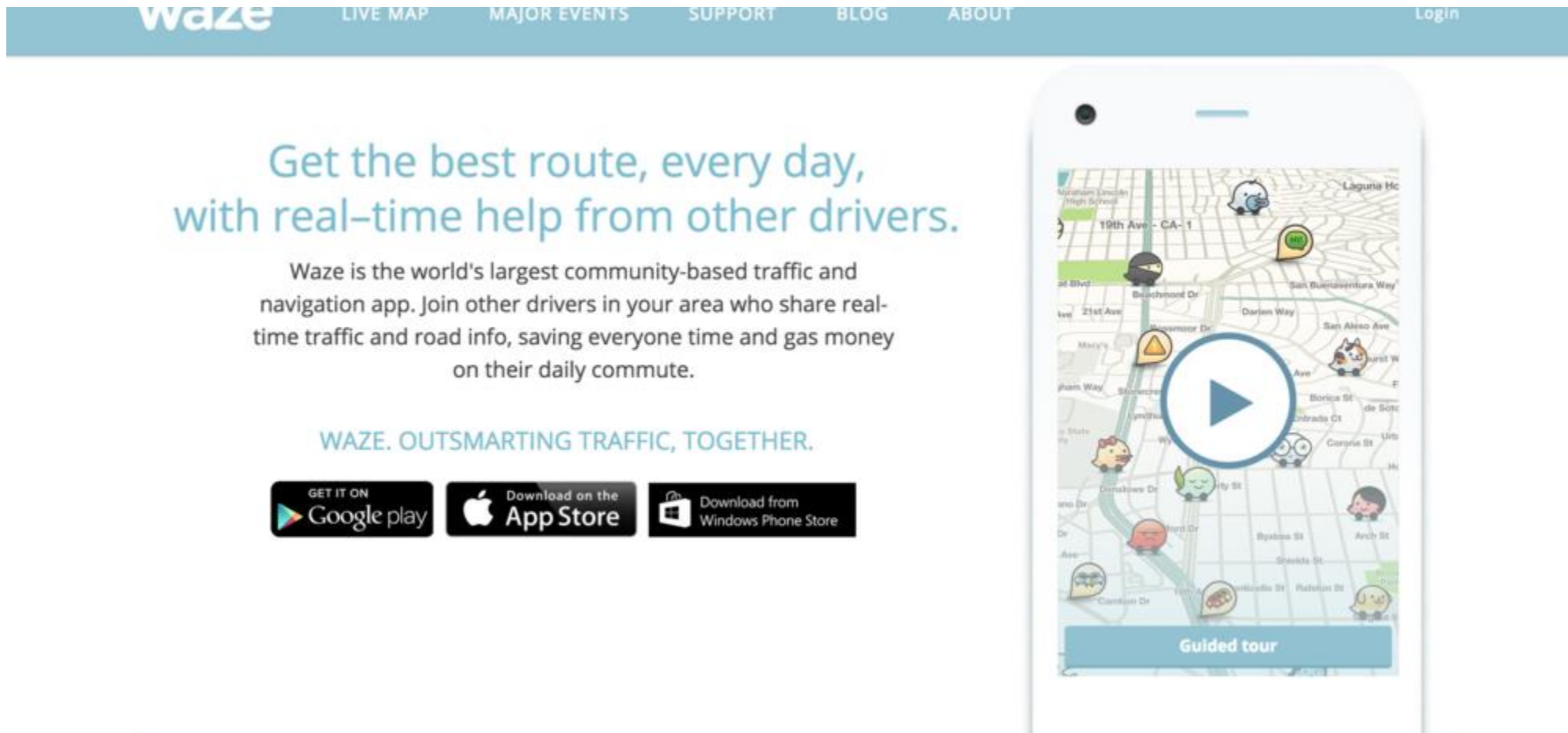
Actionable Takeaways:

1. Create a website for your app. Not only will this help with branding, as it did with community-based traffic appWaze above, but can also help drive more downloads to your app through relevant searches and content

2. Consider launching an app blog to highlight cool things about your app, user stories, and drive more traffic to your app site and app store page. Get inspiration from <u>RunKeeper's blog</u>

Invest in Strong Paid Campaigns

While having a solid organic strategy in place for your app is key, you cannot overlook the importance of paid channels. Paid acquisition campaigns allow you to cast a much wider net than organic, driving more traffic to your app. Your paid tactics will catapult you in the right direction with a solid user base that you can retain and grow organically.

Just like the other aspects of your user acquisition campaign, it's important to have your target audience in mind with your paid strategy. Understanding where they frequent online is key to success. Here are a few paid tactics to consider:

1. Social Media: Start with a list of social channels your audience is most active on. Facebook will undoubtedly be one of them, as it tends to span all audiences, but don't overlook Twitter and <u>Instagram</u>, especially if you are trying to reach millennials. You should be placing targeted ads on several social media channels, and monitoring where you are getting the most bang for your buck.

Another pro-tip for social media advertising is the importance of A/B testing. Don't just create one ad and expect it to deliver, instead test several versions of the ad to see which performs best. Research some best practices around social media ad copy, and implement it in your different ads. From there, you can hone in on which ads are performing best and drop the rest.

- **Facebook Ads:** Facebook totes some of the best targeting capabilities in the ad world, allowing you to get as close to 1:1 advertising as possible. For starters, you get to tap into their massive audience reach (1.5 billion and counting), and run highly targeted campaigns using their audience profile tool. This audience tool allows you to get very personalized with your ad campaign, not only breaking down audience by standard demographics (age, gender, location), but by personal interests and life events. Plus, you can A/B test ad copy and audience profiles to see where you're getting the strongest ROI on your campaign.

Facebook Ad Tip: Facebook allows you the ability to target <u>Lookalike</u> audiences based on your top app users. With a platform like Localytics, you can use the Remarketing tool to identify who your top users are and export them directly to Facebook, where you can create impactful Lookalike campaigns that are specifically designed to acquire new customers who are just like your top users. Use this to your advantage while running Facebook ads to attract like minded individuals.

- **Twitter Ads:** Twitter is another great social platform to run app install ads on, giving you the ability to target by interest, keyword, and more. <u>Twitter's Mobile App Promotion site</u> boasts powerful case studies from Lyft reaching their acquisition goal at 30% below CPA (cost per acquisition) and gaming app TwoDots reaching 1 million

downloads in the span of a few weeks.
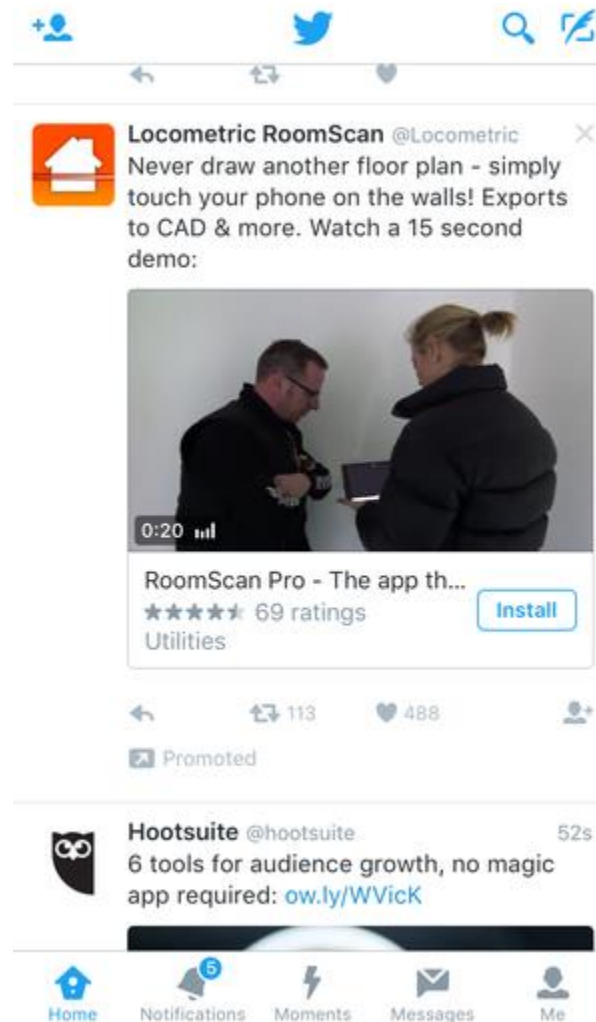
Twitter Ad Tip: **According to <u>Twitter's blog</u>, creating a sense of urgency through using words such as "now" drive a 9% higher conversion rate and 36% lower CPI.**

- **Instagram Ads:** Since it's owned by Facebook, Instagram has many of the same targeting capabilities as its parent company. Instagram is a very powerful advertising to In addition, Facebook gives you the ability to advertise on Instagram at the same time you're setting up your Facebook ad campaign. Can't beat that.
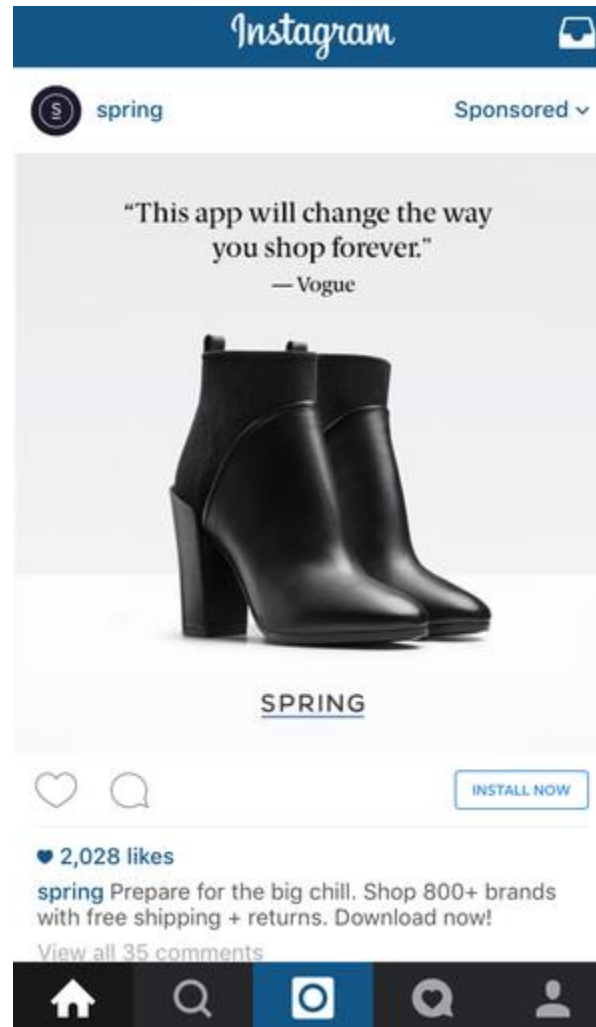
Instagram Ad Tip: **Instagram is able to tap into the robust data of its parent company, Facebook. Using this data and combining it with the power of visual advertising their social platform lends easily too, Instagram ads enjoy CTRs of <u>2.5x higher</u> than other social platforms.**

**2. Google:** Of course, Google is also another solid option to run paid advertising on. <u>Google AdWords</u> allows you the ability to run your ads across Google channels (including YouTube) and through multiple options (search, display) .Your app's ad will populate during related search results based on the criteria you set, including location. This is a prime opportunity to test out different messaging to see how it performs prior to rolling it out on a larger scale. AdWords also gives you access to their reporting tool so that you can monitor results of your campaign and optimize accordingly.
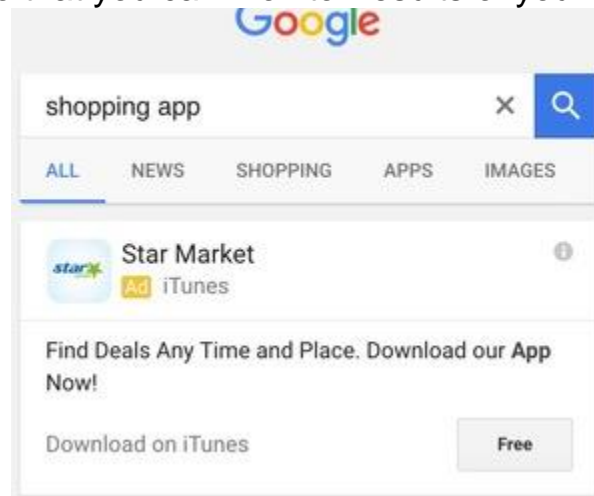
Google AdWords Hack: **Adwords gives you the ability to create app install ad campaigns that run exclusively on tablets and smartphones to better target your audience.**

3. Ad Networks: In addition to the above ad partners, you'll want to invest in a solid mobile ad network, which can provide you with an even larger reach. Ad networks are unique in that they bring together individual websites and

publishers into a sort of 'bundle' so that you're able to efficiently and effectively reach your audience on a large scale. The idea here is that this bundle of websites is highly curated based on your target audience. Be careful though and do your research, as not all ad networks are created equal.
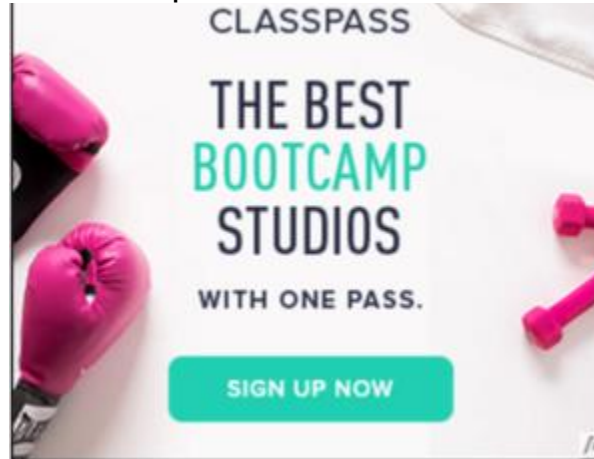
Below are five of the big ad networks to check out beyond Google and the social media platforms we listed above:

- **Millennial Media:** One of the biggest mobile ad networks around, Millennial Media offers a host of creative ad formats and helpful targeting options. Some of their clients include U.S. Marine Corps, T-Mobile, Paramount, and UGG, among others.
- **AppLift:** Works with over 5,000 media partners and 500 advertisers, including Zynga, Lyft, and King games.
- **Conversant:** A massive mobile ad network serving over 5,000 clients each month and driving an average of 5 million purchases each day. Conversant works with most of the top brands across various industries and offers integrated solutions for everything from mobile to affiliate marketing. Some clients include Travelocity, Hotels.com, Urban Outfitters, Target, and Gap. Conversant was also rated as the #2 most popular ad network bycomScore.

- **Tapjoy:** TapJoy offers a large collection of different ad styles for driving awareness, conversions, and engagement. Some clients include Starbucks, Sephora, and Lego.

- **Opera Mediaworks:** Sophisticated targeting and rich ads with a massive network. Opera works with McDonald's, Ebay, Samsung, and MasterCard, among others.

Knowing where to target your paid strategy is half the battle. The other? Effective ads. How many times have you simply scrolled past an ad without even giving it a second thought? That's a marketer's worst nightmare. We know that there is an <u>art and science</u> to creating effective app ads, and below are a few of the key ingredients to an engaging app advertisement:

Pandora @pandora_radio ✕

Free, easy, and everywhere you are. Pandora: anytime, anywhere.

Pandora - Free Music & Radio
★★★★⯪ 2,218 ratings
App Store

Install

↩ ⟲ 142 ♥ 1,350 👤+

⤢ Promoted

Engagement Marketing @Engagemen... 2m
Download Available Now: #Shoe Carnival #CaseStudy: When the Shoe Fits bit.ly/1MyMyMM

↩ ⟲ ♥

Home   Notifications   Moments   Messages   Me
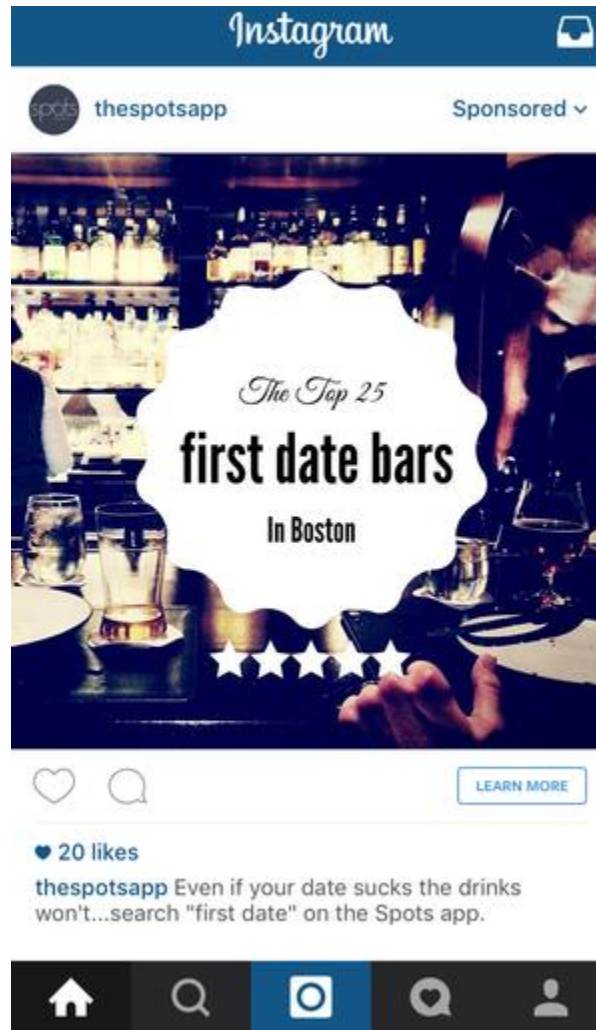
Clearly state the value proposition: You created your app because you felt there was some kind of void in the marketplace, right? Be sure to clearly state in your ad what needs or problem your app addresses. Whether your app is entertainment based or task-oriented, you designed it to provide value to your audience, so make sure they know it.

1. **Copy:** You have such a small window of time to get your audience's attention, so make sure you invest time in your messaging. Be clever, but succinct.

2. **Branding & visuals:** If you're an established brand launching an app, make sure that your audience knows it's you. Your app is an extension of your brand, and the ad should showcase this with voice, tone, and visuals. If your app is your brand, now is your chance to get noticed. Make sure the essence of your brand is encompassed in the messaging and visuals of the ad. This is your introduction to the world, so make it count.

3. **CTA:** Don't forget to provide clear next steps on your app ad. What action do you want them to take? Most likely, you want them to click-through to the app-store to download.

4. **Deep Linking:** Deep linking allows you to direct users to a highly relevant piece of content. It can be as straightforward as having your CTA link them to your app store profile for them to download the app, or as complex as linking them to specific content once they install your app (e.g. a specific offer or article).

5. **Ratings:** Including app store ratings or the amount of "likes" or "followers" on your app's social page is another powerful tactic to use within your ads as it builds a sense of legitimacy and social proof.

Measure success and optimize accordingly: As with any advertising campaign, it's important to closely monitor performance upon launch, and gather insight into what's working for you. In other words, start broad and then narrow down based on data insights. Continually optimizing your app's advertising campaigns will allow you to get the most bang for your buck, and increase the success of acquiring new app users. We cover more on how to do this, below!

Know the Components of a Successful App Acquisition Campaign

App acquisition campaigns are tricky to get right, which is why it's imperative to closely monitor yours to see where you can improve. But what exactly should you be monitoring?

1. ***How are your ads performing?*** According to studies, the average CTR (click-through-rate) for a Facebook ad is 0.04%. This number will vary based on channel and industry, but use it as a benchmark to measure success. If you're not at least getting a 0.04% CTR, it's time to optimize. How do you go about doing so? For starters, you

should already be A/B testing your ads. If not, it's time to do so immediately. If you are A/B testing and none are meeting that benchmark, it's time to hit the drawing board and redesign your ads based on best practices.

2. ***How is your ad performing on each channel?*** Take a step back and look at your ad's performance by each individual channel. More often than not, the results won't be even. It's possible that your creative for a certain channel is falling flat, but it's also possible that your audience is just more active on a different channel. That's why with every app acquisition campaign we recommend casting a net and then honing in from there. Now that you've identified where you're getting the most traction, put more of your advertising spend towards the channel that's paying off.

3. ***Is your ad network partnership up to snuff?*** Ad networks use different algorithms and methodologies to produce results, and some perform better than others. That's why it's important to take a look to see the results your ad network is giving you, and if it's worth changing.

4. ***Are Your Campaigns Actually Attracting Quality Users?*** While downloads are great, they're really just vanity metrics, especially since we know from research that <u>25% of users abandon an app after only one session</u>. To truly understand the success of your app acquisition campaign, you need to go beyond downloads to see how many users are actively engaged with your app. In order to do so, you need access to a mobile engagement platform with strong data capabilities. Checkout a breakdown of the key metrics you should be tracking to understand how your campaigns are paying off:

- **Average Session length (engagement):** Understanding how long users are spending in your app is crucial to keeping a pulse on them and predicting churn. It can also help you realize any hangups users may be encountering so that you can address them.

Sessions by **Session Length** split by **Acquisition Source**   Choose Shortcut ▾

■ [Unspecified]	■ Facebook	■ HasOffers
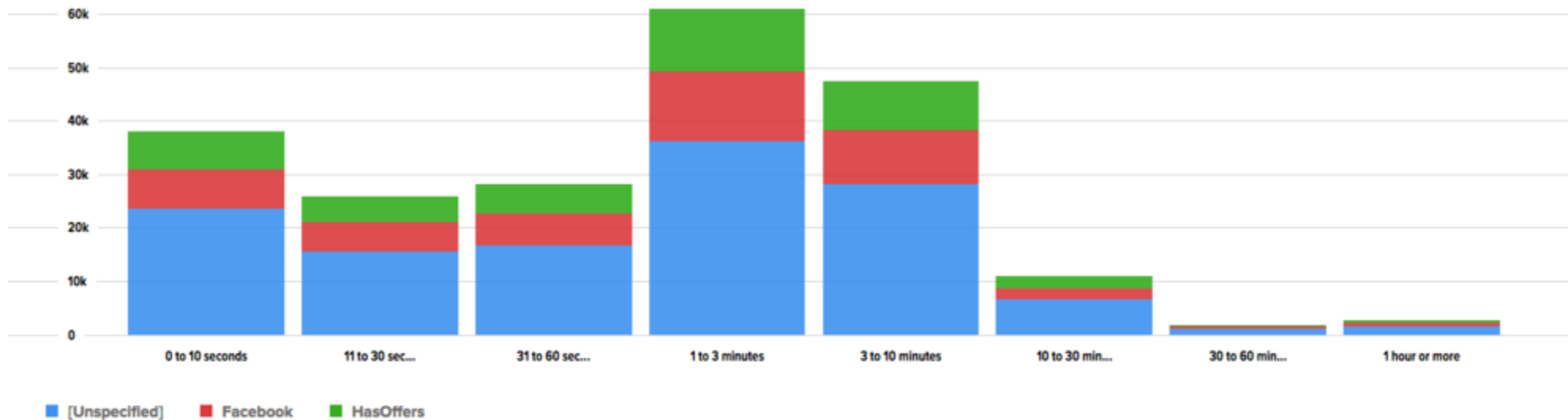
SUMMARY   ⤴ SAVE

5m 37s   **1m 22s**
Average Session Length   Median Session Length
-6.9% Growth   **-11.8%** Growth

- **Retention:** Are these newly acquired users sticking around for the long haul? Taking a look at whether or not they return back to your app after their initial visit, as well as how many times they return, gives you insight into whether or not you're attracting the right users with your acquisition campaign.
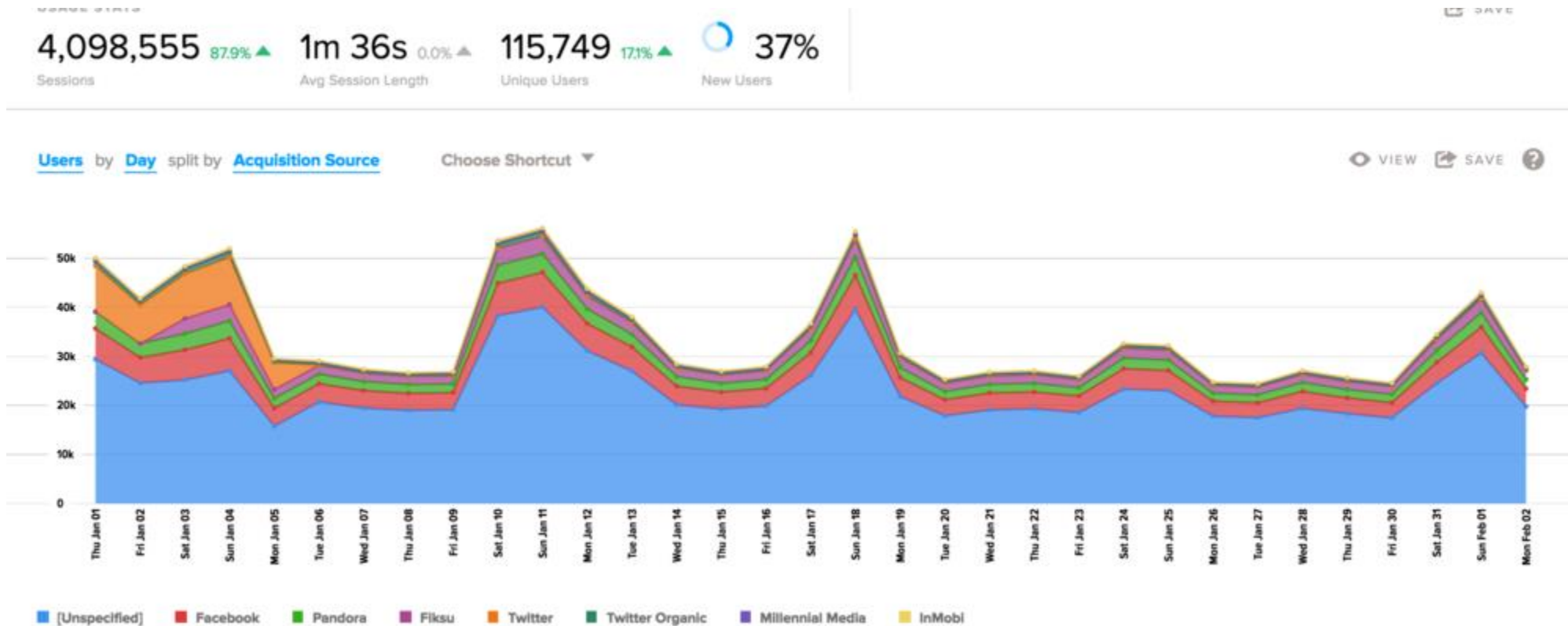
Retention

Daily ▼   ⤴ SAVE ❓

Day First Used	Users	% of Users Returning - Days Later								
		+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+14	+28
Jan 1, 2015	1,437	29%	23%	23%	23%	19%	23%	25%	23%	19%
Jan 2, 2015	1,171	26%	23%	21%	18%	21%	23%	18%	19%	14%
Jan 3, 2015	1,031	29%	27%	23%	20%	23%	20%	21%	21%	17%
Jan 4, 2015	1,033	33%	28%	24%	23%	21%	20%	23%	20%	16%
Jan 5, 2015	1,252	27%	25%	24%	21%	19%	20%	21%	17%	17%
Jan 6, 2015	930	28%	25%	22%	19%	19%	19%	16%	14%	
Jan 7, 2015	1,050	30%	20%	18%	19%	16%	15%	18%	15%	
Jan 8, 2015	1,290	21%	17%	19%	19%	16%	17%	20%	22%	
Jan 9, 2015	952	26%	24%	22%	20%	17%	19%	20%	17%	
Jan 10, 2015	867	32%	27%	24%	22%	24%	20%	24%	16%	
Jan 11, 2015	974	26%	22%	21%	25%	19%	20%	20%	20%	

- **Channel success:** Knowing which channel you're having the most success with will help you to target your ad dollars accordingly. The idea here is to monitor which ad channels are performing in terms of user engagement and LTV and which are falling flat, so that you can trim back accordingly and focus all of your efforts on where it's working.

- **Campaign success:** Going even more granular than channel is monitoring campaign success. Make sure you label all of your campaigns so that you can easily distinguish between them. Then, pay attention to which ad creatives and audience segmentations are most successful so that you continue to get highly targeted with your efforts, and focus in on those campaigns that are paying off.
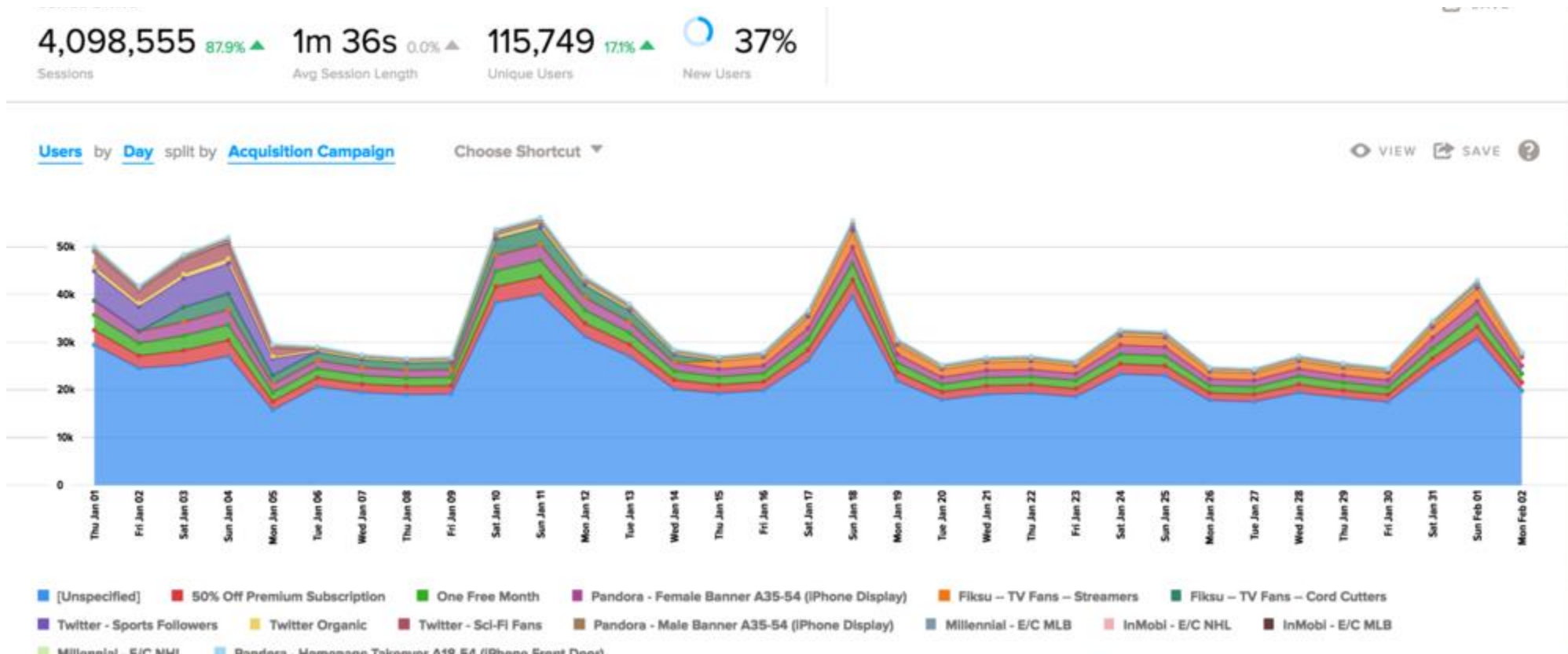
- **Lifetime Value:** Perhaps the most important metric and indication of a successful app acquisition campaign is the LTV (lifetime value) of your newly acquired app users. While lifetime value is calculated in a few different ways, it is an estimation of a user's value over time. This could be **the number of conversions a user has taken or the amount of time a user has been active**.This is an essential measurement because it gives you a true indication of ROI. The goal of your acquisition campaign should be not just to attract new users, but quality users who will continue to engage and convert over time.

New Users by **Day** split by **Acquisition Source**   ⤴ SAVE

• Organic • Facebook • Pandora • Fiksu • Twitter • Millennial Media • InMobi

By Source **By Campaign**				
Campaigns	**New Users** ❓	**Sessions / User** ❓	**LTV / User** ❓	**Total Revenue** ❓
Organic Users Comparison to all other users	9,597	18.0	20.98	201,376.00
Twitter - Sports Followers — Twitter	423	5.4	6.50	2,748.00
Twitter - Sci-Fi Fans — Twitter	264	5.0	4.43	1,169.00
Pandora - Male Banner A35-54 (iPhone Display) — Pandora	66	23.0	32.95	2,175.00
Pandora - Homepage Takeover A18-54 (iPhone Front Door) — Pandora	63	15.7	21.94	1,382.00
Pandora - Female Banner A35-54 (iPhone Display) — Pandora	810	18.9	17.92	14,518.00
One Free Month — Facebook	813	16.6	16.71	13,584.00
Millennial - E/C NHL — Millennial Media	63	19.0	27.10	1,707.00
Millennial - E/C MLB — Millennial Media	42	17.5	12.50	525.00
InMobi - E/C NHL — InMobi	54	15.6	14.22	768.00
InMobi - E/C MLB — InMobi	57	22.5	23.58	1,344.00
Summary	4,728	15.5	16.73	79,087.00

[1] [2] [>]

SUMMARY

4,728   79,087
New Users   Sales

The most successful app acquisition campaigns come from performance measurement and optimization. And while there's no exact formula for success, taking into consideration the best practices listed above while continually monitoring results and A/B testing will help you find the rhythm of what works for your app.

What to Consider During and After Launch

Much of this guide has been focused on a tactical approach to app acquisition, but let's take a step back and do some strategic planning. Having a solid launch and post-launch plan is essential to driving all of these tactics. That's because when launching your app, you have a lot of options on how to proceed. And since we're well aware of the fierce competition in the app world, in order to have any chance of success you need to come out of the gate with a solid game-plan. What should this game-plan consist of? Consider the below your personal guide to a successful launch plan:

During Launch Week

During the first week of launching your app, you should be obsessively monitoring performance. Here are some key items to monitor and address:

Functionality & Reception

- **Functionality Issues:** There are two main ways to monitor functionality issues: from the user, and from the data. Keep an eye on the forums, blogs, and app store comments so that you can quickly address any problems. In addition, digging into the user data can reveal places in your app users are getting stuck or falling off. Localyticspartners with performance platforms such as, Optimizely and Apasalar, who can monitor this for you.

- **Feedback:** Addressing functionality issues is just the tip of the iceberg. Based on feedback, you'll most likely have plenty to work on, from workflow optimizations to overall user experience. Understanding how these newly acquired users are reacting to features and using the app is critical to prioritizing new functionality. Oftentimes, the features we think will be the most used or accessed aren't at all and vice versa.

General Mood of New Users: On a broader spectrum, how are new users initially reacting to your app? Is it in line with what you envisioned or does it need some work? Getting a feel for the initial reaction towards your app will tell you if you're on track, or perhaps need to take it back to the drawing board.

Success Measurements

- **App Store Ranking:** Keeping an eye on your app store ranking will be a surefire way to see if your acquisition campaigns are paying off. You should hopefully see a boost in your ranking after the launch of your campaigns, so monitor closely and follow our optimization suggestions if not.
- **Referral Traffic:** Understanding which channels your users are coming from will help you narrow in on which ad channels are most successful right out the gate, and where you may need to make tweaks.
- **Retention Rates:** As you know, retention is key. Keep an eye on the retention after the first week. This will give you insight into whether or not you're attracting the right audience with your app acquisition campaigns so you can adjust quickly.
- **New User Session Length (Engagement):** The new user session lengths will let you know if your newly launched campaigns are attracting the right audience or not.

Post-Launch

After the initial launch period, there is still plenty you can do that will immediately improve your app and harness incoming users for long-term engagement:

- **Functionality:** You should continually optimize your app based on user feedback and improved functionality. Beyond fixing the general hang-ups and workflows we mentioned above, there are always updates you can make to improve the workflow and experience of your app. Take a look at what other best-in-class apps are doing and learn from them. Your app needs to provide a top-notch user experience in order to take on the stiff competition.

- **Customization:** App users expect a highly personalized experience, one that is tailored to them. Your app should do the following in order to give you the ability to deliver on this expectation: **save user preferences, geotargeting, surface relevant content based on previous history, remember previous user actions taken, and implement cross-channel functionality,**

- **UX:** Apps have literally changed the way we interact with technology. That's why it's extremely important to ensure the user experience of your app is top notch. This means continual app optimizations to improve user interface from the smallest tap to the biggest feature.

- **Customized Push and In-app Notifications Based on History:** How you talk to users will differ based on location and previous actions they've taken within your app. We touch more upon this below, but you should be monitoring this activity closely post-launch so that you're ready to begin implementing personalized messaging.

Retention > Acquisition

The final but most important part of any app acquisition campaign is user retention. You can acquire two million app users through your paid campaigns but if they all churn, it's a failed (and costly) effort. That's why in conjunction with your app acquisition campaign you need to be zeroed in on retention.

Push Your Way to Success

While app user retention can fluctuate, we know that using push messaging can improve app retention rates up to 56%. Put together a solid push messaging strategy for users, keeping in mind to customize according to app interactions and funnel stages. Below are some pro tips on how to tailor push messages based on the user:

- **Location:** Knowing where a user lives gives you the ability to update them about happenings relative to them geographically, and at the right time.
- **Transactional:** If a user makes a purchase, send them relative push messages about their order from receipts to delivery details.
- **Targeted Offers/Content:** Send a relative push message to users based on items or content they've previously looked at or converted on.

Spend Money (and Time) Wisely

Marketing your app can get very pricey, so make sure you're getting the best ROI for your dollars. Tap into your referral data to understand where both your paid and organic campaigns are paying off. But don't stop there. Dig deeper and analyze what the LTV of these users is based on retention and churn. Is a paid campaign driving a ton of new installs who mostly end up churning? If so, take a look at your app's functionality and optimize accordingly. In addition, make sure you have the right marketing strategy in place and are attracting the right users. Your dollars should not only be driving in new users, but qualified ones who will engage with your app longterm, so invest in the campaigns that are working best and ditch the rest.

Don't Forget to Remarket

If you've ever viewed a product online only to find it following you around afterwards as you peruse other sites and social channels, you've already encountered remarketing. Remarketing is targeting consumers outside of the app based on how they've previously interacted with your brand. The goal of remarketing is to bring them back into your app. It takes place across multiple channels, from social media to blogs. And it's becoming more and more essential to have as part of your app marketing strategy.
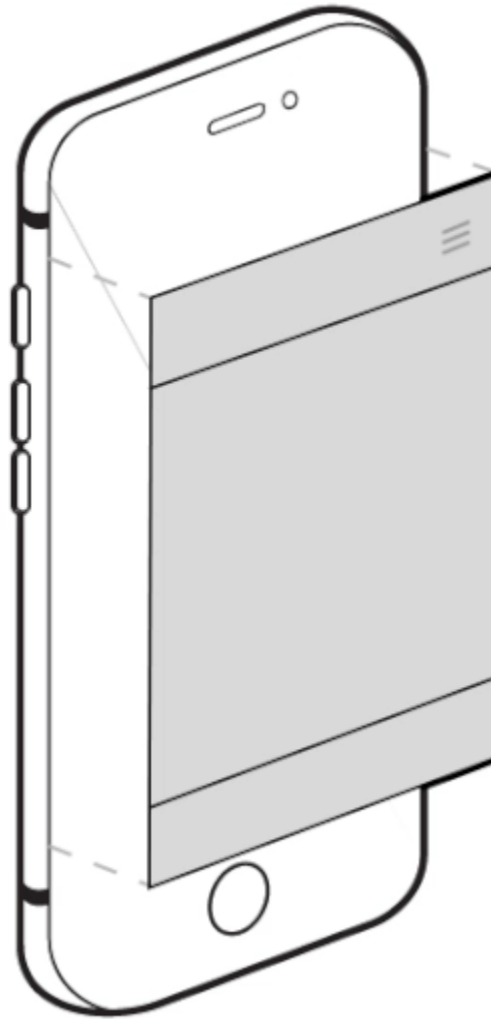
Consider this: Over <u>50%</u> of app users opt-out of push messaging, and <u>75%</u> churn within the first 90 days. If you want a chance at combating these staggering numbers, you need to play in your audience's space, and remind them about your app via remarketing.

Keep Calm and Acquire on

Developing a successful app user acquisition campaign is a process, but an essential one that will set you on the right path as you enter into the app world.

Implementing multiple user acquisition campaigns that have been well planned is your best bet for becoming top of mind for your audience and gaining market share. After all, you can have the most amazing app in the world, but if no one uses it, it's going to fail.

So keep calm and acquire on. After you launch the campaigns, keep your ear to the pulse and optimize accordingly. Putting together a stellar app user acquisition campaign can be the difference between whether your app becomes yesterday's news or tomorrow's headline.