

A mobile app is a major undertaking, and building it is only the first step. The key to lasting success lies in growing your audience, keeping them engaged, focusing on quality, and developing an effective monetization strategy.

64%

of Americans own a smartphone<sup>1</sup>

Americans spend over  
**37** hours a month in apps<sup>2</sup>

Mobile audiences have increased by

41%

in the time desktop audiences have grown by 1%<sup>3</sup>

With time on mobile increasing, particularly in apps, we've gathered our most actionable research and best practices to help you succeed in these key areas.

## Grow your app's audience

With over 3 million apps on the market, it's not easy to stand out.<sup>4</sup>

Build your user base with these suggestions.

### Get people talking

52% of people learn about apps from friends, family, and colleagues.<sup>5</sup>

**App Invites** allow users to invite Google Contacts via email and SMS.



### Flash your badge

47% of people say they're more likely to download apps upon seeing the **Google Play Store badge**.<sup>6</sup>

Make sure your badge is prominently displayed on your website.



### Pique user interest

Your app's icon gives the first impression, so make it count.

Experiment with the Google Play Store's **A/B testing features** for different versions of graphic assets, titles, and descriptions.

A/B

[Get more tips to build your audience.](#)

## Engage your users

Once they've downloaded your app, you need to engage them. 52% of all apps lose at least half of their most valuable users after 3 months.<sup>7</sup>

Try these tips to keep users engaged.

### Optimize your onboarding

Users spend most of their time in a few favored apps. This makes your app's first-run critical.

**A/B test** different onboarding features, like app tutorials and custom discount codes.

A/B

### Measure user engagement

Find patterns in user behavior with **cohort analysis**.

Customize **Google Analytics** to drive the right KPIs for your business.



### Prove your worth

34% of app abandonment is due to boredom.<sup>8</sup>

Use **Google Cloud Messaging** to create rich, contextual notifications like news, weather, or reminders to re-engage and increase regular users.



[Get more tips to keep users engaged.](#)

## Focus on quality

Your app's content may be great, but technical aspects can make or break its success. Users expect apps to load in under 1 second.<sup>9</sup>

Here are a few suggestions to create a high quality app.

### Slim down your app

Users have limited data storage. A large app runs the risk of losing an install.

Optimize your app code with tools like **ProGuard** for Android and **App Thinning** for iOS.



### Test every device

Glitchy apps lead to angry customer feedback and low ratings.

Use **Cloud Test Lab** to simultaneously test your app on nearly every kind of Android device and **Robo tests** to exercise your app by simulating user actions.



### Reduce risk

Don't underestimate adoption and usage levels of a new version of your app.

Try **staged rollouts** to beta test different app versions and gradually release app updates to a chosen user group.



[Get more tips for maximizing your app quality.](#)

## Effectively monetize your app

There are many ways to earn revenue from your app. Maintaining the balance between maximizing revenue and protecting user experience, however, is critical for app success.

Try these monetization tips.

### Respect the UX

Consider the flow of user engagement to place ads in unobtrusive places.

Experiment with frequency and placement. Avoid sandwiching your ads.



### Ad type matters

Small screens on mobile make it easy for users to get distracted by ads.

Try **Native ads** to create a more consistent look and feel across your content and ads. They are also more likely to be viewed and clicked on by users.



### Go programmatic direct

Maximize revenue by allowing advertisers to bid for your ads while maintaining full control of pricing and ad formats.



[Get more tips on app monetization.](#)

Set up your app for success with these tips on growing app audiences, engaging users, ensuring high app quality, and monetizing effectively.

For more in-depth guidance, read our four-part mobile bootcamp series on the [DoubleClick Publisher Blog](#).

Sources:

1. Smith, Aaron. "U.S. Smartphone Use in 2015." *Pew Research Center*. 01 Apr. 2015.
2. "So Many Apps, So Much More Time for Entertainment." *Nielson*. 11 June 2015.
3. "The 2015 U.S. Mobile App Report." *comScore*. 22 Sept. 2015.
4. "Number of Apps Available in Leading App Stores 2015." *Statista*. 2015.
5. Google. *Mobile App Marketing Insights: How Consumers Really Find and Use Your Apps, Think With Google*. 2015.
6. Google internal data, 2015.
7. Danova, Tom. *BI Intelligence: The App Store Marketing Report: User Behavior Trends, And Getting Apps To Stand Out*. Business Insider. 2015.
8. Google. *Mobile App Marketing Insights: How Consumers Really Find and Use Your Apps, Think With Google*. 2015.
9. Miot, Stephanie. "iOS Apps Crash More Than Android." *PCMag*. 28 Mar. 2014.