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Mobile App **Marketing Plan**

(A complete roadmap to promote your mobile app)

Authors

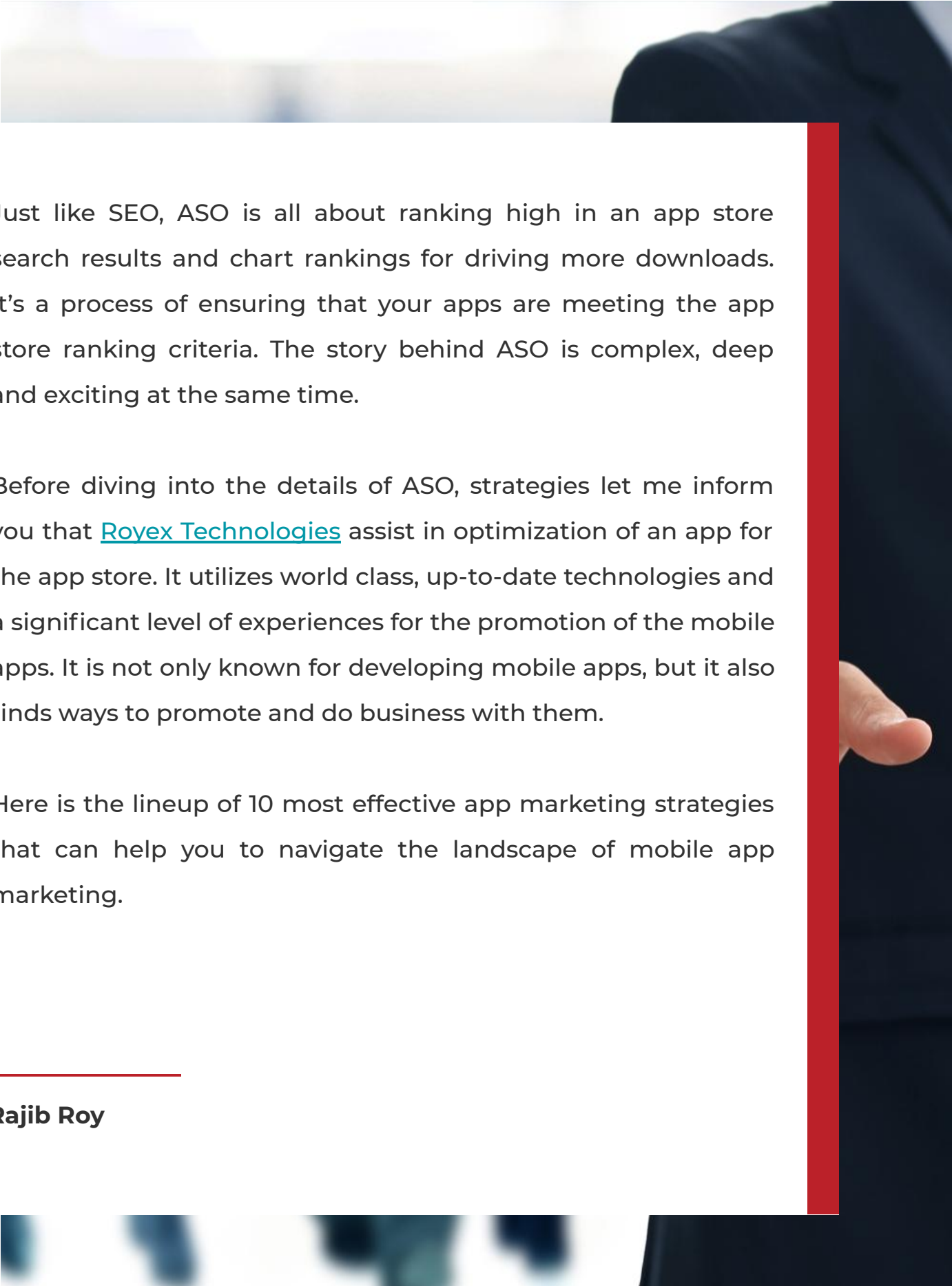Rajib Roy

Last Update

Feb, 2020

Published By

Royex Publication

Introduction

Mobile app store marketing is a whole new ball game with different players and rules. How to market a mobile app is a common question which requires a new marketing approach. Marketers entering in mobile app arena have to face unique challenges such as unfamiliar channels, targeting problems, understanding downloads versus users, app store ranking and much more.

It might be surprising to know that ranking high in an app store is no longer a challenge. The mobile app developer can get their app to the masses through ASO (App Store Optimization). It is the best possible and only way to improve visibility and discoverability of mobile app in the app store but how an app developer can do so is still questionable?

Just like SEO, ASO is all about ranking high in an app store search results and chart rankings for driving more downloads. It's a process of ensuring that your apps are meeting the app store ranking criteria. The story behind ASO is complex, deep and exciting at the same time.

Before diving into the details of ASO, strategies let me inform you that Royex Technologies assist in optimization of an app for the app store. It utilizes world class, up-to-date technologies and a significant level of experiences for the promotion of the mobile apps. It is not only known for developing mobile apps, but it also finds ways to promote and do business with them.

Here is the lineup of 10 most effective app marketing strategies that can help you to navigate the landscape of mobile app marketing.

Rajib Roy

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App Store Optimization

In this section, we will list 10 different app marketing strategies revolving around app store optimization to make your app more visible ultimately resulting in more downloads and users.

1.   Know Your Customers and Your Competition

Knowing customers and competitors is vital

An effective ASO strategy hinges on a clear understanding of its clients as well as competitors. Here is the checklist which can help you to know your customers and the competition deeply.

- What language do your customers use?
- How will they describe your app?
- What are the top reasons for downloading and using the app?
- What is your core competitive advantage?
- What are the targeted keywords of your competitors?
- How easy it is for you to compete against the app with the same keyword?
- Should you have to target obvious keywords or the less obvious keywords to speak about unique offering and points of differentiation?

A well informed ASO strategy revolves around putting you in shoes of your customers.

The ultimate objective of an ASO is to improve discovery of an app in app store search and target those keywords that can drive more traffic. You can find these optimal keywords through customer research. Review all the customer search queries to your app and understand the natural language which they use to describe the app. The more you know about customers, the less you need to worry about losing them.

Mobile Apps marketing puzzle is incomplete without a proper understanding of your competitions. The most meaningful way to differentiate your app from your competitors is to have an outstanding information about your competitors. Identify the keyword targeted by your competitors and determine if it makes sense to target same keywords. You can also use a separate set of unique keywords for a value proposition. Various tools can help you to get your app discovered, downloaded and track the competition too. If you want to do it better,then you must have to understand your competitive landscape.

2. Start with a Right App Title and App Name

A good app name can do wonders for you app

Unique title of your app is not just the matter of branding. It's an important piece of metadata and one big thing that can affect your ASO.

The most important decision to make about app title is the insertion of keywords in the title. Some of the major brands do not include keywords in the title for a cleaner look, but this approach is effective for companies with a sizable marketing budget. Keywords in the title get a visual cut off in the app store. To have good end results, it is recommended to include relevant keywords in your title. This factor can heavily increase ranking on search result pages. According to a research apps with relevant keywords in their titled ranked 10.3% higher than the apps without keywords in the title.

Choose app name or title with care and don't change it often because the news about your app will spread through word of mouth.

You can't change the name once the word gets around. Another important consideration for the title is size.

It must have to be short. 255 characters in the title in the App Store is allowed with plenty of keywords but don't take this as an opportunity for keyword stuffing. App name is the first and foremost impression to potential mobile customer. Apple store truncates the titles on search results and top chart pages. The Title of the app acts as a keyword so, it is important to pick it correctly. Keep the actual name short and sweet and avoid special character in the title. Don't use an app name that has been already taken.

3. Identify the Best Keywords

Find out which keywords work best for you

Keyword is another component of an app, and keyword maximization is an important part of the ASO strategy. Google play processes six million unique phrases every month. Users search for apps and app stores have algorithms that use keywords to search. Therefore, it is important for an app to contain the keyword in the title and draw the heaviest traffic. Apps with keyword inserted in title have a better ranking than those which don't have keywords in their titles. Several tools can help you to choose a better title and keyword for your app.

Concerning ASO keywords, Google play and App Store both came up with very different approaches. Google Play ranks based on keywords in title and description, and it is similar to tradition SEO.

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Whereas, the Apple App Store has limited characters available for the keywords. For strong keyword ranking, it is important to track keyword ranking of the competition and find keyword alternatives. A thorough competitor's analysis, constant monitoring, and revisioning can help to maximize keyword ranking of an app.

The App Store

There is 100-character keyword field in the App Store. You can exclusively include title and keyword and keyword phrases in these 100 characters. App Store will use these characters to determine the search strings will show up. Keeping this in mind, it is necessary to use all the allotted characters. You can increase your organic traffic through careful selection of keywords.

Google Play

The Google Play store approach is more similar to modern SEO. Google extract relevant keywords by scanning the app's description. So, don't try to jam as many keywords as possible, try to sprinkle relevant keywords where they logically make sense. To maximize the likelihood of ranking prominently for the keyword, you can repeat that word for five times in an app store product pages.

4. Create a Compelling and Persuasive Description

Write a catchy app description to attract users

Keyword research is a great idea for generating the best results out of Google and Apple algorithms but the humans are the actual users, and they are going to read your app descriptions.

They are the ones who will decide whether to install the app or not. Keyword stuffing in your content will create a baffling app description, and this is the terrible approach for ASO.

The description is a call to action for potential customers. It must have to be simple, concise and list some unique benefits for compelling readers to download.

Description has to target towards customer base rather than search engines.

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If the app description is a hodgepodge of contextually irrelevant keywords, then the app must have to struggle to entice customers to take the next step and download it.

In short app, description is the process of convincing potential customers that the app can meet their needs.

Treat your app description as a living document and focus the bulk of energy on first three lines of the description to grab customer attention immediately. Ever growing number of apps in the marketplace have increased the intensity of competition. There is some alternatives on the fingertips of the users. Make your customer's easy by immediately communicating what your app has and why the user should have to use it?

5. Stand Out With a Unique Icon
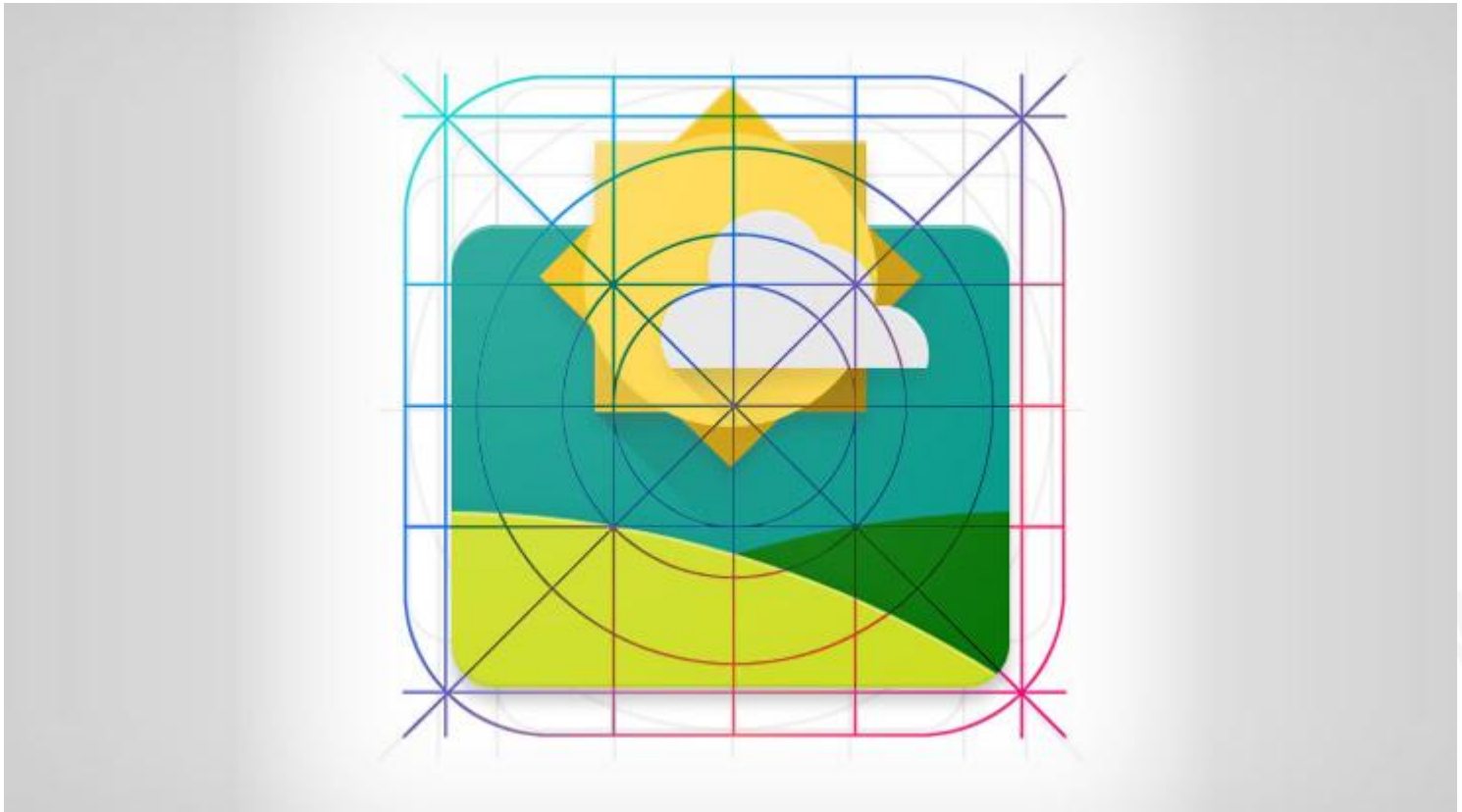
Your app icon can make your app stand out

A better optimally developed icon can increase downloads up to 560%!

Keep the design simple and eye-catching. Don't try to cram the small space with so many items or words. In an endless list of apps, your logo icon is the first impression of your app in front of potential consumers.

Simple design without much noise is something which will last in user's mind for a long time. Another important consideration to create an effective logo is to make sure that the logo icon looks good when it scaled down to the smallest size. The app logo also has to look good against the light and dark backgrounds.

You can get inspiration for the design from the logo designs of top rated apps in your category. Make sure that the icon is different from the logo of your competitors it will help you to avoid brand confusion.

It is worth mentioning here that App Store and Google both have different approaches for icon development. Both App stores have different preset standards for ideal size, geometry and color scheme of app icons.

For iOS icons, 1024×1024 pixels is the size and dimensions of the logo required by the App Store. Apple OS resize the icon for the other applications. Therefore, it is important to design a logo with meticulous details of 1024×1024 icon and the simplicity also has to look good when it scales down to the smallest size.

On the other hand, designing an Android icon means you have design 512×512 image. According to Google, you have to design app icon with material design guidelines which include all from image anatomy to lightning and shading. Little competitive research in logo designing can ensure that your image is different and it has potential to avoid brand confusion among users.

6. Feature Screenshots and Videos
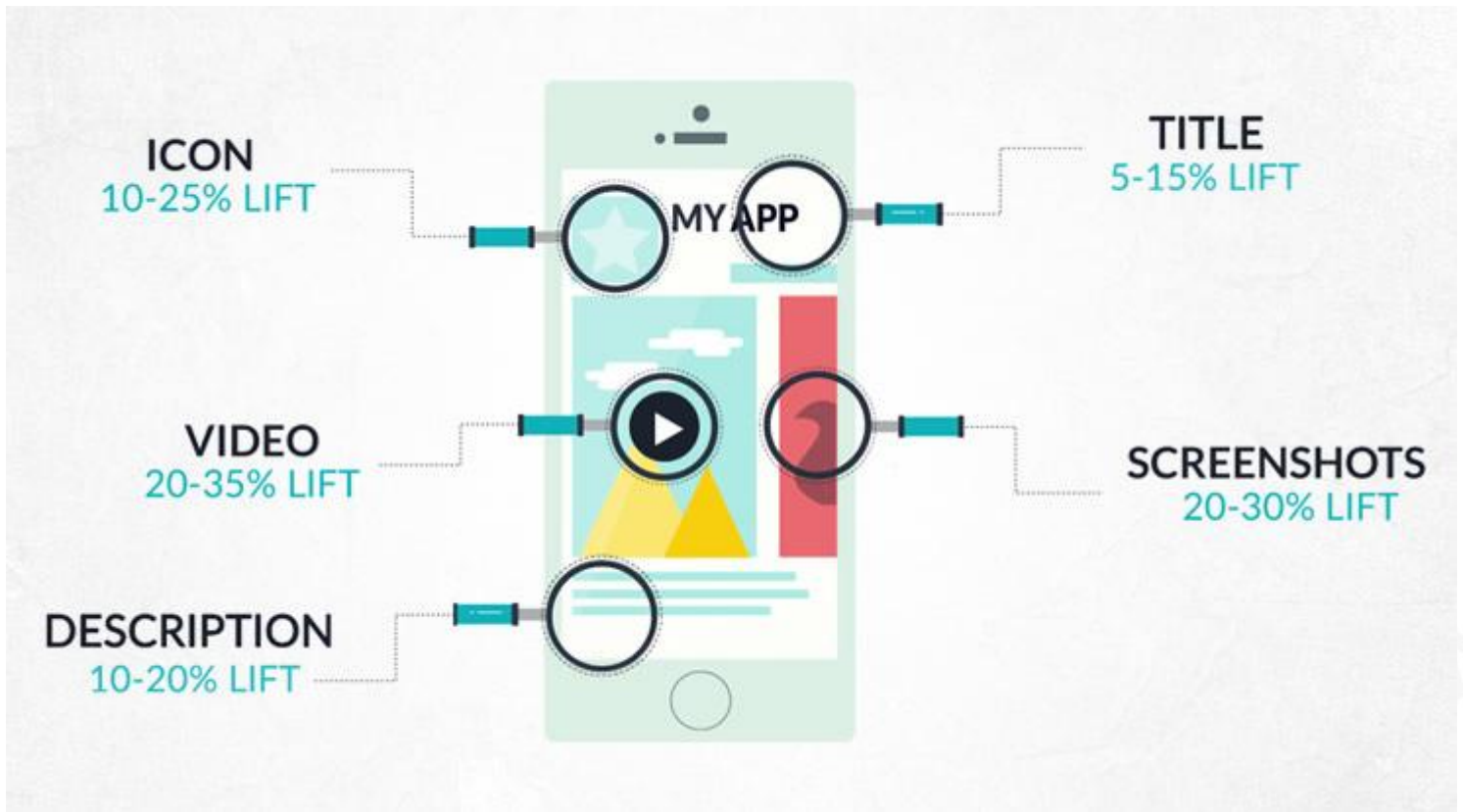
Screenshots and videos increase app conversions

According to StoreMaven, two best screenshots can increase conversion by 25%. Each screenshot tells a single message about the app. Screenshots in the description don't have a direct effect on the search rankings, but they have potential to drive downloads.

Feature screenshots reinforce the reality that the users are visual being and the App Store is offering a visual medium of an app. Screenshots are considered as actual advertisements which influence consumers to make an app downloading decision. Look at the Apple store you will find screenshots as are dominant in app product pages.

You can upload maximum five screenshots for the iOS app and up to eight for Android app. Apple store will show three screenshots in the gallery and it's a fact that first three screenshots will be your obvious selling point.

Look at screenshots as another advertising platform. This is a great opportunity for the unfamiliar brands and newly launched apps to shine. Images convey more about the app and bring the descriptive text to life. It's important to ensure that the screenshots are speaking biggest customer benefits and convincing readers to browse additional screenshots and download the app.

App store prefers the images representing the customer experiences; technically you can upload graphics in the field of screenshots in the form of a concept or character art. For example, Facebook promotes its new update by adding a graphic overlay to its screenshots.

No matter which approaches you are using to promote app through a screenshot. It's important to make sure that the screenshot is showing off most central features of the app, latest updates and the pages on which customers will spend their time. A/B Test can help you to determine which screenshots have the best chance of persuading people to download your app.

You can advertise your app through videos, and it's an active part of ASO strategy. According to StoreMaven, video making is a difficult option, but it can increase install rates more than 23%. Use a good poster frame (iOS)/feature graphic (Google Play). This graphic has potential to have a significant impact on app advertisement. It's imperative to keep your message in video concise, simple and to the point.

7.   Localize Your App Listing

Target your local market

When it comes to global marketing one size fits all is not a practical approach to marketing particularly in case of mobile app marketing. Majority of the world population speaks English, so the App store caters American audience. But the truth is that much of the world doesn't speak English!

31% of the total app revenue is coming from North America, 41% of the app revenue is coming from Asia and 23% from the Europe. It means people living outside America prefer to use app their native languages even if they are fluent in English.

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These statistics suggest App publishers have massive opportunity to publish their apps. So the app developers and marketers must have a market in their users' language.

If you are making only English-centric apps, then it means you are missing out on the majority of the world's market. You can resolve this issue by focusing on localization. It is the process of selling your app to non-English speakers in their native language.

There are a large number of localization services which you can translate the keywords, descriptions, name and even screenshots as per demographics and segments. Apple store also permits app marketers to localize app listing to different parts all around the world.

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8. Promote your App Beyond the App Store

So many app stores to publish your app

Eventually the most significant thing that we should remember is that on-page optimization is just one single tool in your entire mobile marketing kit and this is the point where your knowledge of SEO really comes into play. It is commonly thought that both Google and Apple factor in your product page backlinks and your app's total page visits when they determine your search and also the overall ranks.

To simply say, to reach high ranks in the search results all you need to do is drive more traffic to your listings and to build more traffic you need to construct an online presence which can be found around your application with relevant soliciting press and reviews, investing in online advertising and also social media and content.

App indexing for many publishers has proven to be the most effective approach for driving heavy traffic to an app's primary product page. This concept which is app indexing is relatively new and is currently in the process of making iOS or Android content linkable and searchable from a mobile web or PC web search.

How does indexing helps you? Well when customers see that you are indexed in a search result then they can simply click on your click and it will be deep-linked to two places, either it will be to the page in your app from which the particular content that is indexed that is, if they have it installed or the 2nd place which will be your product page that is, if they don't have it installed.

Therefore, it can be said that indexing does help with both acquisition and re-engagement by promoting all your content in fresh channels. And that is not all, app indexing also allows you to drive app store traffic and downloads right from the search engine page.

App indexing has revolutionized the world of search. Almost 40% of all searches now return to app indexed results. The world today has gone mobile and because of that, all those apps which are ahead of the curve in ASO and in app indexing trends will be specifically those that grab the largest market share from the conventional web-dominated search results.

9. Frequent updates
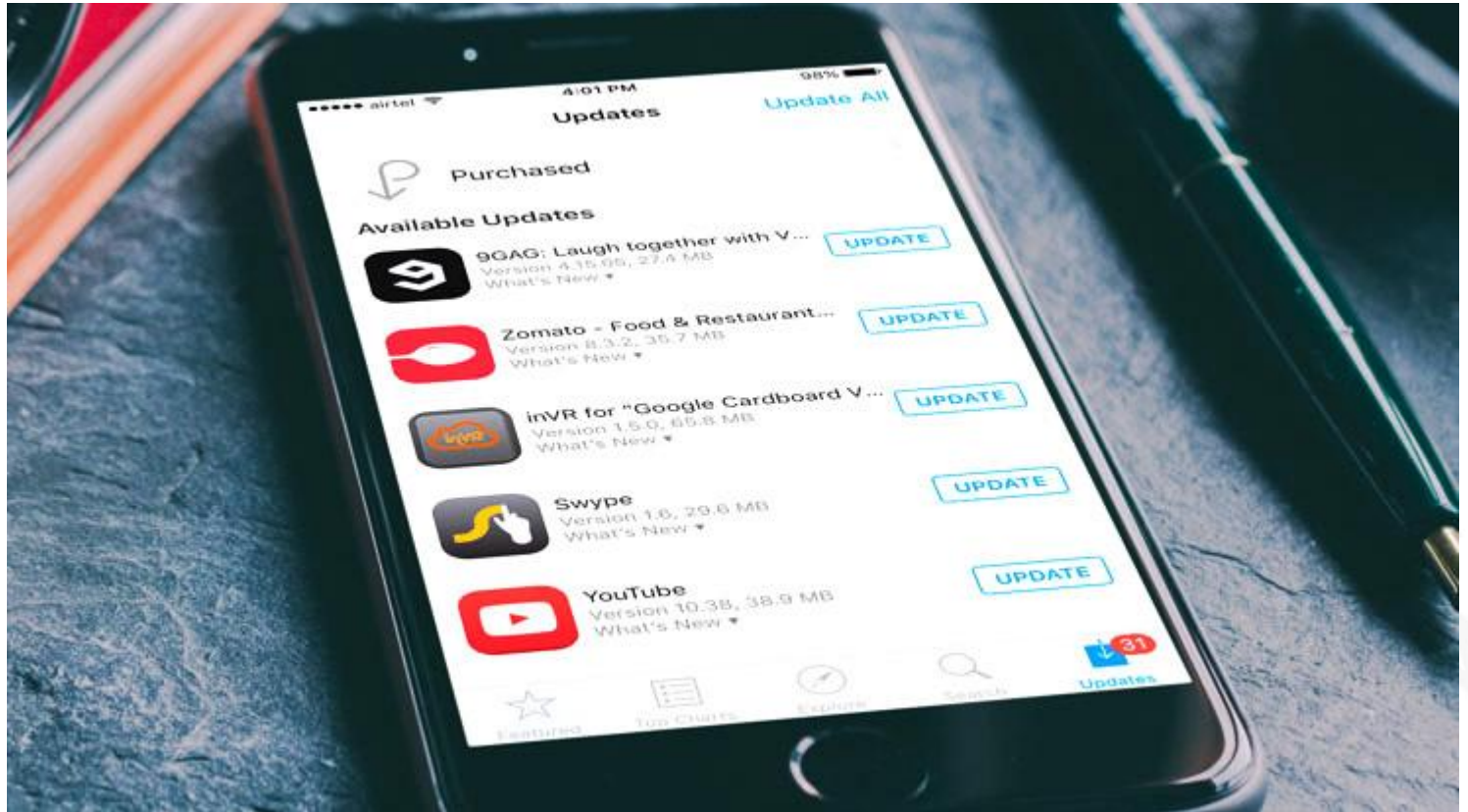
Fixing app bugs should be your top priority

An app that keeps on fixing getting better, keeps on fixing all the bugs that it encounters and keeps on updating based on customer feedback is the App that customers are looking for. The apps which are regularly updated are regarded highly by the app store as well as the customers, they are considered more customer-centric.

Thus, app updates are directly linked to higher ranking in the app store, as with every new and improved update the ranking will naturally go up as the app will get positive feedback and reviews from customers.

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But this doesn't stop here, don't think that releasing the updates does the job, the real task is to encourage the customers who are already using the app to download the updated version, below are some useful tips that can help you sell your next update.

1. Temp customers within your app, by using a push notification or by a note which is prompted at login or by an hard to miss update link which is displayed in the main navigation, hence notifying the customers that there is a new update with exciting new improvements that they must check out.

2. You can update the app's description in the "what's new" field in your app store product page to highlight the new and improved features with an irresistible appeal.

3. Lastly, you must maintain a majority of 5 star reviews for your app, primarily for its latest version. A survey held in 2015 unearthed that almost one third of existing customers check the app's rating before downloading the update therefore it is crucial to maintain a highly positive rating for your app if you want to score a home run.

We have done a bit of analysis that might help you with the app update frequency, the top 500 ranked apps that we scoured had an average update frequency was around 30 to 40 days.

What you should keep in mind is that, each time you update an iOS application, your app's rating starts all over again and along with that your ranking crashes temporarily. That is why the iOS which are frequently updated face high rank volatility and the android apps which are updated frequently undergo less volatility.

10. Encourage ratings and feedback
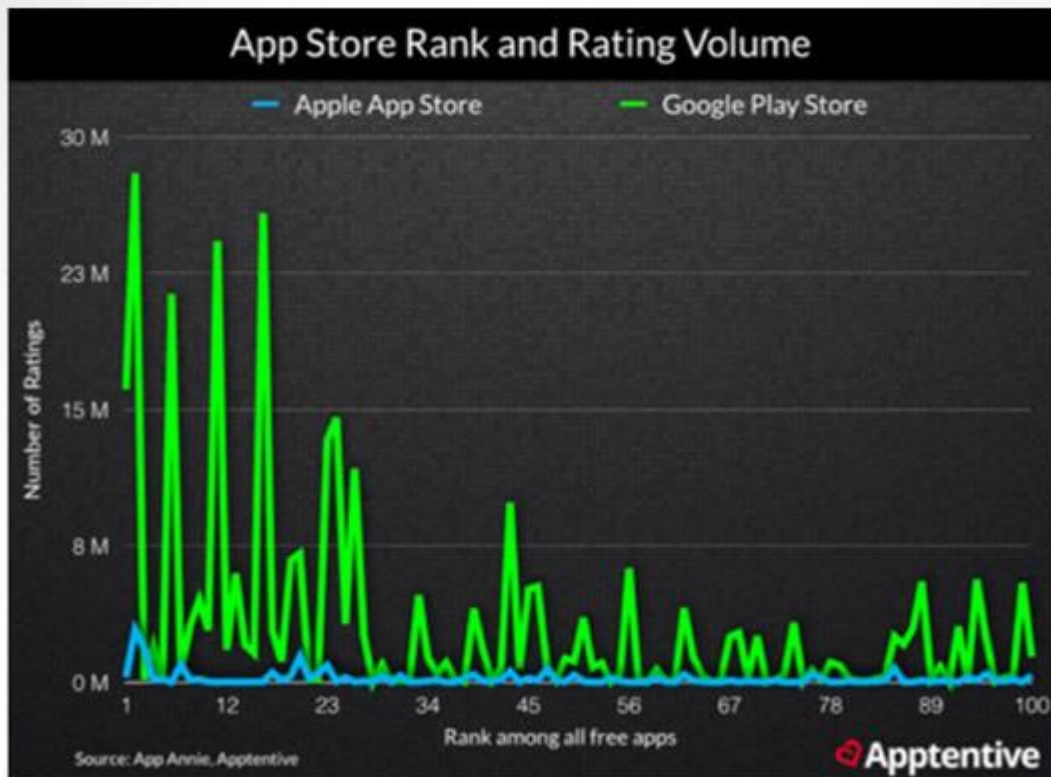
Higher app ratings mean more downloads

And finally, a constant flow of positive reviews significantly serves as the highest possible authentication of your app's quality and it is also one of the primary factors of high ranks.

We also found that the most prominent connection between ratings (which includes both rating count and average rating count) and ranks than any of the other determinant we have examined. Apps with a large volume of most approving reviews tend to dominate the top charts across the board.

Besides the reviews, we have also noticed that the rating volume usually outshines the rating sentiment when it goes down to determining the rank.

The apps which have the largest fan community are recognized by app stores instantly and the best proxy for confirming that is the rating count.

The apps which keep their customers engaged and enthusiastically request customer feedback are the apps which have the highest ratings counts. The feedback is also mandatory to design their product according to customer demand and road mapping future updates.

And one thing that you should keep in mind is that app store ratings only provide short-sighted view of customer satisfaction. That is, only the people who love or hate your app will take their time out in writing a review. While you need to understand the fact that majority of the customers lie in between these two extremes. You need to intelligently prompt the customers who will give you a five star review, which ultimately leads to higher ranks, hence an easy win

Conclusion

With a sound understanding of the science and data behind the app store ranking algorithms and with these pro tips for App store optimization you are on the right track to an impenetrable ASO strategy.

The road to surpass your competitors in the app store will require careful measure along with a little trial and error but if you're resilient then you'll be knocking out the completion and becoming the champion of app store top charts in no time.

But of course, the App store optimization is continuous process, all thanks to the constant evolving ranking algorithms and because of the competitive nature of all app stores. A booming ASO strategy will require a taste for analytics, a keen eye and orderly check ins.

ASO isn't simple task that you could pull of over a night's work, it requires time and experience. Royex Technologies are here to help you with this task, we along with your support can make the perfect strategy which will guarantee to make your apps poplar.

A well-organized apps quickly return your investment repeatedly, so call us when you're in mood for a chat, we're here to help you at all times.

Author

Rajib Roy, CEO of Royex Technologies is a highly motivated, genuinely flexible and exceptionally hard-working person. He is a Systems Architect with a background encompassing over 17 years of experience in software development. Having played a key role in the development and deployment of projects and solutions that have been adopted by leading retail, hospitality and travel sector clients, his skills lie in planning cost-effective solutions and building and coordinating dedicated, highly-skilled teams that convert ideas and concepts into innovative, functional and ultimately profitable products.

About Royex Technologies

We are a creative web design and software development company in Dubai. We also offer mobile application development and SEO service with affordable price. We have already developed more than 300+ websites, 30+ mobile apps for Middle East market.

Here are the products and services provided by Royex:

Services:

- Mobile App Development
- Website Development
- Search Engine Optimization
- eCommerce Web Design
- Custom Application Development
- Magento Development
- Umbraco Development
- WordPress Development
- AWS Consulting and Maintenance
- Security and Vulnerability Testing
- Branding and Logo Design

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