

Top 10 Marketing Tips for a No.1 Game App

Industry Article



With gaming revenue projected to reach a massive \$16 billion by 2016, the mobile game market presents an alluring business proposition for most developers and tech entrepreneurs today. However, whilst games such as Angry Birds or Fruit Ninja are typically taken as benchmarks, such gaming blockbusters are the exception, rather than the rule. For every big gaming hit out there, thousands of games go virtually unnoticed in the app stores.

So how can your game make an impact? Whilst a lot of factors decide a game app's success, our [game marketing experts](#) have compiled their top ten essential tips for kick-starting your marketing campaign.

1. Pitch Your Game to Bloggers and App Reviewers

Gaming enthusiasts and app bloggers are always on the lookout for the next 'cool' game, and they are the key to creating buzz around your app. Prior to launching your game, it is essential to find online gaming communities and network with relevant influencers, bloggers and forum members. Give out promotional codes, if applicable, and offer an exclusive preview before the app's general release. Game bloggers and app reviewers are your best friends and your best chance to your app going viral.

2. Use Visuals to Promote Your Game

In the mobile app market, 'What you see is what you get' or rather 'What you see is what you download'. There is no more effective way to persuade a user to download your app than by giving them a visual taste of what they would be missing out on. Create a video tutorial to demonstrate the entertaining value of your game and post it on YouTube alongside screenshots and a compelling, keyword optimised app description. If you want to go all the way, consider creating a professional screencast in high definition to demonstrate the quality of your app.

3. Update your App Regularly

Engagement is key when it comes to the fast-moving world of mobile games. On average, games have particularly short life cycles, so you need to regularly push out app updates to maintain your users' interest and stop them moving on to the next best game. Start by using analytics to monitor how many users actively use your app and how long they use it for (see tip 10 for more on analytics). As soon as app usage patterns drop, offer updates and new engagement tools. The more you invest in increasing your app's novelty, the more likely it is that your users will remain excited and share the excitement with their friends too.

4. Watch the Size of Your App

When it comes to your game, size really does matter. Heavy graphics and rich functionality make game apps particularly prone to long install times, and apps over 20MB have to be downloaded using WI-FI or a web connection. Ultimately, the ease and speed with which your app installs will determine how many downloads you get, so don't put any barriers between your app and your potential audience. Aim for your game to download in under a minute on an average connection.

5. Build a Community

Social media is your best channel for app promotion. Build a fan page for your game on networks like Facebook and Twitter to create a social meeting point for your fans or potential users. But make sure that your content is exciting and engaging. Organise contests and give prizes and awards to your most passionate fans. Be articulate. Be witty. Be ridiculous. Be loud. There are no rules as long as your voice is fun and unique. Chances are that the people who can connect and engage with you on social networks will also connect and engage with your game.

6. Offer Discounts

With thousands of great free games out there, it has become increasingly difficult to market a paid game, especially without special endorsement from a big name or a big brand. So if your game is paid, it is worth considering discounting the full price around special events and holidays to generate buzz around your app. If the discounting is noteworthy it typically drives mentions from app reviewers and bloggers. Furthermore, the boost in downloads might drive your app into the top charts and allow you to capitalise on the organic traffic that chart rankings usually bring about.

7. Monetise Your App

Another way to promote and monetise your paid app is to offer a limited feature version of your game free and monetise the upgraded, full-feature one. This 'freemium' model allows you to harness the high download rate of a free app while, at the same time, showcase its entertainment value so that users are enticed to go back to the App Store to demand more. Alternatively, you can offer in-app purchasing where the initial game is free and you monetise additional content (features, levels, tokens, etc.)

8. Take Social Gaming Seriously

Though social sharing on networks such as Facebook is on the decline, the same is not true of social gaming. Playing games as a form of social interaction is one of the hottest phenomena today, with the most successful app games out there having multi-player features or capabilities. If your game's concept is compatible with competitive multi-player gaming, plan to offer it and make it an important selling point. If your game is essentially single player, plan on integrating social networks or add social sharing elements to it.

9. Consider using Pay-Per-Install Ad Networks

Everyone wants their app to top the App Store charts. However, making the Top 25 in the US Apple App Store requires 45,000 downloads, with the Top 10 requiring a whopping 80,000 downloads over the course of 2 or 3 days! With such high standards to meet, getting into the top charts upon app launch is almost impossible without investment in pay-per-install ad networks. Plan to test several ad networks with a pilot mobile display advertising campaign. By comparing the number of impressions and installs across the various networks, you'll get a better idea of which one delivers the best ROI for your app.

10. Use Analytics to Understand Your Market

Despite designing your game with a specific market in mind, it is hard to gauge how effective your user targeting is without proper in-app metrics and analytics. Tracking indicators such as level of app engagement over time, app usage patterns across various demographics or patterns of play across different game levels can give you a lot of insight into what kind of changes will increase app engagement or attract new users.

About Apppli

Apppli is a [software development](#) and [digital marketing](#) firm based in London. We design, develop and promote market leading software solutions across all platforms and devices, specialising in mobile apps and web development.

As a full service company we take projects from concept to market, working with entrepreneurs and high growth start-ups to transform their visions into sustainable businesses. Covering all sectors from financial services, enterprise and e-commerce to [games](#), art and travel, our experts work closely with clients to help them build their brand, increase productivity and improve ROI.

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