

App Uninstall Report

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KEY FINDINGS

- More than 3 out of every 10 installs of mobile apps globally end up being uninstalled. Minimizing an app's uninstall rate is a key factor for success in today's marketplace.
- The Android uninstall rate is 2x higher than iOS. Storage space, app quality, device quality, and incentivized advertising are among the key reasons for this significant gap.
- 43% of gaming app installs on Android devices are uninstalled, compared to only 21% of shopping app installs. iOS users are far more reliable with only 13% uninstalling gaming apps and a mere 9% removing shopping apps from their devices.
- The US has the lowest uninstall rate from non-organic installs on both Android and iOS: 31% and 12%, respectively.

INTRO

As an app developer and marketer operating in a highly saturated landscape, you're probably struggling with dwindling [retention rates](#). It is therefore no wonder that the freemium-dominated app market is rapidly changing: from an install-driven to a post install-driven space where engagement is the new king.

With over 2 million apps in both Google Play and Apple's App Store, each app has numerous competitors just waiting for their chance to shine. If your app does not deliver on its promise on *all* fronts quickly, it won't be used, or worse it will be uninstalled. Without users constantly engaging with your app, monetization becomes very difficult.

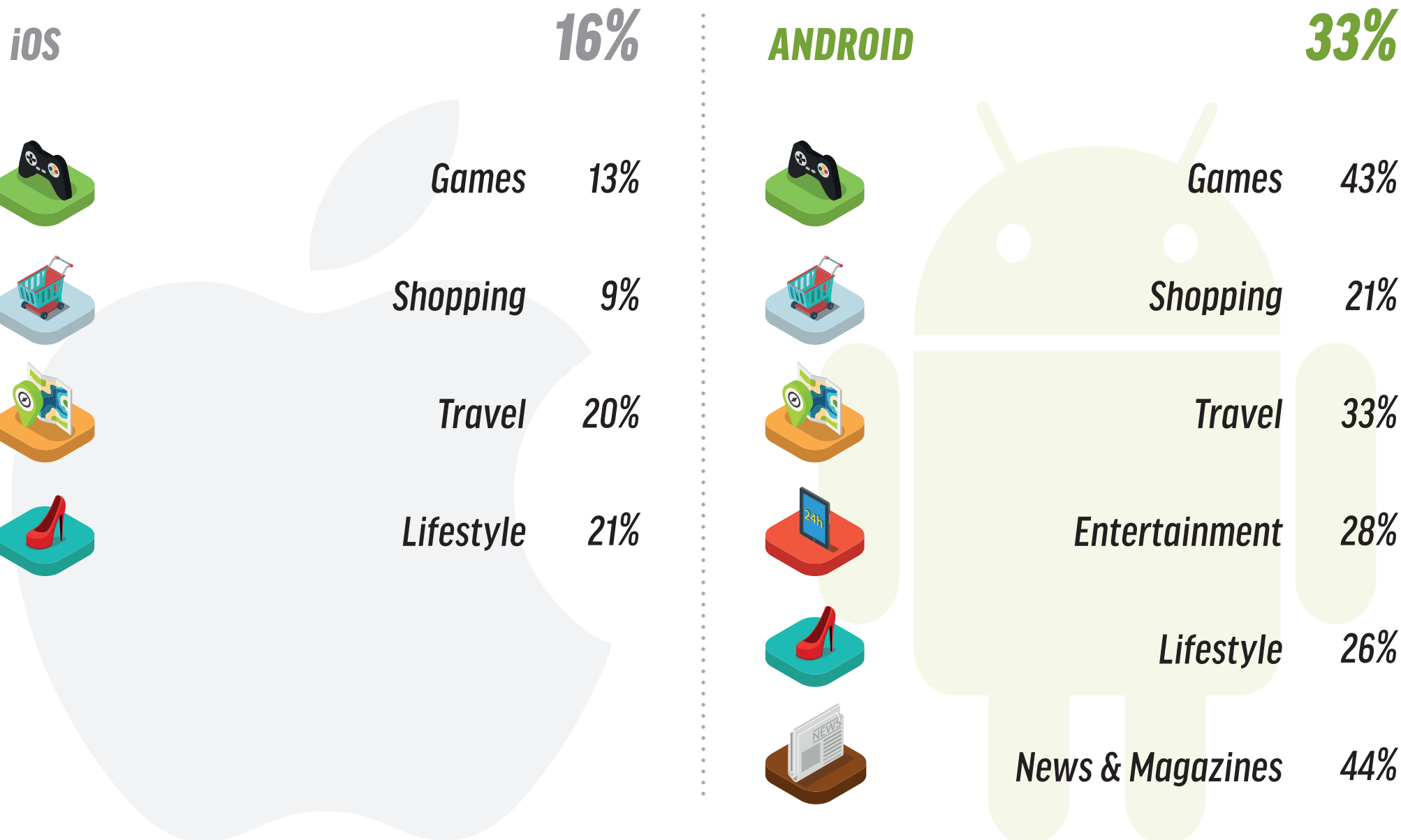
Do not despair! There are many metrics you can measure to optimize properly and prosper. One of the key data points that can improve engagement is the uninstall rate. It offers important insights for your acquisition and re-engagement strategies, in addition to user lifetime value predictions, and valuable information about the app itself and the experience it apparently failed to deliver. Uninstalls are also an increasingly important factor in the app stores' ranking algorithms, so keeping the number as low as possible is crucial for organic app discovery.

For starters, it is important to know how your app compares to other apps and take action accordingly. This report provides uninstall benchmarks by platform, category, and country, in addition to valuable tips on how to reduce your uninstall rate. It is the industry's most comprehensive uninstall report to date, and also includes, for the first time, iOS data. Information on Apple devices is particularly important since the App Store does not provide this data.

METHODOLOGY

- Sample: 20+ million uninstalls of nearly 500 apps globally that measure uninstalls at scale
- Period: September-October 2016
- Definition: Uninstall rate was calculated by dividing the total number of uninstalls by the total number of installs
- Country and / or category uninstall rates were included only when the data was statistically significant for the specific group in question

GLOBAL UNINSTALL BENCHMARKS



KEY OBSERVATIONS

Android users uninstall apps at a rate that's more than double the rate among iOS users. This trend is even more evident when looking at key categories like gaming and shopping where iOS has a rate that's 3x and 2.5x better than Android's, respectively. There are a variety of factors that contribute to the OS gap including:

1. Device storage space: High-end iOS devices have far more space on their phone than the *average* Android device, so there's much less of a need to uninstall apps to free up space.
2. Better iOS apps: The average Android device does not perform as well as the high-end iOS device, which could lead to a sub-par experience and ultimately to higher uninstall rates.
3. Incentivized installs: The scope of rewarded advertising (in which users are offered an incentive to download an app and therefore often uninstall it after receiving the reward) is much higher on Android than iOS.
4. Utility apps an Android-only factor: Highly aggressive and popular utility cleaner / performance enhancement apps pro-actively alert the user suggesting which apps to uninstall. These apps only exist in the Android ecosystem.

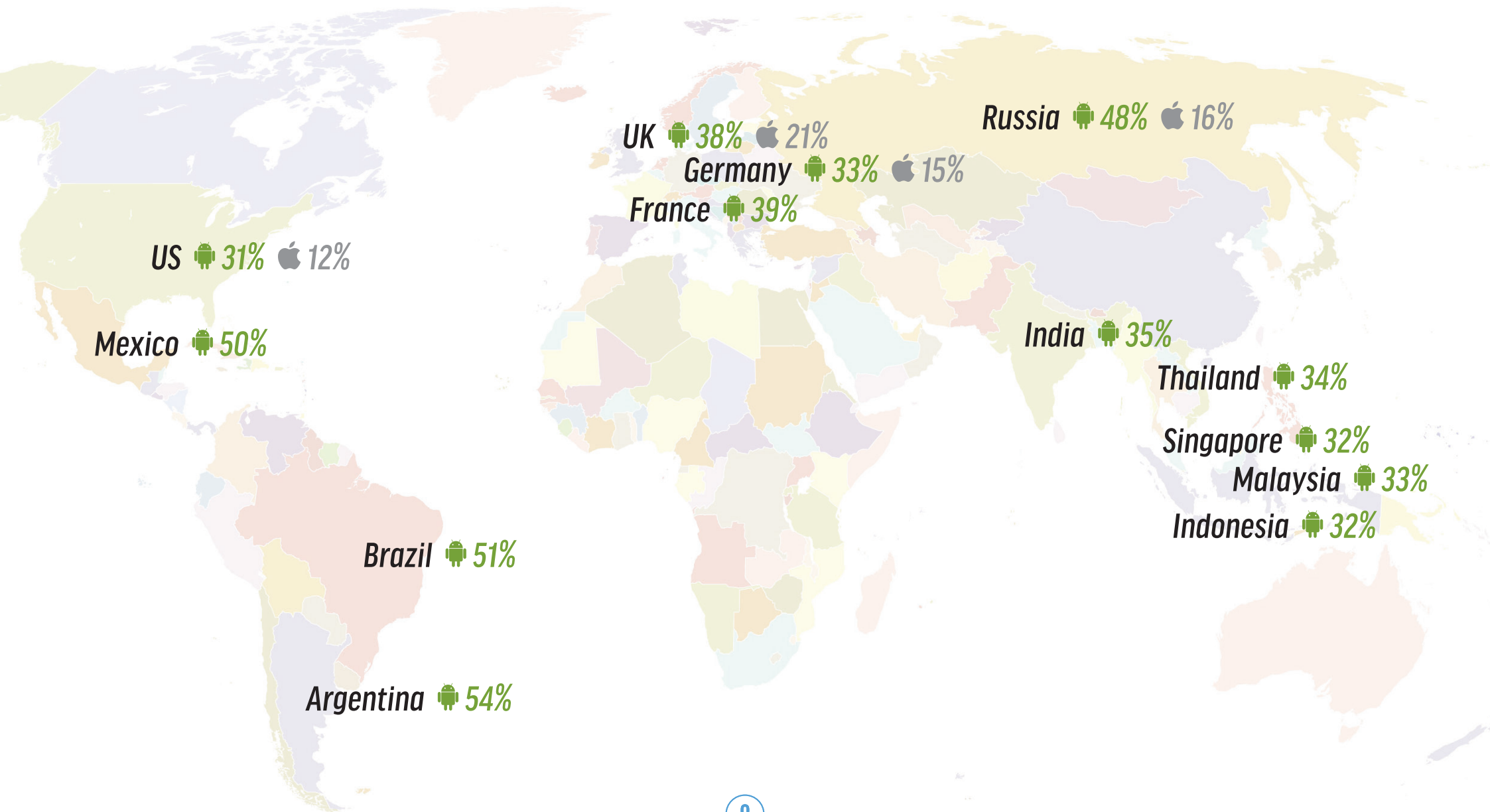
Android gamers quick to uninstall. As the largest category (1 in 5 apps in Google Play), gaming offers truly endless options. As such, there is practically no brand attachment and loyalty. Games are casual in nature and therefore users put very little thought into installing them. The thinking can best be described as "I'll install the game, see if I like it, and if not I'll simply uninstall it." Other reasons include the impact of incentivized installs which is highest for gaming apps, and the fact that the gaming category has a shorter shelf life as players lose interest in games.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Shopping apps enjoy greater brand affinity. The retail category has relatively low uninstall rates on Android and especially iOS. This can be explained by the stronger connection to shopping brands (from offline and / or web experiences). Unlike games, shopping apps don't really "expire" as shopping never dies!

Travel is seasonal. Travel apps have relatively high uninstall rates across both platforms. Since travel is seasonal and does not take place very often (for most), users install apps when they look for their next holiday and once they've completed their booking, they no longer require the app (at least not in the short term).

COUNTRY UNINSTALL BENCHMARKS (From Non-Organic Installs)



KEY OBSERVATIONS

Incentivized installs damage Android's uninstall rate. Since rewarded advertising is far more common on Android, the uninstall rate from non-organic installs in leading markets listed here is much higher than iOS (see page 7 above to read more about why iOS has a lower uninstall rate than Android).

The US has the lowest uninstall rates on both iOS and Android. The Android figure can be explained by the fact that in the US, higher quality phones with significant storage space are common, as they are priced within reach for practically all sectors of the population. It is possible that the 12% iOS uninstall rate is tied to American users' strong affinity for the Apple brand. With [87% customer loyalty](#), iOS users in the US are deeply connected to their devices, and as such, the thought process behind selecting apps to install - and whether to uninstall - is more carefully considered.

Mobile-first vs. mobile-second. Developing countries across Asia, Latin America, and in Russia have different uninstall rates on Android despite the higher percentage of phones with low storage space in these markets. This can be explained by the fact that Asia is a [mobile first](#) region. As such, Asian users are more connected to their phones for everyday activities and are therefore almost 50% less inclined to uninstall apps compared with countries that are not mobile-first.

12 ACTION ITEMS FOR APP MARKETERS



1) Compare your uninstall rate to your platform, category and country. Take advantage of the above data benchmarks to see where you are standing and where you need to improve.

2) Utilize uninstall data to acquire intelligently: Dive deep into your UA data to understand which channels, media sources, campaigns, publishers, countries and creatives delivered loyal users and which delivered high uninstall rates - and shift budgets accordingly. Don't forget to factor ROI in as low quality installs with high uninstall rates also have far lower price tags (but remember a high uninstall rate will also hurt your app's ranking in the app store - so use moderately).

12 ACTION ITEMS FOR APP MARKETERS

3) Remember that iOS and Android users are two different animals. Data shows uninstall rates are much higher on Android than iOS. Although Apple users generate higher revenues, it makes sense to also invest in your Android app because its users are far easier on the uninstall trigger, especially in gaming apps and in countries where limited phone storage is an issue.

4) Re-engage across channels. The best tactic to prevent uninstalls is to ensure a user's ongoing engagement from the get go. The key here is obviously a great product/app that meets the user's expectations. But from a marketer's perspective it means using all available channels - push, email, retargeting, social - to continuously keep the app top of mind and propel users to engage with your app rather than the dozens on their device and numerous others in the app stores. Each channel is important: [86%](#) of emails are opened on a mobile device; a personalized push message doubles retention rates and reduces the likelihood of an uninstall by 15%; and [retargeting](#) is becoming a top priority for marketers.

Strong engagement is driven by many factors, with frequency and relevancy topping the list. Measure, test, and then do it again and again to pinpoint the ideal number of engagements per channel and across channels. Too much and you risk losing the user.

12 ACTION ITEMS FOR APP MARKETERS

5) Define In-App KPI milestones to understand where users drop off. Understand the relationship between usage and in-app funnel progression (e.g. in gaming: tutorial completion, registration, level 5 success, level 10 success, in-app purchase. In e-commerce: category, product, add-to-cart, purchase). It is particularly important to know at which point an active user suddenly becomes inactive so you can encourage them to continue using your app by offering a special promotion, a discount, etc. And on an aggregated level, if you're seeing a significant drop after a certain stage in your funnel, you probably need to change something in the app itself.

6) Measure rich in-app events to enhance relevancy: Granular measurement of in-app activities will help you understand what each user does in-app, add them to a specific segment, and run highly targeted campaigns across email, push and / or retargeting with content that is relevant to the user's segment and personalized based on the user's actions. For example, rather than simply measuring add-to-cart events, you can measure add-to-cart events of users who viewed running shoes priced above \$100. Armed with this knowledge you can re-engage with those users by running with a specific offer for quality running shoes, or even a new Dri fit collection. To further enhance relevancy, show users the exact pair of shoes they added-to-cart. When the content speaks to the user, action often follows!

7) Offer real value to reactivate dormant users and uninstalls: Users need compelling value propositions to come back to an app they've stopped using or uninstalled. The best way to spark their interest and generate action is through discount offers and exclusive content. According to a [Think With Google](#) survey, 30% of users polled said they would be prompted to restart using apps not used or uninstalled if offered a discount or coupon for their next purchase, while 26% said exclusive content would do the trick.

12 ACTION ITEMS FOR APP MARKETERS

8) Ensure deeplinks are in place. Connecting mobile web and app environments is a must if you want to deliver a streamlined user experience. After all, it's what users have come to expect. Any glitch or friction in the experience, and you risk losing users. For example, if a user clicks on your promotion in an email and finds themselves taken to the app store - even if they have the app installed already - will cause frustration. Or if a user clicks a promotional link and has your app open in the home screen instead of a specific screen relevant to the content or promotion, you are not meeting user expectations.

How can we prevent these glitches from happening? By querying the conversion data from your attribution provider so you know which page to show the user when the app opens (this may sound trivial, but it certainly isn't in apps). Conversion data opens the door to personalization as you can customize the user experience based on all the information on the tracking link, so there's no need for a promo code. Whereas deferred deeplinking has become an industry standard, the ability to open a specific screen with the right content in real time (or near real time) is a key aspect that separates the different providers from one another.

9) Use video ads to find the right matches: Joint [AppsFlyer-AppLovin research](#) has shown that video ads are a proven method to acquire loyal users. That's because a video ad can show so much more of what an app has to offer, and as such sets the right expectations. A video helps users better understand if the app in question is right for them or not. With insufficient information, users often install an app only to realize that it was not what they had hoped for - and then the uninstall quickly follows. Don't leave room for surprises!

12 ACTION ITEMS FOR APP MARKETERS

10) Create an informative app store page: Once again, to better set expectations, provide as much information as possible in your app store pages. Using a video, in addition to multiple images of the app and detailed yet easy-to-quickly-read information will help the user understand whether to download the app or not.

11) Listen to your users: Be part of any conversation about your app on social networks, app stores (through ratings and reviews), and communities. Make sure you tackle any negative feedback - both personally to the user in question and within the app itself - to learn from your mistakes and correct them.

12) Have a fantastic app! Although this is mainly aimed for product managers rather than marketers, the best way to reduce an app's uninstall rate... is to have a truly great app. This may seem obvious but if your app does not deliver on all fronts then all the marketing data in the world won't help. That means, first and foremost, performance (rapid loading, no crashes), a great UI/UX that makes everything simple and intuitive - especially while onboarding a new user, non-intrusive in-app ads that do not affect app performance, and delivering what the app promised to deliver!



ABOUT APPSFLYER

AppsFlyer is the leading mobile advertising attribution and marketing analytics platform, allowing app marketers to measure the end-to-end performance of their campaigns across over 1,600 integrated networks from a single real-time dashboard. The company's comprehensive [Active Fraud Solution](#) offers mobile marketers everything they need to actively prevent mobile fraud. Among its 10,000 customers are Alibaba, Baidu, Macy's, Samsung, Playtika, IHG, Trivago, DeNA, and HBO.



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