Thanks for viewing my portfolio!

These blog samples were created for Mobile Action, an app store optimization and user acquisition platform. I handled content writing, sourced visuals, and managed formatting and on-page SEO in WordPress. The goal: attract qualified organic traffic by answering ASO and UA questions with keyword-targeted posts that connect readers to relevant product features and resources.

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How to Run an App Flash Sale Campaign to Boost Downloads

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

Choosing amazing keywords, including great screenshots, writing informative descriptions–all of these optimization strategies are crucial to your app's success.

But don't neglect a totally free, easy-to-implement technique that, when executed well, acts as a supercharged download machine: the App Flash Sale.

Flash sales originated with online businesses as a tactic to move excess inventory and raise a quick profit. They also help with brand awareness, as the deep discounts can promote visibility and create buzz.

But flash sales aren't limited to eCommerce clothing shops and the like. You can use the same price drop strategy, or a zero-cost, "apps gone free" campaign, for your mobile app and reap a wide range of benefits.

Unlike with online shops that sell physical products, you don't risk running out of stock, failing to fulfill orders, or facing shipping difficulties.

Once you understand the ins and outs of App Flash Sales, you can implement them without as much time and effort as some other marketing and app optimization strategies, so there's no reason not to make them a part of your repertoire.

Why App Flash Sale Campaigns Work

The first and most obvious benefit of flash sale campaigns is that you'll see a spike in downloads. It's a basic tenet of consumer behavior: sell at a discount, and sales (or in this case, downloads) increase. Temporarily lowering the price also gives your audience the perception of increased value.

SEE ALSO: [The Complete Guide to Marketing Your iOS or Android App](#)

But if you've drastically lowered your app's price or made it free during the flash sale, a one-time spike in downloads won't necessarily net you amazing profits. Thankfully, you should see long-term benefits due to publicity and ranking increases.

App Flash sales get free publicity due to the thousands of websites and other apps that crawl the app stores for sales. These monitoring sites are followed by users who want good deals, meaning you can get your app, or at least your name and brand, in front of thousands of people without spending any money on advertising.

You can boost this process even more by informing websites like [AppAdvice](#), [AppSaga](#), [iOSnoops](#), [148 Apps](#), and the [AppHookup subreddit](#) about your flash sale.
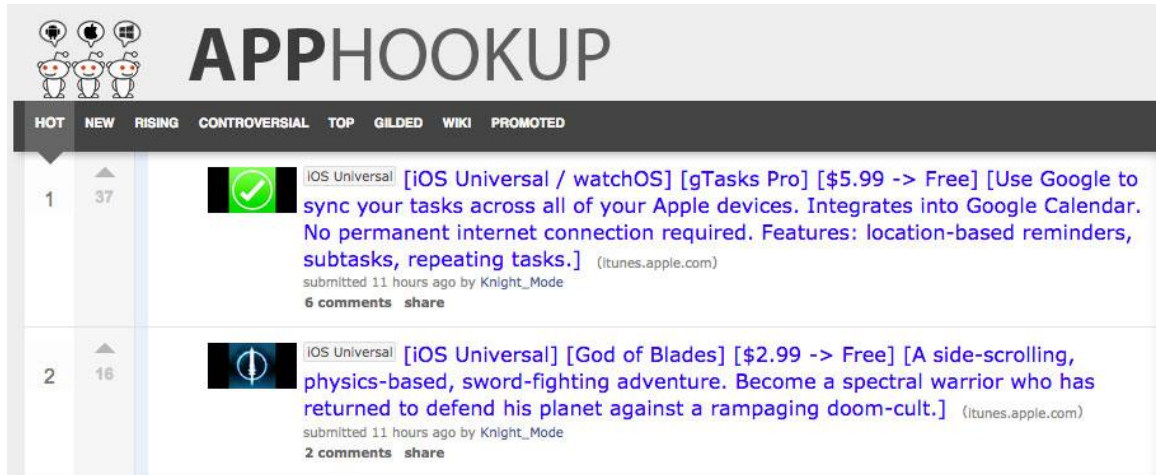
Steve Young of AppMasters [writes that](#) he maximized his coverage by giving the exclusive to [AppAdvice](#), and gained 38,000 downloads in only a couple of days.

He then decided to experiment with what would happen if he hosted a flash sale without notifying any of the aforementioned aggregation sites or really telling anyone at all.

You can probably guess: he only saw a few hundred downloads.

Spreading the word is a crucial part of your flash sale. In addition to notifying the monitoring sites, promote it across your social media and even notify your current users.

Maximizing the amount of downloads during the flash sale will help your app rise in the store rankings, which means your app can reap the rewards of more visibility even after the price goes back to normal.
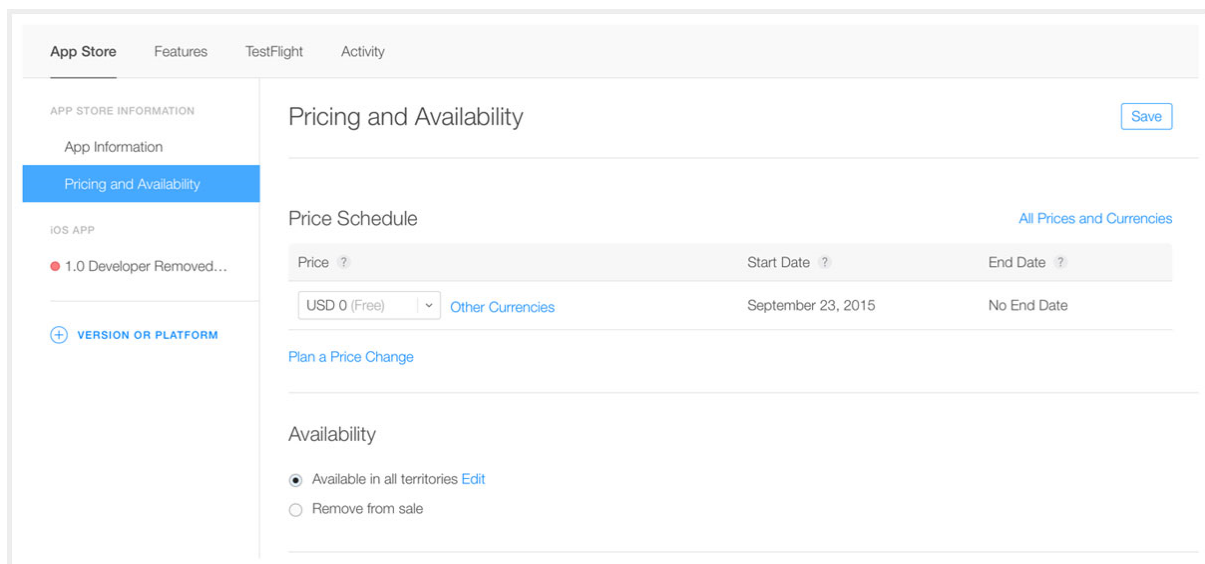
One more tip: if you haven't actually launched your app yet, you may consider setting your initial price higher than the price you first decided on. Why? That will set you up for a first flash sale that makes it appear you're presenting a substantial deal.

While flash sales are relatively simple to understand, you still face risks based on what type of app you're selling, the length of your price drop, and how often you run flash sales. Get a handle on all these details, plus tons of other benefits, with Mobile Action Academy.

Setting Up Your Flash Sale in the App Stores

When you're ready to initiate your flash sale campaign, you can simply adjust your pricing in the App Store and/or Google Play Store.

You can also schedule price tier changes ahead of when you actually want to run your flash sale. This can be useful if you need to do the administrative work ahead of time and you have a specific date, event, or campaign to plan around.

Image: Apple

Consider scheduling your price drop to coincide with something, like a big shopping holiday, or an occasion related to something about your app, like a sports event.

Reap the Rewards of Your App Flash Sale Campaign

A well-executed flash sale campaign is the gift that keeps on giving.

Simply put, increased downloads during your flash sale will help your app rise in the rankings… which in turn, through increased visibility, leads to more downloads!

So even after the initial price drop period of your flash sale is over, it acts as an engine to power more organic downloads over time.

# How Often Should You Run Flash Sales?

There's no exact science to the frequency and duration of flash sales. Some experts recommend dropping prices for only four hours at a time, while choose to keep the sale going for a few days in order to give users a longer chance to download–meaning, essentially, that it depends.

If you want to experiment with **price cycling** over a long period of time (essentially, flash sales on steroids), check out this post on the topic. But keep in mind, the strategy is best for established apps that are not price-sensitive.

You can track your downloads and rankings during and after your App Flash Sale, along with a host of other metrics, with Mobile Action.

Conclusion

App Store Optimization is essential, but it's not the only tool you need in your toolbox. While you shouldn't neglect other strategies for developing and optimizing your mobile apps, App Flash Sale campaigns are an indispensable free tool for moving the needle in the right direction.
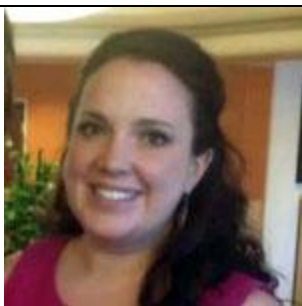
About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

Why Every App Publisher Must Use Long Tail ASO Keywords

by Guest Author - Leave a Comment

So you've dedicated a lot of time to creating a well-researched, robust keyword strategy for your app and you think that you have mastered App Store Optimization (ASO). But you're still not seeing the results you'd like.

Your app isn't ranking very high in the app store's search results, and downloads are lackluster.

What are you missing?

There's another essential component to throw into the mix: long-tail keywords.

By including the right long-tail keywords in your ASO strategy, you will see better rankings and more downloads.

…and by continually refining this strategy over time, you can **dominate** over the long haul.

In this post, we will define what long-tail keywords are, how to find them and what you need to do keep improving your keyword rankings.

Long-Tail ASO Keywords Explained
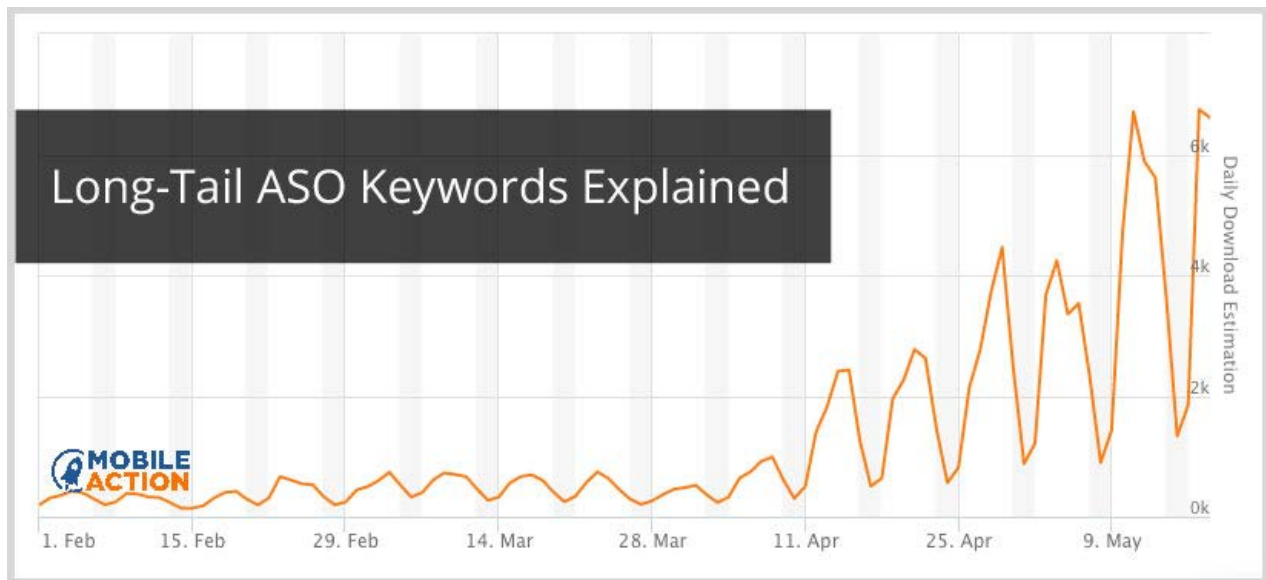
What Are Long-Tail Keywords?

The principle of the "long-tail" applies across multiple channels and industries.

Quick review, in case you're not familiar with the term in ASO: long-tail keywords are simply search phrases that are more specific than the most commonly searched keywords.

Why bother with long-tail keywords, if they're less common?

Good question.

It may seem counter-intuitive, but in aggregate, long-tail keywords still represent a significant number of searches – up to 80%.

Long-tail keywords also represent a less competitive area than the most common keywords, which can allow you to edge out other apps.

In other words, using long-tail keywords is about getting the right views, that are more likely to result in user downloads.

For example, if your app helps high school students practice vocabulary in order to prepare for standardized tests, the keyword "education" might come to mind. But "education" is going to be a difficult term to be competitive for, and pretty generic.

There's a lot of room for interpretation and deviation with just "education." Is it bartender education or SAT education?

A long-tail keyword is a more specific, multi-word phrase, representing more exactly what the potential user is looking for.

Something like "SAT vocabulary word prep" would be a good keyword idea. And ultimately, it will be easier to rank for, resulting in more downloads.

Note that length alone, is not a definitive factor for long-tail keywords. Consider instead the specificity of the keyword. Does it include modifiers like adjectives – descriptive terms, places, brand names, and so on? Then it's more likely to be long-tail.

It's also important for long-tail keywords to be specific enough to be relevant.

Let's take that example of the vocabulary app for high schoolers. "Education" may be an appropriate keyword, but that doesn't mean that every long-tail keyword associated with education will be effective to use.

"Spelling words for elementary school" may be an easy term to rank for, and it's related to education, but it's likely not relevant to the audience for the users looking for an app to help high schoolers prep for vocabulary tests.

Think about the intent of your potential users: what will they be searching for just before downloading your app?

How to Find Long-Tail Keywords

In order to find long-tail keywords, you'll have to know your users well: who and where they are, and what type of words they use when searching for your app or others like yours.

Before committing to your long-tail keyword strategy, consider user intent. More specific and relevant search terms translate into higher likelihood of download, because they represent a much better match to what a person was really searching for.

As mentioned earlier, some keywords may be easy to associate with your app's general category, and may seem easy to rank for, but are not actually relevant to your app's content or your potential users. Someone won't be searching "spelling words for elementary school" when they want an app to help high schoolers prep for standardized tests.

Use something like "SAT vocabulary word prep" instead, because it is more relevant and more closely aligns with your user's intent.

While user intent and relevance are the key criteria to consider when choosing long-tail keywords, you also have to consider keyword ranking difficulty and traffic volume. You'll notice that less specific keywords tend to be more difficult.

If you're really feeling stumped about what kind of search terms your users might type to find your app, start by using Mobile Action's *Keyword Suggestions* module. It will show you keywords that your competitors are using.

Notice that Mobile Action provides long-tail keywords.

Some competitors only provide single-word keyword suggestions, which is much less useful because they are very competitive and not specific.

Top Keywords of Clash of Clans

Keywords	Search Score	Chance	Total Apps	Current Rank	
actuation	33	100%	28872	1	⊕
cls	42	37%	7133	1	⊕
clash	49	42%	6696	1	⊕
game castle	28	46%	5080	1	⊕
clans	43	43%	2787	1	⊕
coc	52	53%	1776	1	⊕

Competitor Keywords

Keywords	Search Score	Chance	Total Apps	Current Rank	
war action	-	-	-	-	⊕
puzzle dragon	-	-	-	-	⊕
aar	-	-	-	-	⊕
phone games	-	-	-	-	⊕
game offline	-	-	-	-	⊕

You can sign up for a free trial of Mobile Action and give this a try.

Next, you can use Mobile Action's *Keyword Research* module to find long-tail keyword ideas that are related to any keyword idea that you have. Simply type in a keyword and the module will return a set of related keyword ideas.

Related Keywords ⊘   + Track All

castle

Keyword	Search Score	Chance	Total Apps	Current Rank
castle	54	49%	6106	10

+ castle clash + castle story + castle + castle games + castle story™ + castle defense + castle branch
+ castle crashers + castle wars + castle crafter + castlevania + castleville + castle of illusion
+ castle of illusion starring mickey mouse + castle doombad + castle raid + castle age + castle age hd
+ castle branch, inc. + castle build + castle builder + castle cash + castle cats + castle clash 2
+ castle clash : أساطير الدمار + castle clash : كاستل كلاش + castle clash free + castle clash hack
+ castle clash: age of legends + castle clashers + castle craft + castle crafters + castle crash + castle crasher
+ castle crush + castle crushers + castle defence + castle defender + castle defense 2 + castle defense games
+ castle doombad: free to slay + castle game + castle games free + castle maps + castle master
+ castle master 3d + castle miner z + castle raid 2 + castle royal

You will also notice that there is a *Search Score* and *Chance Score* on this screen, along with total apps and current rank. These metrics will help you decide which keywords are best for your app.

To learn more about how to use these metrics to select the right keywords, read this post.

Finding the sweet spot between user intent/relevance, difficulty, and traffic potential is crucial.

But never sacrifice relevance.

In the end, you should select long-tail keywords you have a good chance of ranking in the top 10 for.

Those are just two of the six modules inside Mobile Action's ASO Intelligence product. To give them a try, be sure to signup for a free account.

Long-Tail Strategy for the Long Term: Research and Refine

Keyword optimization is not a "set it and forget it" endeavor.

Once you've implemented your long-tail keyword strategy, be sure to track your keyword rankings regularly. Use Mobile Action's *Keyword Tracking* module to track your keywords.

It may take a little while to see the benefits of using long-tail keywords, but don't let that scare you off. As explained here, long-tail keywords represent a more intentional, download-ready user base than short-tail keywords.

It's also important not to try to do too much at once. If you find a certain long-tail keyword doesn't work well after a couple months, discard it and on to the next one. When you've jumped up in the rankings for a certain long-tail keyword (congrats!), conquer the next one on your list.

Final Thoughts on Long-Tail ASO Keywords

App Store Optimization isn't a one-size-fits-all recipe. In order maximize your downloads, you'll need a balanced strategy that includes keyword optimization, strong visuals, and great content.

But with long-tail keywords, you'll be well-equipped to rank higher and get more downloads.

About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

Should You Target Singular or Plural Keywords for ASO?

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

Singular vs. plural: no, this isn't grammar class, but this is a crucial concept for you to consider when choosing the best set of keywords for app store optimization.

You may have assumed that using just singular keywords was covering your bases, e.g. using "kid" has you covered for "kids," too, and vice versa. After all, Apple recommends avoiding plural keywords when you've already used the singular form.

But many app developers and marketers report that their apps rank differently for singular vs. plural keywords. So which is more important, the singular or the plural form of your keyword? With limited space, which one should you include?

The answer isn't always straightforward, so let's break it down.

Do You Really Need to Consider Both Singular and Plural Keywords?

First, let's look at that recommendation coming directly from Apple: don't use plurals when you've already used the singular form of the keyword.

But is this actually a good strategy? Note that the recommendation doesn't state explicitly that app store algorithms actually will account for (or rank on) the plural form if you've used the singular form.

You can test this out quickly by going to the app store of your choice. Search for "garden" and observe the top ten results; then type "gardens" and do the same

thing. The results change, right? You may not notice *any* of the same results. The same holds true for languages other than English, as well.

So the advice from Apple could simply be about saving you space in a field where that's limited. But it certainly doesn't give you the best tactic to rank highly in the App Store and/or the Google Play Store.

Treat Singulars and Plurals as Different Keywords

The simplest advice we can give, which obviously differs from Apple's, is to treat singulars and plurals as distinct, different keywords.

This doesn't cover whether or not you should target both forms, or which form to target if you should only pick one, but when you're considering your keyword strategy, start here: consider both singular and plural forms as individually and uniquely as if they didn't share any of the same letters.

Prioritize the Keyword You Want to Rank Higher For

Now that you're considering singulars and plurals as separate (and not always equal) keywords, let's look at which ones you should pick for the best app store optimization strategy.

In a perfect world you could target the singular and plural forms of each keyword you choose. But realistically, you have limited space. So utilize some of the tried and true ASO recommendations and modify them for your singular vs. plural choice, such as:

- **Determine which keyword has the lower competition, and focus on that one**. If they have equally low competition, employ different criteria to choose or focus on both.

- **Choose keywords with Search Scores of 40 or higher**. If one form of your keyword is lower, you can choose to discard it for now.
- **Check on your keywords regularly**–both singular and plural–and update your app's title and keywords at least twice a month.

As with all things ASO, try to get in the mind of your ideal user. What word will he or she more likely search for–the singular or the plural? Choose the form of the keyword you want to rank higher on, and optimize for that.

Singular vs. plural in non-English language localization

Another component to consider in the singular vs. plural keyword debate is that not all plurals are as simple as adding an -s or -es to the end of the word. It makes sense that you'd get different results for "mice" compared to "mouse," right?

This concept gets even more complicated when it comes to localization. As Chris Kiertz [writes for Localytics](#), "Now, for languages other than English, don't count on the algorithm to combine the forms."

Chris ran a test on the App Store using all English and French keywords for two different apps, and compared the data when looking at both the singular and plural forms. He found that the French algorithm was not as advanced as the English one when it came to accounting for plural forms. So it's especially important to treat singulars and plurals as separate keywords in different languages.

Conclusion

App store algorithms don't treat singular and plural keywords the exact same way; rankings differ for the different forms. So you shouldn't blindly use only singular or only plural forms of your keywords, nor should you necessarily use both.

How do you choose which form of the keyword to use to best optimize your app? The same way you choose your other keywords. Research and perform

competitive analysis with Mobile Action, and incorporate your keyword choices, whether they're singular or plural or both, into all the relevant places in your app.

About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

How to Get Better Backlinks for Google Play Store Success

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

The relationship between App Store Optimization (ASO) and Search Engine Optimization (SEO) might not be too obvious, at first.

They're clearly different strategies for different products and markets, but there are overlapping components. Technically speaking, there are different algorithms and methodologies governing the ranking systems for search engines and app stores.

Apple doesn't incorporate anything from outside the App Store in order to rank apps. **However, the Google Play Store does incorporate some SEO into its store rankings.**

This is no surprise, as Google is the king of search engines and virtually all SEO strategies focus solely on Google rankings. Because Google's ranking factors are proprietary and ever-changing, good SEO strategies involve a lot of research, testing, and continual tweaking and modification.
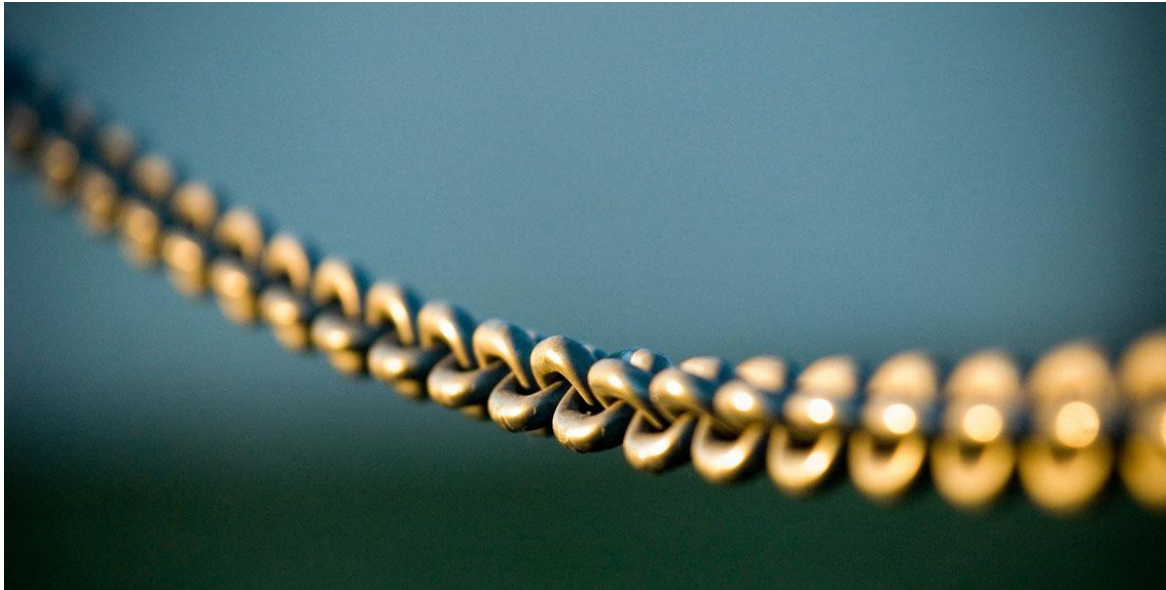
Sound familiar?

It should, because good ASO involves these techniques as well.

So for the Google Play Store, the better your web SEO is, the higher you will rank in the store.

There's one clear place to start when it comes to tackling your app's SEO opportunities in order to rank higher: **backlinking**.

SEE ALSO: [The Ultimate Guide to ASO for the App Store](#)

What are Backlinks?

There are a multitude of factors to consider for good SEO:

- Quality keyword-rich content
- Readability
- Social media shares
- ..and the list goes on

But for your app, a crucial factor is good backlinks.

Backlinks are simply incoming links from other websites.

For example, when we here at Mobile Action link to other sites in our blog entries, those pages receive a tiny boost in SEO credibility. The relevancy and quality of the linking page also factors into how much of a "boost" that link gives.

These weighted elements are part of Google's algorithm called [PageRank](#).

For ranking in the Play Store, rather than a web search engine, the backlinks that matter are website links to your Play Store URL.

The higher the quality, quantity, and relevance of your backlinks, the better you will rank in the store.

How Do You Get Backlinks?

If you're just starting out in app development or marketing, you might be scratching your head right now thinking, *how do I get backlinks?*

Experienced SEO strategists will recommend focusing on quality content when it comes to link building. In the past, getting better backlinks often involved link exchanges and even paid placements.

But the best brands now use good, useful content to build better backlinks.

How does this work?

It can seem like more of an art than a science.

If you don't already have your own website or blog, start there, and begin linking to your own Play Store URL. Ideally, in the midst of content that is informative or entertaining to your reader (e.g. not just "hey, come check out my new app!"). Use your full Play Store URL in your social media profiles, like your Twitter bio, and try searching for some app directories to submit your app to.

Great content also attracts others whose sites have more ranking authority than yours, and that's where the magic happens. If big brands or influential people link to your app's Play Store URL, you'll see a rise in your rankings. This may take a little time and luck, but you can better your chances with marketing promotion activities like interacting with those influencers on social media, writing guest blog posts, and submitting press releases when you hit major milestones.

Backlinks are a key element of ASO, but not the only one. If you haven't invested time and effort into the key elements of ASO like a well-written description, your backlinks may help you raise in the rankings but won't necessarily result in

downloads and engaged users. So be sure to [focus on your ASO strategy holistically](#).

How Do You Measure an App's Backlinks?

Monitoring your backlinks is just one of the key metrics you should keep track of.

Luckily, it's a fairly manageable and straightforward data point to track.

First, [set up some Google alerts](#) for yourself: the name of your app, your own name, maybe even a key phrase you're targeting as a keyword. These alerts won't necessarily tell you when you get a backlink, but they will give you insight into online coverage you're getting. If you catch a good mention without a link, you can reach out directly to the poster and ask for one–which may turn into more opportunities.

You should also use link research tools like [Moz Open Site Explorer](#) (OSE). With OSE, you can "research backlinks, find link-building opportunities and discover potentially damaging links."

Essentially, you'll enter your Google Play Store URL and get a variety of metrics around valuable inbound links and linking domains…AKA backlinks.

Note the Inbound Link data from Facebook's Android App Google Play Store URL:

Some of their top backlinks come from external news and blog sites, but some are from Facebook's own "newsroom" site.

Can Backlinks Actually Hurt Your App's Rankings?

You may never run into this problem–and if not, lucky you–but it's important to know that irrelevant or even malicious links can hurt your app's ranking in the Google Play Store.

You could have a non-relevant site repeatedly linking to you, or even worse, maybe a competitor figures out a way to get your app linked by an adult or vice-related site. Again, this isn't a problem that most app developers and marketers run into, but if it happens to you, there is some recourse.

Google created the Disavow Tool in order to prevent third-party links from negatively affecting the website (or in this case, your app) being linked to. Basically, you'll be asking Google not to incorporate specific links into their ranking algorithm.

This is a tool you should only use when you've exhausted other options, like reaching out and asking directly for a link to be removed, and only when you actually know that the link is causing negative effects in your ranking–another good reason to keep close track of your backlinks and your app's performance.

The steps to use the Google disavow tool can be found [here](). If you've unfortunately received a toxic backlink, be sure to take advantage of the tool, but be responsible about it.

How do you improve your app's backlinks?

Once you start to track your app's backlinks, you can determine their quality and relevance based on your own knowledge of your app's audience, category, and competition.

Improving your backlinks involves continually putting the time and effort into the same strategies that you used to get backlinks in the first place. If you find that you're receiving a lot of links from niche blogs, keep pitching ideas to bloggers and writing guests posts. If you started seeing a boost in your Play Store rankings once your first press release came out, plan press releases into your editorial calendar.

There's a saying:

"Success is the sum of small efforts – repeated day in and day out."

You'll soon come to find how true that is in regards to backlink improvement.

Final Thoughts on Backlinks

For Play Store apps, including some outside-the-store strategies like backlinking can have a big impact on in-store results. This is a strategy specific only to

Google, as the iOS App Store doesn't incorporate any influences from outside that store.

The continual effort you put into securing and improving good quality, relevant backlinks from across the web will help cement your app in the rankings.

Let the downloads begin!

About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

How to Discover and Interpret Vital ASO Metrics For Your App

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

Between implementing a variety of ASO strategies, researching your competitors, and of course actually coding and developing, there's a lot to consider when getting an app ready for production.

Don't let your momentum slow once you've actually launched your app. Tracking key metrics about your app is a crucial part of your strategy to ensure that your app doesn't just start strong, but has continued success over the long-term.

Gaining insight based on solid data will allow you to react, refine, and adjust in a more informed and intelligent way, and that spells success for your app.

This post covers all the key metrics for your app that you should be tracking right out of the gate: Search Score, Chance Score, number of competing apps, and Visibility Score. (And if you don't track them yet, start now!)

To gain access to these metrics, sign up for a free Mobile Action account. Read on to learn what each means and how to use the data to reach your audience and get more downloads.

Search Score

Search Score, viewable next to each keyword you're tracking on your Dashboard, is one of the most important data points when it comes to your app's ASO strategy, but it's also an easy one to misinterpret.

You see, Search Score measures the number of relative searches for a given keyword, with a number from 0 to 100. The reason this can be a tricky metric is that higher Search Scores may seem to imply that those are the ones you should target first, or that you should target your keywords in order of Search Score.

SEE ALSO: [How to Get Top Charts App Download Estimates for iOS](#)
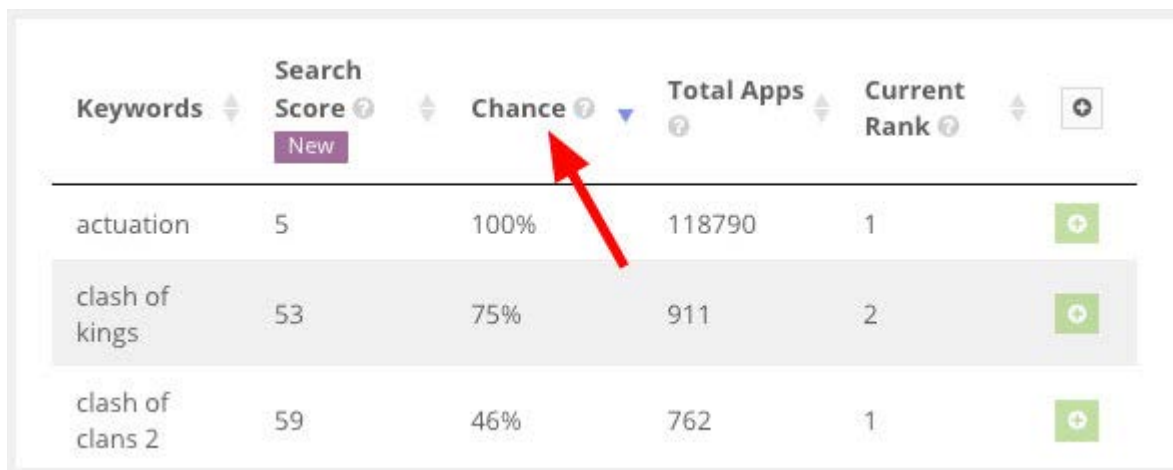
But it's not quite that simple.

The highest-ranking Search Score keywords are the most difficult to rank for because they also usually indicate the most competitive keywords. So you could

spend your energy attacking a few keywords with high Search Scores and still end up ranking low enough that your audience may never see your app.

It's a better strategy to target good long-tail keywords and some intelligently-chosen keywords with good (but maybe not the best) Search Scores. In fact, you should balance your Search Score tracking and decision-making with the other metrics in this post.

Once you've picked your targeted keywords based on these techniques, be sure to check your keyword rankings at least once a week, if not more frequently.

Chance Score

Keywords	Search Score ⊘ New	Chance ⊘ ▼	Total Apps ⊘	Current Rank ⊘	⊙
actuation	5	100%	118790	1	⊙
clash of kings	53	75%	911	2	⊙
clash of clans 2	59	46%	762	1	⊙

Chance Score is a percentage score based on Mobile Action's estimate of your chances of being in the top ten for a particular keyword in your app's specific category.

This is a powerful metric.

The % Chance Score is determined based on keyword analysis, but also provides measurement specific to you based on your linked iTunes account, so don't neglect this step.

Once you have both the Search Score and the Chance Score for a potential keyword you want to rank for (or, ideally, a collection of keywords that you're

tracking over time), you can use both scores to determine which keywords to attack.

For example, you may discover that a keyword has a high Search Score but a very low % Chance Score. That one is easy to discard, move down your priority list, or modify with some additional words to make it a long-tail keyword.

Or vice versa: you find a keyword that has a low Search Score but a high % Chance Score. Depending on the circumstances, and how many other keywords you have with a potential for ranking on, you may choose to go with this one.

Just as with Search Score, track your keywords' Chance Scores week over week so you can have the data to back up your decisions to either continue to target the same keywords, or make adjustments.

# Number of Competing Apps

Your dashboard also provides a **Total Apps** number–in other words, a metric that shows the number of competing apps for a given keyword.

Gauging the competition is a big part of ASO; in fact, a deeper competitive analysis element should be a part of your overall strategy. But the Total Apps figure can be a good barometer for your keyword targeting, especially when

Search Score and/or % Chance Score don't provide you with a decisive push for one keyword over another.

Keep your finger on the pulse of your app's performance by tracking your Search Score, Chance Score, and number of competing apps regularly.

Visibility Score
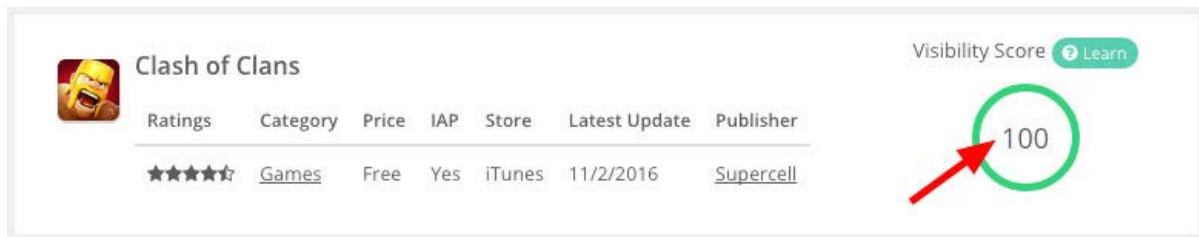
Mobile Action invented the app Visibility Score in order to track one of the most important things about your app: how discoverable your app is in the app store(s).

No one will download your app if they can't see or find it–that's common sense, right? But quantifying visibility was difficult in the past, and thus figuring out how to actually make your app more visible in the app store was a tricky, overly subjective endeavor.

With the Visibility Score for iOS and the Google Visibility Score for Android apps, you'll get a score between 0 and 100 based on Mobile Action's proprietary algorithm.

The Visibility Score incorporates keyword performance, category ranking performance, and review/rating performance–three areas that significantly influence your app's discoverability and thus overall performance.

It's important to have a well-rounded strategy to improve your Visibility Score, rather than targeting only one thing (say, category ranking) at the expense of the rest. The Visibility Score keeps you "honest" in this regard, since it measures multiple parts of your performance.

So what should you do in order to get a higher number?

Improving your ASO will in turn improve your Visibility Score.

And in fact, using each of the three previous metrics described here–Search Score, Chance Score, and number of competing apps–can have a big impact on Visibility Score.

Using those pieces of information to decide which keywords to target, and continually tracking and adjusting based on the data changing over time, will impact the three areas that impact your Visibility Score.

Conclusion

As you can see, the key metrics for tracking your targeted keywords and app's performance are all part of the same ecosystem. It's one that includes all the best App Store Optimization strategies, too.

So be sure to include tracking and analysis as part of your regular routine. Remember to check your app reviews too!

You can get our complete ASO guides here: App Store // Google Play

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About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

How to Take Advantage of iMessage App Opportunities

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

Until 2016, iMessage was simply the default instant messaging service on Apple products…synonymous with "texting" for many. Its distinctive blue and white bubbles are familiar to even non-iPhone, non-Mac users.

But nowadays, iMessage has a new feature that takes it from simple messaging service to a new frontier for both users and developers: **iMessage apps**.

According to Apple…

With the Messages framework, you can build a standalone iMessage app, or an extension to an iOS app that lets users interact with your iOS app without leaving Messages. Consider the capabilities of each option as you plan your app.

This means that app creators have the option to develop an app that lives within iMessage at all times, or one that originates from outside but integrates with the service so users can interact with the app from within iMessage.

Some examples of popular iMessage app styles include rich content sharing, message stickers and reactions, and even payments.

So why should developers and marketers care about capitalizing on this new platform and creating iMessage apps?

Opportunities Abound With iMessage Apps

With the release of iOS 10 came a lot of buzz about new features coming to iMessage, including apps. And for good reason: this development was a significant change to the simple messaging system, allowing users to interact and collaborate in new ways, and also access multimedia content without leaving iMessage.

Apps make iMessage a richer and stickier experience for users, so it's worth your time to take part in the opportunity and get your app on the iMessage platform.

There's a wide range of possibilities with iMessage apps. Simple options, like [sticker packs](#), can be created without a lot of development time and have a lot of potential for branding.

Games, too, are hugely popular and dominated the App Store within the first few weeks of iMessage Apps' existence.

Another big opportunity comes with some of the other categories (social networking, travel) and types of app (think: new types of collaboration and interaction), where competition may be lower and the audience's attention may be easier to grab. And existing apps of many categories have seen success from developing extensions to iMessage, like an integrated sticker pack.

Apps Taking Advantage of the iMessage Market

The most successful apps in the fast-growing (but still young) iMessage App Store seem to have one of two qualities:

- Usefulness
- Novelty

Useful iMessage apps include anything that makes life a little easier, and often that means an iMessage extension of an existing successful app. For example, [Venmo](#) and [Square Cash](#) are successful mobile payment apps in their own right, but their iMessage integrations mean that sending money to friends is not only as easy as a text, but can actually take place inside of a text messaging platform.
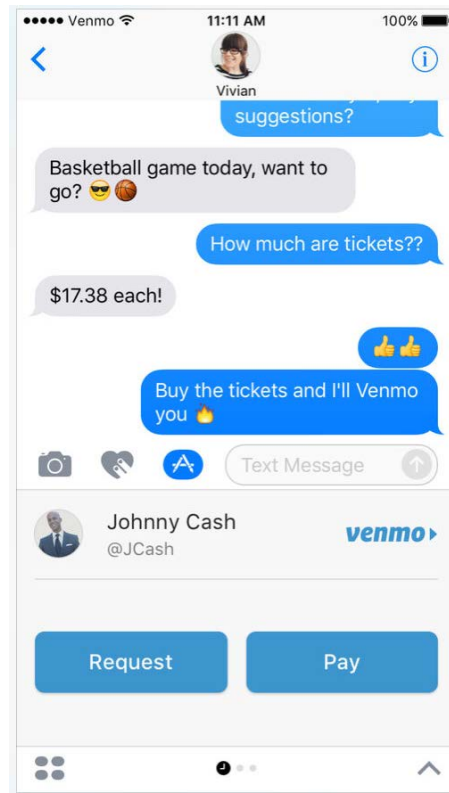
Sending cash via Venmo's iMessage app

Other iMessage apps have gained success simply for being fun and entertaining.

One of the biggest early stars was JibJab, which opted into the platform early on with its personalized video-making service. In essence it's an amusing way to send personalized, silly videos to friends, but the novelty of being able to create and send the videos without using iMessages has helped it gain a lot of traction.
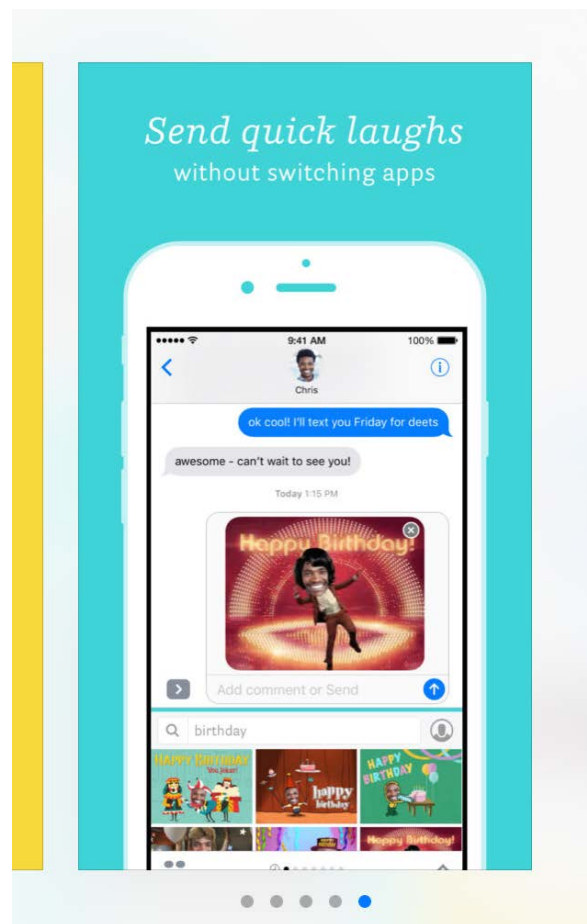
Fun with JibJab's iMessage app

New apps are being added every day, so take a look for yourself. You can access the App Store for iMessage by following [these steps](#).

Ready to jump into the fray?

How to get started with iMessage apps

If you're a developer, start with [Apple's videos and documentation](#). There you will begin to learn how to build with Xcode and iOS 10, and start to understand some of the guidelines for design and user experience.

You also need to decide whether you'll build an iMessage-only app, or create an extension of a standalone app that integrates with iMessage.

There are pros and cons to both, so consider which category your goals and your app's potential capabilities align better with.

After you've finished the development stage of your app, you'll need to consider some of the same strategic pieces as you would with any app: app icon design, targeted keywords (limited to 100 characters in total for iMessage apps), app preview videos, and so on.

Then you'll submit to the iMessage App Store, and unlock new opportunities with this new platform!

Here's a roundup of some resources to get you going:

- iMessage app submission FAQs – get a detailed overview of iMessage apps and sticker packs in the form of frequently asked questions
- iOS Human Interface Guidelines: iMessage Apps and Stickers – learn what to consider when creating an app specifically for users within iMessage
- Apple Developer Forums – connect with other app developers and experts in creating iOS 10 iMessage apps

The landscape of iMessage apps with likely shift over the next months and years, with new successful apps rising to the top and new optimization strategies to uncover.

To stay up to date with all of the latest strategies, be sure to join Mobile Action Academy.

About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

24 Resources for App Icon Design Inspiration

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

Let's face it: developers aren't always the best designers.

Maybe you're one of the lucky few who's blessed with talent in both areas. But if you need a little help in the design department, there's nothing to be ashamed of.

We rounded up two dozen of the best design resources resources to get a little help with your icon, from inspiration to execution, as well as a few bonus destinations for getting feedback on the design you do come up with.

Jump right in!

# Galleries for App Icon Design Inspiration
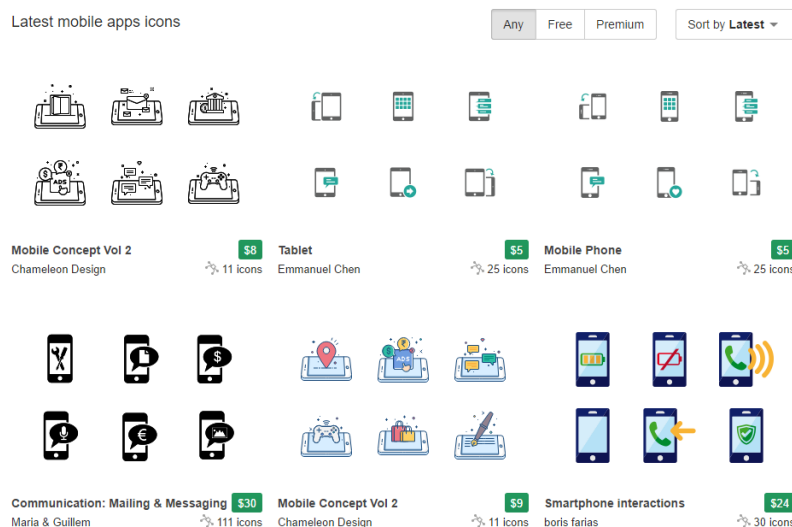
Iconfinder's mobile app icons gallery

So you're just getting started and you need to browse.

Try these app icon design inspiration gallery sites for paging through design sets and icon possibilities in the same manner you'd browse a catalog for new shoes. You need to see a lot of options in order to zero in on a style you like. Bonus: if you're truly inspired, you can often purchase the designs.

- Iconfinder
- iOSpirations
- Iconsfeed
- Mobile Tuxedo App Icon Gallery

Roundups
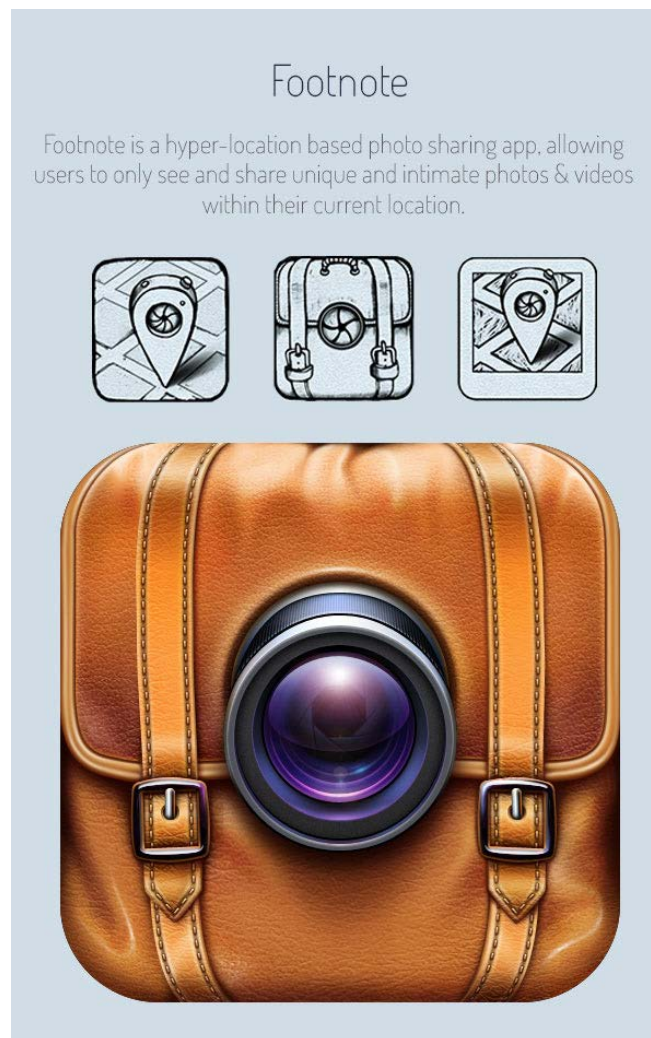
From Design You Trust's Realistic iOS App Icons & Sketching for Inspiration

SEE ALSO: The Ultimate Guide to ASO for Google Play

Need a little more curated inspiration than you'll find from the gallery sites?

The creators of these icon roundups have done the work for you to narrow down some of the most beautiful, detailed designs out there. Unlike the galleries, these showcases feature many examples from existing designers and existing apps. (So don't steal them.)

- Showcase of 40 Insanely Detailed iOS Icon Designs
- 38 Beautiful iOS App Icon Designs For Your Inspiration
- Stunning App Icon Designs
- 35 Most Beautiful App Icon Designs For Your Inspiration
- 20 Flat Mobile Icons Designs for Your Inspiration
- Realistic iOS App Icons & Sketching for Inspiration
- 50 Beautiful Mobile App Icons for Design Inspiration

Icon Advice

The 5 Core Aspects

Now let's take a look at some of the best practices of app icon design. I'll discuss each of my '5 core aspects of app icon design', give tips on how to improve each aspect and show off some examples of how I've worked with that quality. A lot of these examples will be based around my own work. That's not because I feel like it is the best or only way to illustrate these things, but they have the added benefit of me knowing what thoughts went into the process. When going through the aspects, try imagining icons that you like and how the individual aspects take shape in the icons on your homescreen. Let's get started.
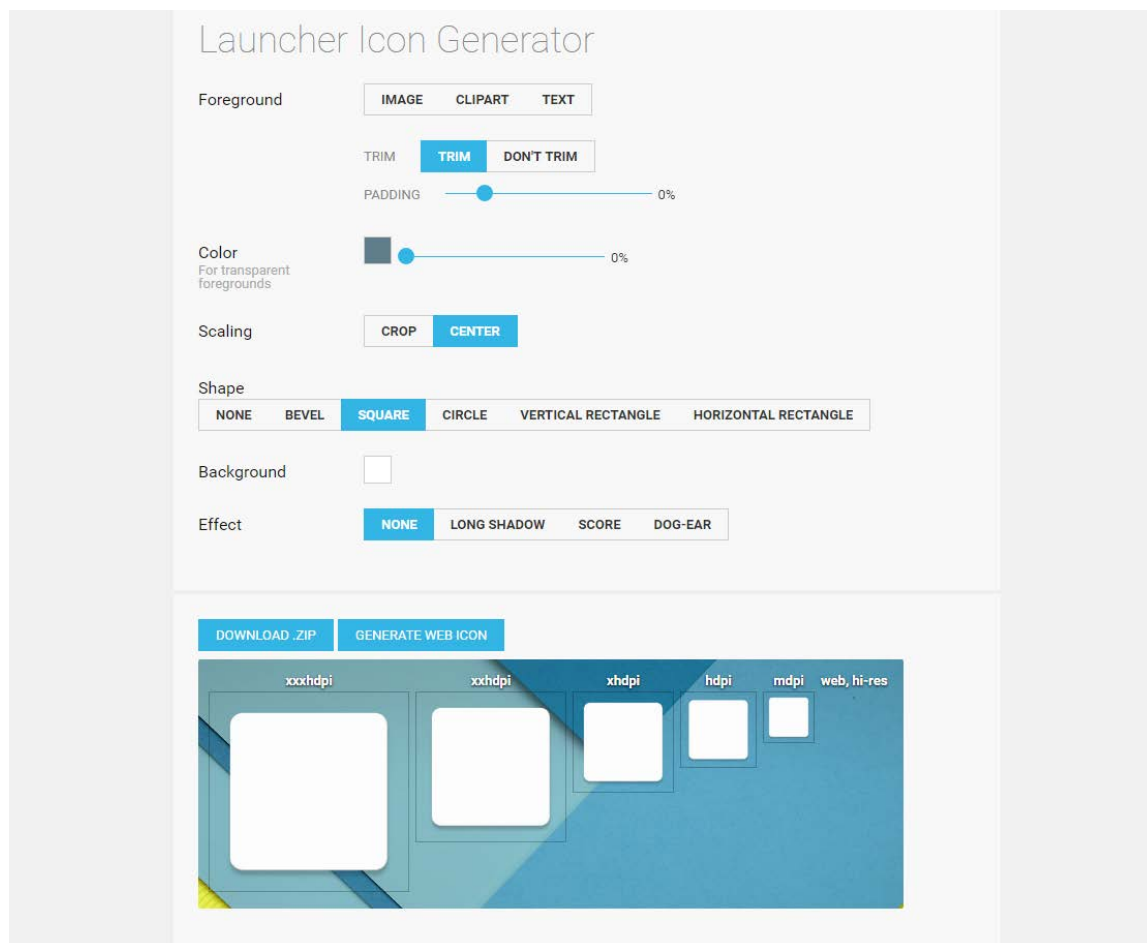
1. Scalability

Maybe browsing isn't your thing… and that's fine. Many of us may feel inspired but have trouble translating that into a design that actually works. These articles give concrete, actionable tips for creating your icon, from general design best practices to actual step-by-step instructions for creating icons in Photoshop.

- Design a Successful App Icon in 11 Steps
- App Icon Design: six tips from Apple on how to create better icons
- How to Design Better App Icons
- Create an app icon using Photoshop in 20 easy steps
- 10 Tips for Designing Icons That Don't Suck
- How to Create Icons for Your Android App

Templates and Generators

*Android Asset Studio's Launcher Icon Generator*

You're ready to put metaphorical pen to paper? Great! Unlike with other artistic projects, you do have some specs and requirements to hit.

These template and generator resources can help you ensure you've got the right sizes and formats for your icon.

- Apply Pixels
- MakeAppIcon
- Android Asset Studio
- Iconion

Get Feedback on Your App Icon Design
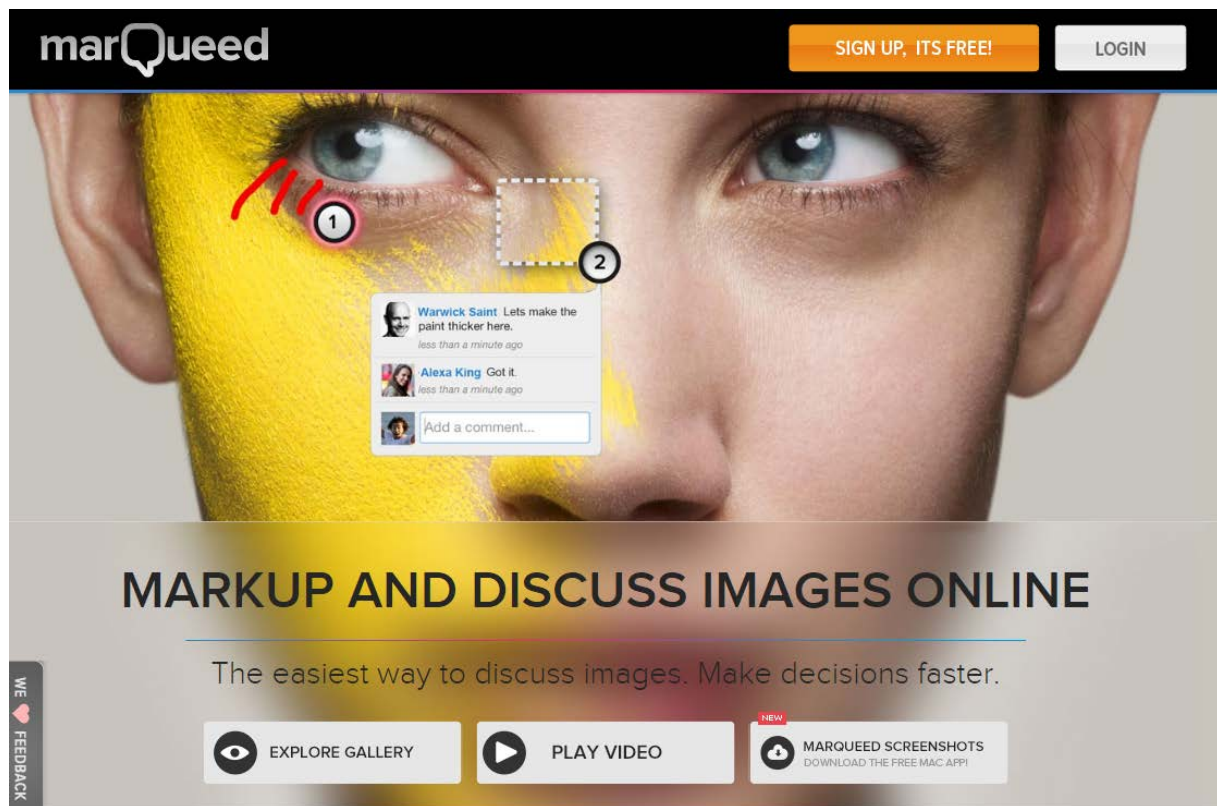
Marqueed

Evaluation is a key stage of any creation process. Icon design is no exception. These destinations provide some support for getting feedback, but you can also enlist your colleagues, friends, the guy next to you at the cafe if you're brave.

Do they like the colors? Does the icon seem to fit the actual purpose of the app? Does the icon remind them of anything?

- The App Entrepreneur Community on Facebook
- Dribble

- [Marqueed](#)
- [Clarity](#)

Conclusion

We hope these resources helped you conquer one of the deceptively tricky aspects of getting your mobile app out there!

Did we miss any? Feel free to share in the comments.

Remember, app icons are one of the most important aspects of of App Store Optimization, so don't neglect your icon.

Happy designing.

About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

Blog / App Store Optimization / How to Optimize Apple App Store Preview Videos

How to Optimize Apple App Store Preview Videos

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

From movie trailers to autoplay ads, the impact of video for audience engagement is undeniable. Nearly everyone with a brand, be it a large corporation or a YouTube star, seems to be capitalizing on this format.

The good news is, you too can harness the power of video for marketing your app. In fact, it's a great way to boost app store optimization (ASO) and should always be a part of your strategy.

App preview videos are an excellent way to increase downloads.

If you've only focused so far on text element and static images for ASO, like writing magnetic descriptions and choosing great screenshots, you may not know where to start when it comes to creating an App Preview video.

Beginning with iOS 8, Apple allows a 30-second video to be displayed alongside an app's screenshots in the App Store. But it's not as simple as creating any clip you like and uploading it.

In this post, we'll cover technical specifications and requirements you need to meet for your video, best practice for creating an awesome clip that actually converts, and some tips for how to get started even if you're not a Final Cut Pro expert with unlimited budget.

App Store Videos: Requirements You Need to Know

First things first: the App Store has published guidelines that you must follow in order to get your preview video published along with your app. It's a good idea to bookmark that page as a reference, but here are a few must-meet requirements for your Apple App Store preview video:

- Video must be 15 to 30 seconds in length

- Only include on-screen capture within your app itself – you can't use over-the-shoulder angles or fingers tapping the screen

- Don't violate copyrights, plagiarize, or show any material you do not have the legal right to display, including music, film, or other intellectual property assets unless you have appropriate licensing rights

- Correct resolutions for your video on different devices, including specs for both portrait and landscape, can be found here

- Only one localization is accepted, so be sure your video makes sense in languages other than English if your app is available for those audiences

- You must disclose if you show features only available through in-app purchases

- Your preview video is not an ad and should not show pricing or timelines

Even more specs, like max frame rate, target bit rate, and so on, can be found in the iTunes Connect Developer Guide [here](#).

SEE ALSO: [How to Track Unlimited Competing Apps](#)

Always keep these requirements in mind and use them as checkpoints as you develop your video. There's nothing more disappointing than creating something you're excited about and then getting rejected because you don't meet a small technical specification.

Now that the requirements are out of the way, let's cover something arguably more important: how to make a video worth watching that ultimately boosts your downloads.

Creating an App Store Video People Actually Want to Watch

With your app preview video, you have 15 to 30 seconds to capture your audience's attention, showcase your app, and convince your viewer that they should press the download button.

But actually, you really only have about five seconds to do that.

Why?

Most of your viewers are going to decide almost immediately whether to continue to watch all the way to the end or move on to the next thing. As mobile phone users, we've gotten accustomed to bite-size entertainment–short video clips that pack a punch.

Watching your app preview video is entirely opt-in, so it's crucial to ensure that your video is both engaging and useful.

Here are some examples of great app preview videos that can inspire you:

Clear

- Simple graphics and text that work with or without sound
- Informative, covering the best parts of the app
- Effortlessly meets all iOS Store requirements

Mint

- Highlights a good amount of features in a short time
- Showcases the brand (including visuals, logo, tagline)

Table Tennis Touch

- Immediately captivating with sound and visuals
- After the initial hook, uses actual app footage
- Employs music rather than words, consistent with the style of the app

There are a few things to keep in mind when recording your app preview video for the App Store.

First, your preview video should be just that: a preview. It should highlight several of the most valuable features of your app, showing the in-app experience, without coming across as a tutorial or advertisement.

In order to achieve this, plan ahead. Everyone's style will vary, but taking the time to develop an outline, storyboard, or script will help you focus on the top features and avoid coming across as too instructional or sales-oriented.

Plan the timing for changing scenes and other visual elements. Set up any test accounts you'll need. And give yourself a chance to rehearse before starting to actually capture the video.

The audio experience is important, but keep in mind that many viewers will have your phone on silent. Make sure that the preview video makes sense even without sound.

Using text can be effective, as shown in some of the examples, but it's important to make sure the copy adds to the video and doesn't create any confusing cultural or time-sensitive discrepancies.

Once you've planned out your app preview video, taking into account these recommendations as well as the App Store requirements, you're ready to actually create it.

How to Create Your App Preview Video Software

Apple recommends using [iMovie](#) to create your app preview video, but you actually have several options. Final Cut Pro, another Apple product, offers even more capabilities for capturing screen recordings and editing. Learn more [here](#).

If you do decide to use iMovie, you'll be able to capture screen recordings from your iOS device, and perform edits like adding titles, transitions, and voiceover. One major benefit of using iMovie is that when you export the app preview video, it automatically renders at the correct resolution based on the device from which you captured the clips. That takes care of one App Store requirement so you don't have to worry about it.

Another great tool for creating app preview videos is [AppShow](#) by TechSmith. At the time of this post publication it's in technical preview, but if you've ever used other TechSmith software like Camtasia, you know you can look forward to powerful, easy-to-use video tools with this product. They also offer some [helpful best practices](#).

The Poster Frame

Last but not least, don't neglect your "poster frame," or the thumbnail that viewers see before pressing play. Here's what Apple has to say about the poster frame:

Ideally, your preview poster frame should convey the essence of the app. If the default frame selected from your footage doesn't convey this, you can select a new frame in iTunes Connect. Please note that changing the poster frame on previews that have already been approved will require a new binary version.

Conclusion

So you've planned out your video, recorded or captured it using the tool of your choice, met the App Store guidelines, and you're ready to show off your app store preview video.

App preview videos, when done well, can engage your potential audience and create a base that doesn't just download your app but continues to use it over time. The rich medium of video creates an opportunity to showcase elements of your app that might otherwise not get shown in the app store.

Pat yourself on the back–you've just employed a great App Store Optimization strategy.

About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

Blog / App Store Optimization / How to Craft a Google Play App Description For More Downloads

How to Craft a Google Play App Description For More Downloads

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

Implementing the perfect App Store Optimization (ASO) strategy requires balancing a variety of different requirements and best practices. From choosing the perfect app name to selecting the most engaging screenshots, capturing the attention of your potential user requires mastery over many variables.

One of the cornerstones of your Google Play ASO strategy should be a well-written, clear, keyword-rich description.

Don't skimp on your description! It takes time and effort to write a great description, and it's of crucial importance for app discovery and getting downloads. In this post we will show you exactly what you need to know to write an amazing app description.
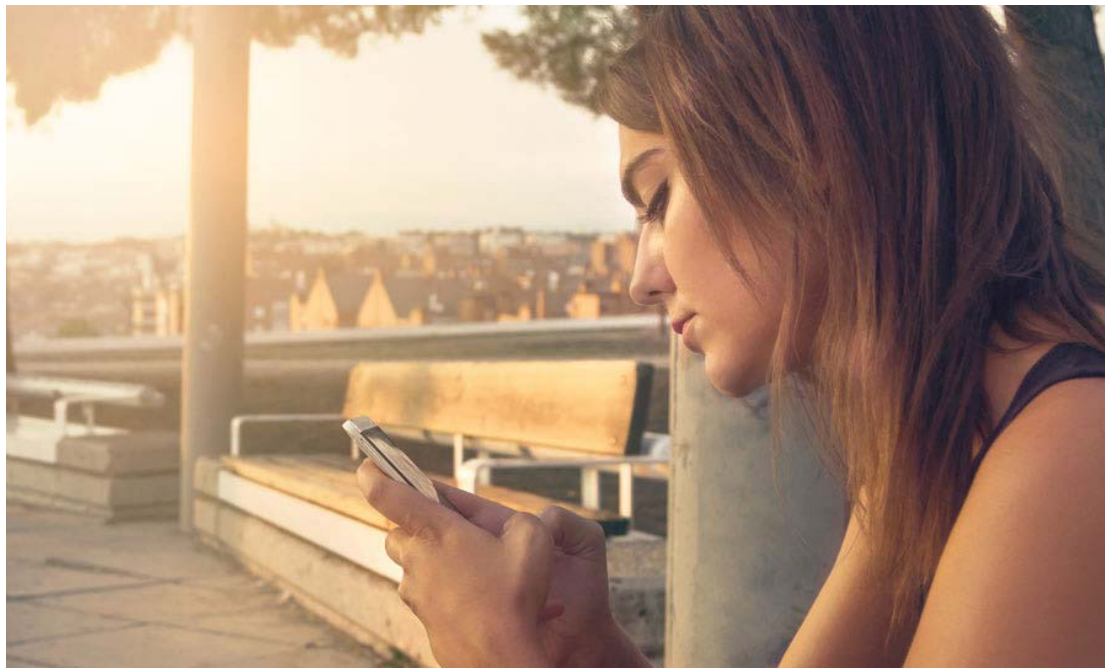
Keywords in Google Play App Descriptions

For Google Play, optimization requires a description that meets the store's requirements while keeping user limitations and preferences in mind. Like anything else in ASO, this means balancing a few variables in order to get to that sweet spot that results in user downloads.

Unlike the App Store, the Google Play Store does not have a keyword field. But the Google Play Store uses two description fields to determine keyword ranking for your app.

As you know, search is going to get you high-quality, targeted downloads. So it's essential to use your main keywords in the description field.

Before even beginning your app's description, you'll need to have your list of keywords decided. There's a lot to consider: single vs. plural app keywords, long-tail ASO keywords, and don't forget those emojis.

SEE ALSO: The Ultimate Guide to ASO for the App Store

Mobile Action's keyword optimization modules can show you how to find the keywords you'll have the best chance at ranking for. You can try them out for free here.

Once you have a solid list of keywords, it's time to start writing.

When you're crafting your description, the first thing to focus on is quality and readability for your audience. Optimal placement in the search rankings will follow from that. Try writing a few drafts first, and getting feedback from others. Does it actually sound like something you'd want to download?

Then, edit your copy to make sure that your targeted keywords are included frequently, but naturally.

There isn't an exact prescription for how often to use your keywords, but as a best practice, try to use your main keywords around five times each…in the full description. Also experiment with keyword density.

Remember, ASO is all about trying different strategies and finding the one that works best for your app.

Short Description vs. Full Description

There's not just one description field in the Google Play Store…there are two. Google uses both of these description fields to determine keyword ranking for your app.
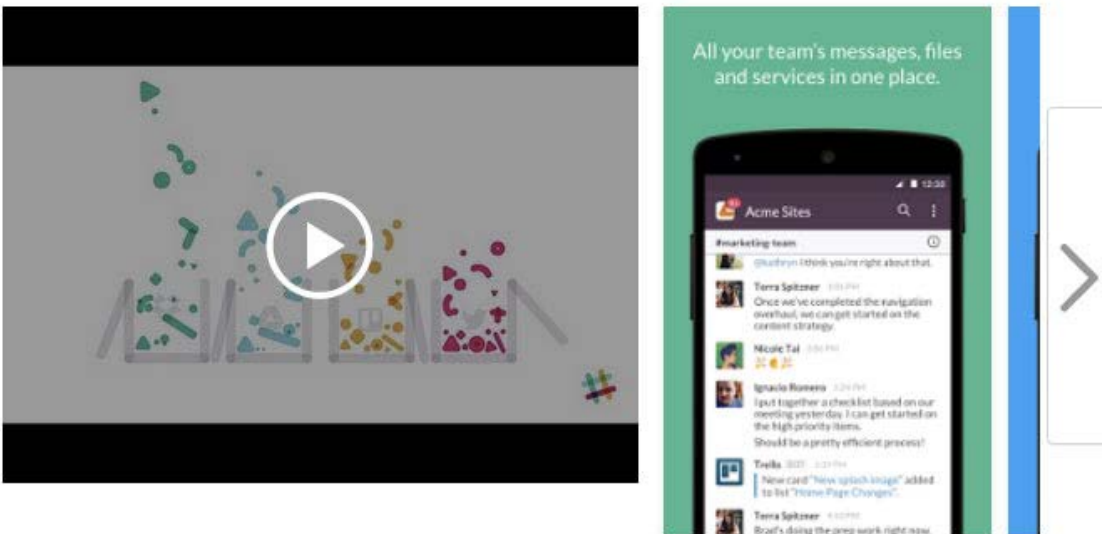

The short description allows only 80 characters, and is the first text potential users see when looking at your app's detail page in the Google Play Store. Users can expand the short description text to view the app's full description. The Full Description has a 4000 character limit.

Keywords in the short description carry more weight than keywords in the full description, but space there is extremely limited. So how do you balance between the two?

Keep user experience top-of-mind. Remember that the short description is what users will see first, in addition to the title and visuals. So while keywords here are great, it's also crucial to grab your user's attention with the short description. That in itself can result in a download.

In the full description, you obviously have more room to implement different strategies. You should be highlighting the functions of your app, what users can expect, what value it gives to the audience, and other information about app features.

Take a look at other apps to get some ideas. Here's how Slack starts their full description.

Don't feel like you have to use the full 4000 character limit in the full description. If you're able to convey all the details you need in less space, that's a better strategy than trying to get close to the limit just because it's there.

It should go without saying, but your app description should be informational and useful for your users. Before considering ASO strategy, focus on making the description accurate and succinct, and clearly reflective of the app's functionality.

Describe what the user will actually experience when interacting with the app, and include use cases and examples if you can. Use proactive, action-oriented language.

Placement of Keywords and User Experience Considerations

In your Google Play app description, every word matters. And as it turns out, placement and format of words matter too.

The recommendation to use your keywords up to five times each applies to the long description, not the short. While you should use keywords in the short description as much as possible, repeating words there will look like keyword stuffing and appear spammy.

No matter what type of device your audience is on, you only have a limited amount of time to hold their attention. Many users won't even read the description before choosing whether or not to download the app. Writing and formatting your text for readability will help persuade the user to read, or at least skim, the app description. Use shorter sentences and paragraphs, bullet points, and bold text where appropriate.

You also might use the description to include contact information, like email and social media addresses, and a URL where users can learn more.

Once your app is active on the Google Play store, review the description in order to validate that it looks the way you intended.

Don't Break the Rules

First and foremost, you should abide by the policies in Google's Developer Policy Center. The [Store Listing and Promotion](#) section has a few sections that apply to app descriptions.

Common violations include:

- User testimonials – Allow these to happen organically in your reviews section.
- Excessive details and repetitive, excessive, or irrelevant keywords – Basically, don't stuff keywords into your description.
- Misleading references to other apps or products – Steer clear of mentioning other apps at all. "It's just as fun as Candy Crush!" won't help you rank for Candy Crush.

Conclusion

In the end, apps are ranked based on a variety of factors. Your long and short descriptions are just one component of a good Google App Store optimization strategy. Well-written, readable copy in the description is key, along with natural, frequent use of both short and long-tail keywords.

If you need more help in getting started, look at app descriptions from successful apps. Keep in mind that they might not all be following best practices, but it is a good place to start.

About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

7 Steps to Research Other Mobile Apps for a Competitive Advantage

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

It's said that preparation is the key to success. In all the excitement that comes with getting your new app out the door, don't miss out on one of the keys success: **competitive analysis**.

Even if your app has been around for awhile, you still need to stay on top of what your competitors are doing, if you want to stay ahead.

You may know who your competitors are, but taking the time to actually research their marketing strategies, demographics, revenues, and more, will allow you to gain great insights that will ultimately result in more downloads.

Here are the seven steps to research a competing mobile app and improve your chances of success.

1. Begin by Tracking All Your Competitors

Competitive analysis starts with actually identifying your competitors. Discovering your competitors can be done by simple online research (AKA Googling), searching in the app store, asking your industry contacts, and so on.

Once you have a running list of your competitors, it's important to organize and track this information so no details fall through the cracks.

You may develop your own process using spreadsheets or some other tools, but regardless of what you use, always have a central place that you can track your competitors.

2. Discover Your Competitors' Category Rankings and App Visibility Scores
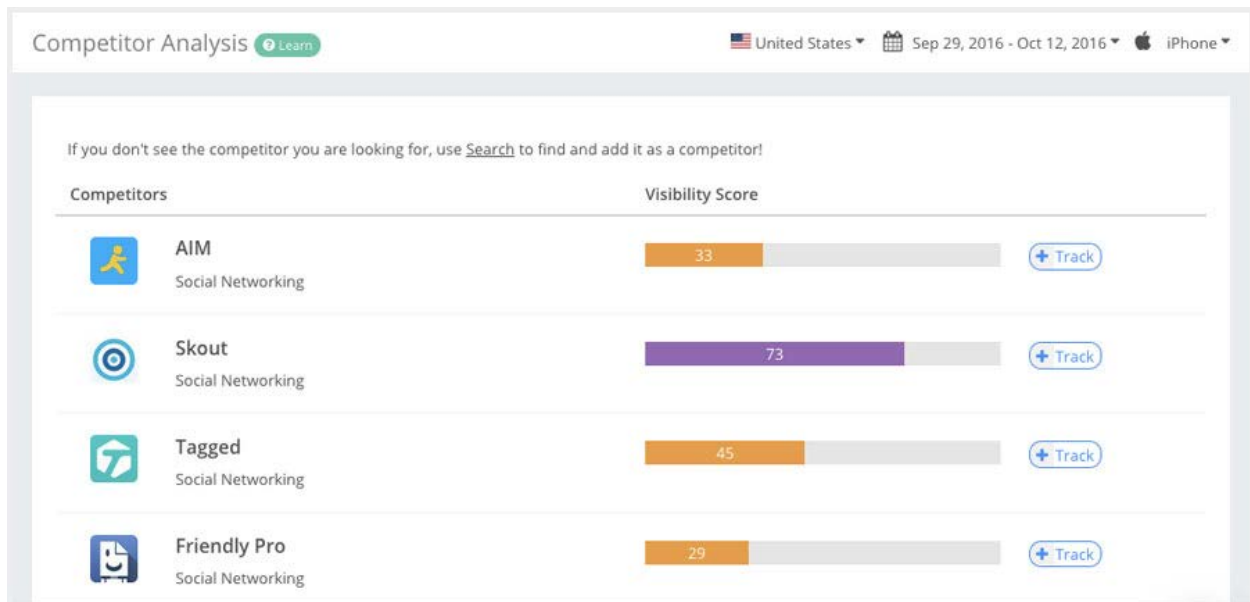
Depending on how far along in their App Store Optimization (ASO) strategies your competitors are, their category rankings and app Visibility Scores may be formidable. **But understanding where your app ranks in comparison, is the first step to figuring out how to beat them.**

An app's Visibility Score is a measurement of how easy it is to find in the app store's search. Since a significant portion of your potential users are still using search to find new desirable apps, your Visibility Score is crucial. The easier it is to find yourapp, the more likely it is to be downloaded.

Category rankings, on the other hand, refer to discoverability within the specific category relevant to your app. While you may not be focused solely on rising in the category ranks, researching who's at the top of your lists will shed light on who's performing well.

Tracking your competitors' app visibility scores and category rankings gives you a benchmark to aim for (and eventually surpass).

You'll also be able to glean insight into how well your competitors are doing against each other. Note who's beating who in terms of app Visibility Score and category ranking, especially across different stores, and analyze what strategies seem to be working well for them.

3. Get Their Estimated Downloads and Revenue

More metrics that matter include your competitors' download volumes and revenues.
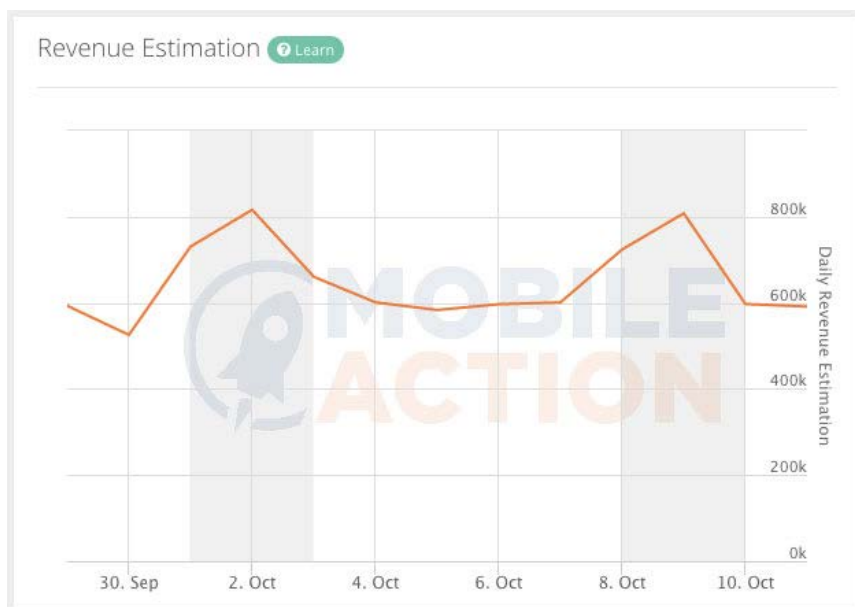
Those category ratings mentioned above? They aren't determined strictly by number of downloads. But that's certainly a key factor in the ranking systems that the stores use.

Knowing the estimated number of downloads your competitors are getting will help you understand one aspect of how well your competitors are doing and where to set your sights.

Similarly, revenue numbers provide important data for goal-setting and decision-making, though you may have to rely on estimates for this highly competitive information.

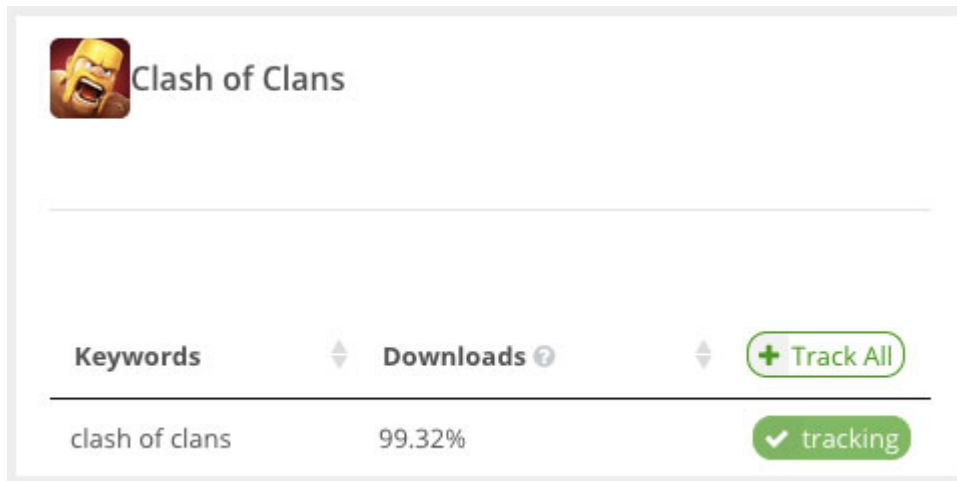# 4. Determine Your Competitors' Keyword Strategies and Which Keywords are Working
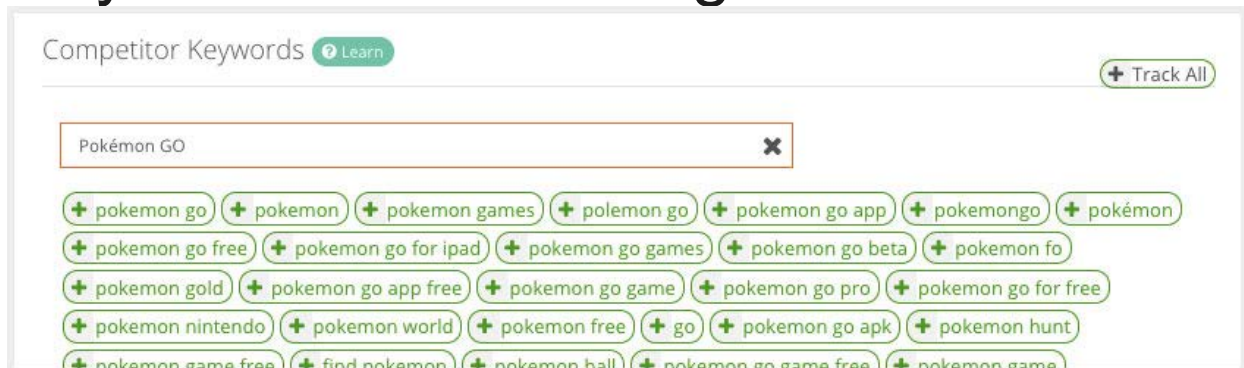
The benefit of creating an effective keyword strategy for your mobile app can't be overstated. But don't do it with blinders on--you should also do some investigation of your competitors' strategies.

Some keyword research platforms require a bit of guessing and checking, requiring you to research keywords individually. The Mobile Action platform takes it one step further.

You'll be able to search for a competing app and then get an estimated percentage of organic downloads for each associated keyword, thereby showing you which keywords are actually working.

This can save you a ton of time.

Whatever method you use, you should come away with a solid list of keywords that are successful for your competitors, which you can then integrate into your own strategy.

5. Uncover Their Localization and Audience Demographics

App companies that do well globally don't do so by accident. They have implemented a smart localization strategy that goes beyond Google Translate and actually incorporates keywords and other tactics that do well across different audiences.

While marketing effectively to a diverse audience isn't easy, examining how your competitors do it will give you some ideas to get started.

Here are some key performance indicators for apps that do well beyond their local market:

- **Keywords:** rather than simple word-for-word translations, keywords need to convey the same nuance and connotation across languages.
- **Descriptions:** like keywords, descriptions need to be carefully crafted so as to convey your desired meaning while still remaining in line with your strategy.

- **Icon, images, and video:** visual elements are significant to your audience, and should appeal to every segment of your target audience, not just your local market.

As you can see, modifying these components to align with the cultural preferences of the app's target audience is critical.

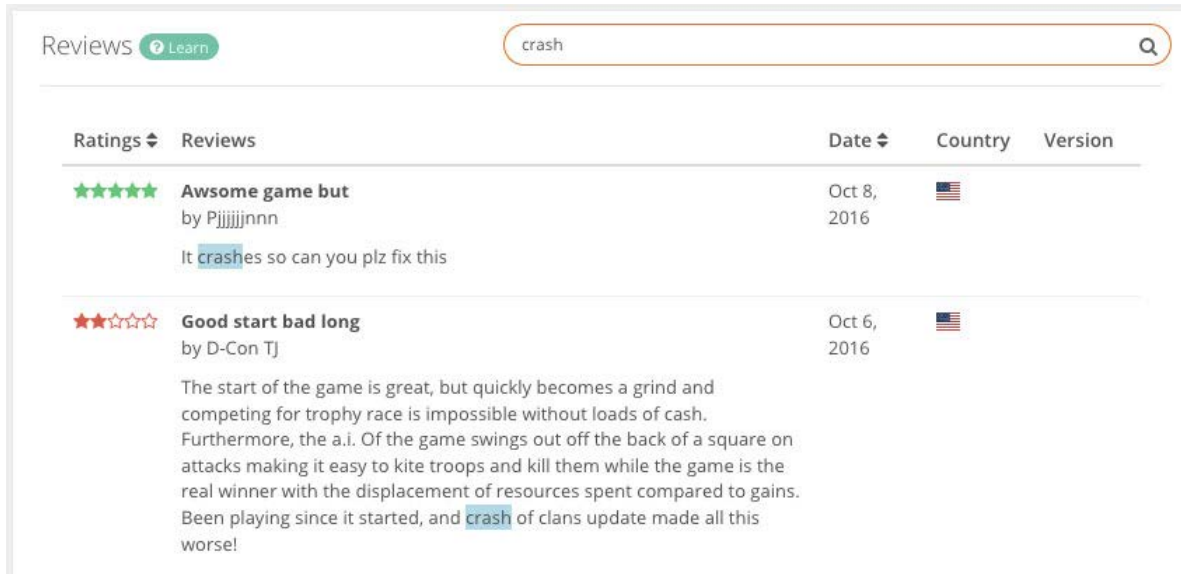# 6. Mine Your Competitors' Reviews for Insights
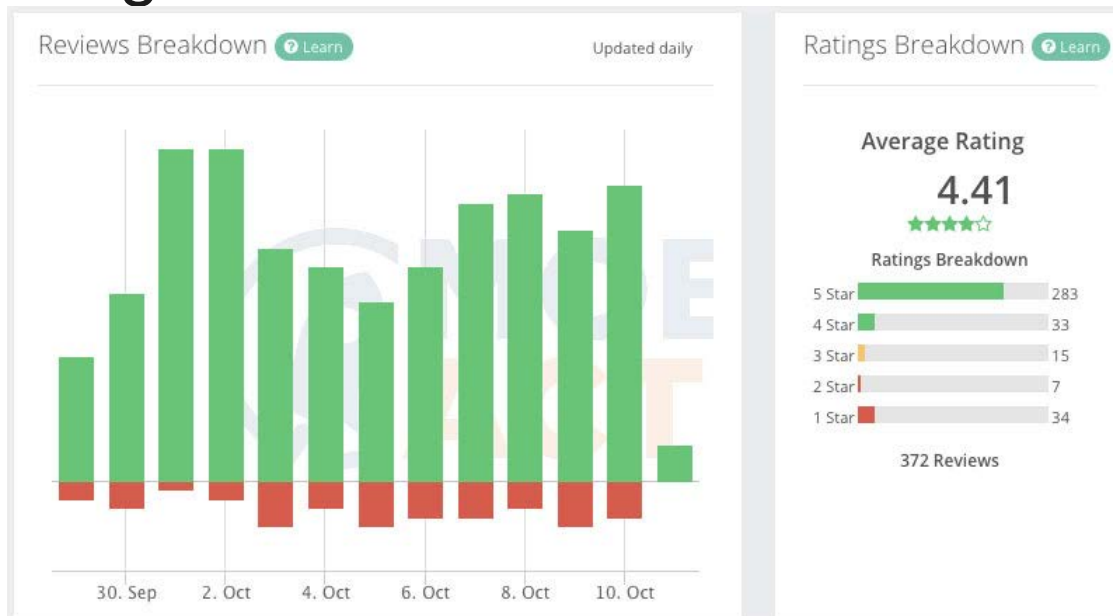
Reviews contain some of the most actionable information you can get from your competitors.

Most of us can agree that reviews are indicative of performance; if an app isn't getting a large number of good reviews, it's probably not a competitor to watch (for now). Examining the reviews of your big competitors will give you valuable insights into your potential audience's experience and preferences.

First, reviews reveal keywords. Analyzing a competing app's reviews and noting which words are used repeatedly will give you a solid list of keywords to that they may be ranking for, and that you may want to target.

With this tip more than any other on the list, you'll also be able to tell where your competitors may be weak. By looking at the negative reviews, you may glean some points to use in your marketing strategy.

Is your competitor experiencing bugginess and you know your code is solid? Promote your stability.

In general, reading reviews of your most successful competitors will help you build a comprehensive understanding of what a good app looks like. It can also help you find new feature ideas.

7. Follow Your Competitors' Out-of-App-Store Marketing Efforts

Don't forget to pay attention to what your competitors are doing outside of the app stores. This is a relatively simple exercise, and you may choose to keep a running spreadsheet or document to make sure you're comprehensive.

Doing some Google searches can help you uncover some paid strategies your competitors might be pursuing. What keywords are your competitors bidding on?

Inspect all their social media accounts. If there's a specific platform that tends to get a lot of engagement, you might consider using that as well, as a strategy for gaining more brand recognition and ultimately app downloads.

Determine whether or not they have other community outreach tactics like Facebook groups, in-person events. Are there any strategies that you can

emulate?

Conclusion

Don't work on optimization in a vacuum. Competitive analysis doesn't have to be complex, time-consuming, or costly, but it is an important part of your app development strategy.

Also remember to [split test](#) everything you do. What may be working for other apps, might not work as well for your app.

Just use your research as a starting point.

About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

Why Influencer Marketing is Vital to Your App's Success

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

If you've reached this year without taking advantage of influencer marketing for your app, it's time to rethink your strategy.

Mobile apps are proliferating with no signs of slowing down, which means that your competition is becoming increasingly fierce. You could be tracking all the right metrics, implementing the most savvy app store optimization strategies, and still find yourself struggling, simply because the market is so oversaturated.

To stand out in such a crowd, you need smarter marketing strategies.

Enter: **influencer marketing.**

What is Influencer Marketing?

Influencer marketing is a strategy that enlists individual "influencers" to promote your app to their social media (and sometimes blog/website) follower base.

Combining traditional word-of-mouth with newer platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat, influencer marketing allows you to get in front of thousands or even millions of potential users who might never have seen your app otherwise.

In addition to reaching wider audiences, influencer marketing increases your credibility, since you have an actual person showcasing your app to followers who have already opted in. Influencers are also able to include more elements of human-interest storytelling than would be possible in traditional paid advertising.

SEE ALSO: [How to Track Unlimited Competing Apps](#)

Sounds simple, right? When executed well, influencer marketing looks natural and seamless. But behind the scenes, it's a bit more complex.

Before an influencer publishes that post that promotes your app, you must research and select the right influencers on the right platforms, build your relationship with them, develop a campaign, and set your goals.

Prior to getting started, you should understand some influencer marketing best practices and get familiar with some successful influencer marketing campaigns.

Influencer Marketing Best Practices

While the social media landscape is ever-changing, there's no need to completely reinvent the wheel when it comes to influencer marketing. Follow these best practices to harness the power of influencer marketing.

Choosing the Right Influencers

Most likely, influencers are not going to come to you; you have to be proactive. Thankfully, there are a number of tools you can use to choose the *right* influencer for your app and your message. Here are just a few examples:

- Klout is a free platform (including their own mobile app) that measures influence in pre-defined categories. You can't search free-form, but you can explore experts in multiple areas that relate to your app.
- Klear is a similar tool with a limited free version that allows you to search millions of potential influencer profiles across networks and categories.
- BuzzSumo is a content curation tool that you can use to find trending content. Searching terms related to your app and analyzing content that has been widely shared can uncover influencers in niche areas.
- Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube searches can surface accounts and channels that you can reach out to for reviews and promotion.

As you're identifying potential influencers using these tools, you also want to consider some factors like these:

- How many followers do they have, and what are their audience demographics? (Don't discount those with perhaps a smaller reach, but a relevant niche and good engagement!)
- How engaged are their followers–do the numbers of likes, comments, and shares seem to correspond to the total audience?

- How active are the influencers at posting on their channel? Do they post in multiple places?
- Does the influencer have previous examples of working with brands? Mobile apps specifically? How well have their past campaigns performed?

Choosing the Right Platforms

Unfortunately there aren't many quick and easy tools to follow this best practice, but it's still an important one: pick the right platform for your influencer marketing campaign.

The right platform, whether it's Twitter, Snapchat, or the next hot thing, is the one that fits your users' preferences and tendencies. **Determine where your app users *already are* and select individuals who are influential on those platforms.**

Planning a Campaign That Works

As much or even more so than other marketing campaigns you'll run, plan your influencer marketing campaign carefully. No matter what, you're giving up the reins to another person who doesn't have as much stake in your success as you do.

Proper preparation and results tracking is key.

Once you've identified some potential influencers, reach out on social media or through their blog/website. Some influencers get innumerable pitches, so your chances for success are better if you're clear and genuine. That also sets the tone for good communication and trust throughout your relationship with the influencer.

While some new or up-and-coming influencers will give you a shout out for free, often you will be asked for compensation. Influencers are essentially online marketing consultants, and many treat their social media platforms as a kind of business. If you're unable or unwilling to pay for your influencer marketing campaign, be up front about it. If you will pay, work with the influencer to determine rates that work for you both.

Now let's look at some **influencer marketing examples** and how some brands used this type of marketing to boost their apps' success.

# Successful Influencer Marketing Case Study: Audible
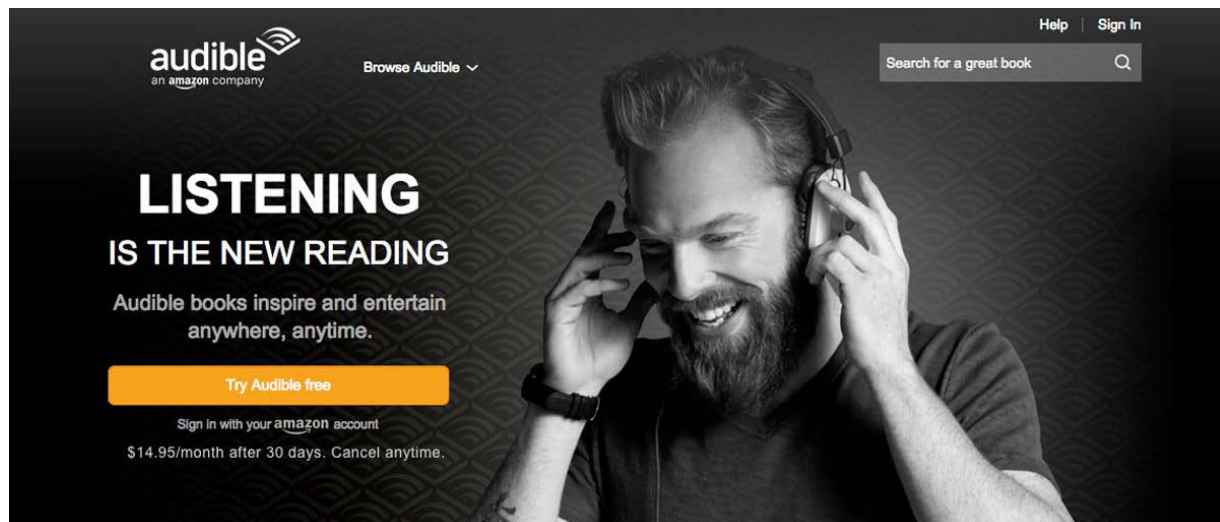
[Audible](#) is an Amazon company that produces audiobooks for iPhone, Android, Kindle, and other devices. In 2015, Audible used the immense popularity of YouTube to reach a wide variety of audiences across different demographics, promoting their brand and monthly membership service.

You can read more [here](#).

Why it worked:

- The campaign targeted existing YouTube stars with engaged, trusting audiences.
- Influencers incorporated Audible promotion into creative content and stories.
- Audible provided their influencers with unique links so users can download their first audiobook free, increasing conversion.

# Successful Influencer Marketing Case Study: Hotel Tonight
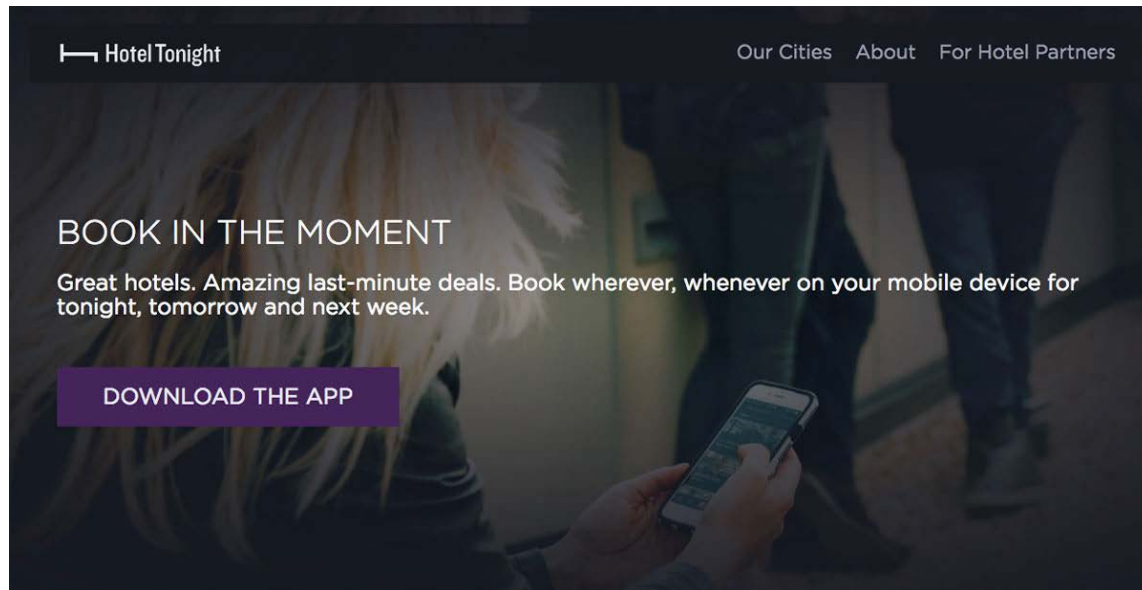
[Hotel Tonight](#) is an app that lets users book last minute deals on hotels. In an already-saturated travel category, they used influencer marketing to stand out, targeting bloggers on NYC-based lifestyle, culture, and wedding sites to drive app downloads and bookings.

Learn more about the campaign [here](#).

Why it worked:

- Hotel Tonight focused their fixed budget in a targeted demographic (potential users in the Tri-State area).
- Influencers included bloggers of many sizes across different content types, e.g. informational stories and personal narratives.
- Special promo codes were used to track bookings per specific blogger.

Successful Influencer Marketing Case Study: Bejeweled
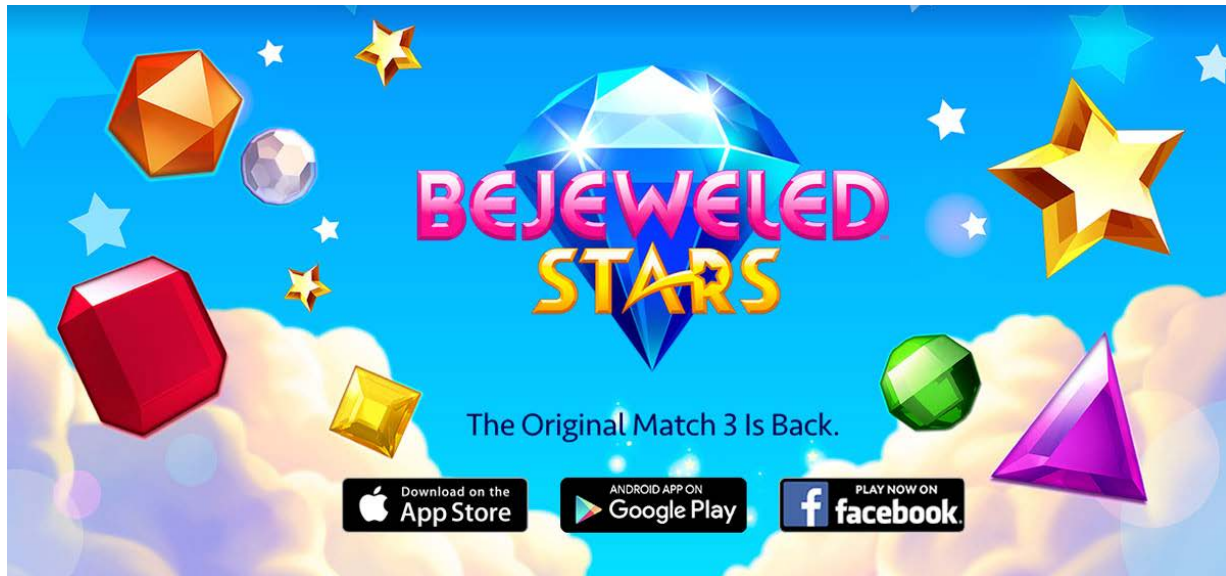
Gem-matching mobile game Bejeweled leveraged the power of influencer marketing on YouTube and Instagram to build brand awareness, increase downloads of the game, and rise in app store rankings. This was accomplished using a combination of sponsored YouTube short videos and branded Instagram shares.

Learn more here.

Why it worked:

- The Bejeweled team created videos like this one with popular YouTube stars to kick off the campaign.
- Instagram influencers used the branded hashtag #shinyplace to promote Bejeweled with a consistent message: use the game to take an enjoyable break.

Conclusion

Though popular platforms shift and mobile technology changes, influencer marketing is here to stay. Even if you don't have a huge budget, you can take advantage of influencer marketing to promote your mobile app in a strategic way.

Partnering with the right influencer will lend credibility and reach new audiences, and you can reap the benefits in the form of increased awareness and downloads.

About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.

How to Find Your Competitors' Best App Store Keywords

by Rachel Wilson - Leave a Comment

As with most endeavors, your **mobile app marketing strategy** should focus on working smarter, not harder. **Competitive analysis** will allow you to uncover some of your competitors' strategies, and by implementing some of their tactics that already work in the marketplace, you'll gain efficiency and proven expertise.

In this post we'll dive deeper into keyword strategy for both the Apple App Store and Google Play. You could spend hours and days searching for your own keywords from scratch, or you could get a head start by using what already works.

Discover All Keywords From a Competing App

As you're getting started, you'll probably have a list of a handful of competitors or competing apps in mind that you'd like to target. But even if you don't, identifying

at least one developer or app, and then going through these tips will help you identify other key competitors.

Begin by researching the keywords that a specific competitor is ranking for. You can get a general idea from simply searching a few choice keywords in the App Store and Google Play store and seeing which apps rank highly.

But remember, we're trying to work more intelligently and efficiently.

Therefore, tools like Mobile Action's Keyword Research module can jumpstart your competitive analysis. Once you've identified a specific app to investigate, go right to *Keyword Investigator*.

SEE ALSO: The Ultimate Guide to ASO for the App Store

Search for a competitor's app name in the *Competitor Keywords* field, select the app you want to research, and a list of all their keywords will be displayed.
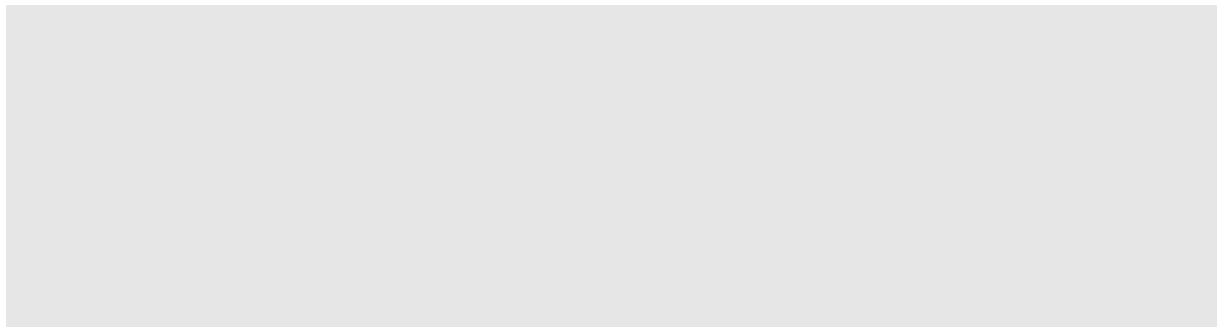
Much easier than guessing and checking, right?

If you select one of the keywords, you'll also see a list of the top 10 apps that are currently ranking for that keyword. Viewing this list will allow you to develop a more robust list of your competitors.

You may even discover some rogue competitor apps that weren't on your radar before. Try it out for free here.

Automatically Generate Keyword Suggestions

Tracking is crucial.

If you're a hunter with your prey in view, you're not going to take aim without looking through the scope, right? So don't lose sight of your rivals, and keep a list of your competing apps by searching for them in Mobile Action and selecting "Track as a competitor."

(More on tracking below!)
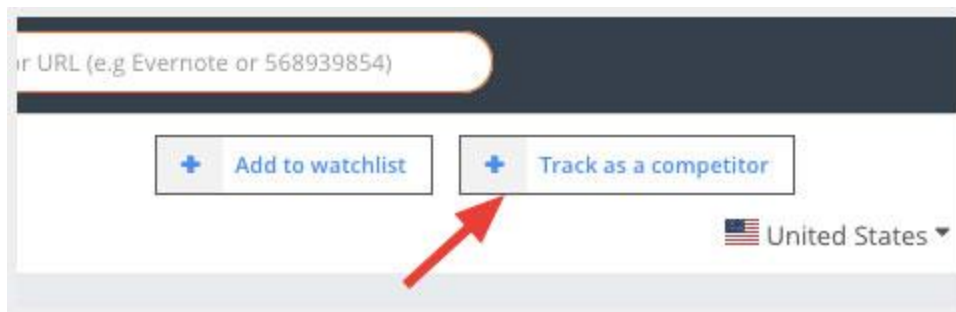
With your eye more keenly trained on the prize, now you can begin using the *Keyword Suggestions* module to pull up a list of suggested keywords to add to your list.

Tracking your competitors is free in Mobile Action and will make your results better. Generating a list of suggested keywords saves you time and gives you the basis for a stellar competitive strategy.

Start getting keyword suggestions for free here.

Get Estimated Downloads by Keyword

Not all keywords are created equal, of course. And it's nearly impossible to incorporate every single competitive keyword equally. Getting estimated downloads by keyword will help you narrow your focus to include just the strongest keyword that you can also use to garner the most downloads.
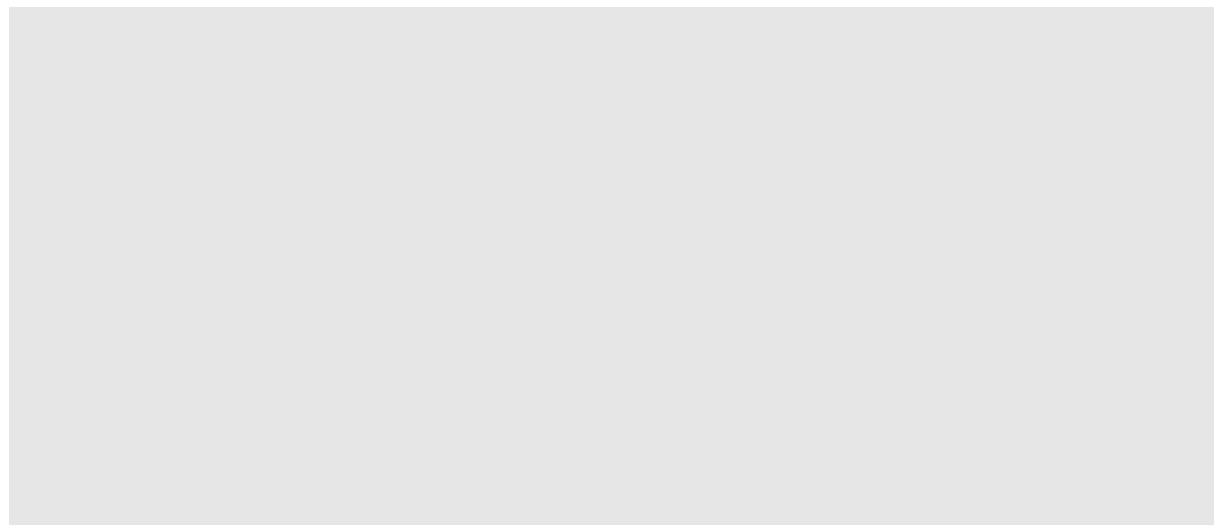
When you search for a competitor's app in the *Keyword Intelligence* module, you'll be able to view a list of keywords automatically sorted by estimated percentage of organic downloads that each keyword is getting.
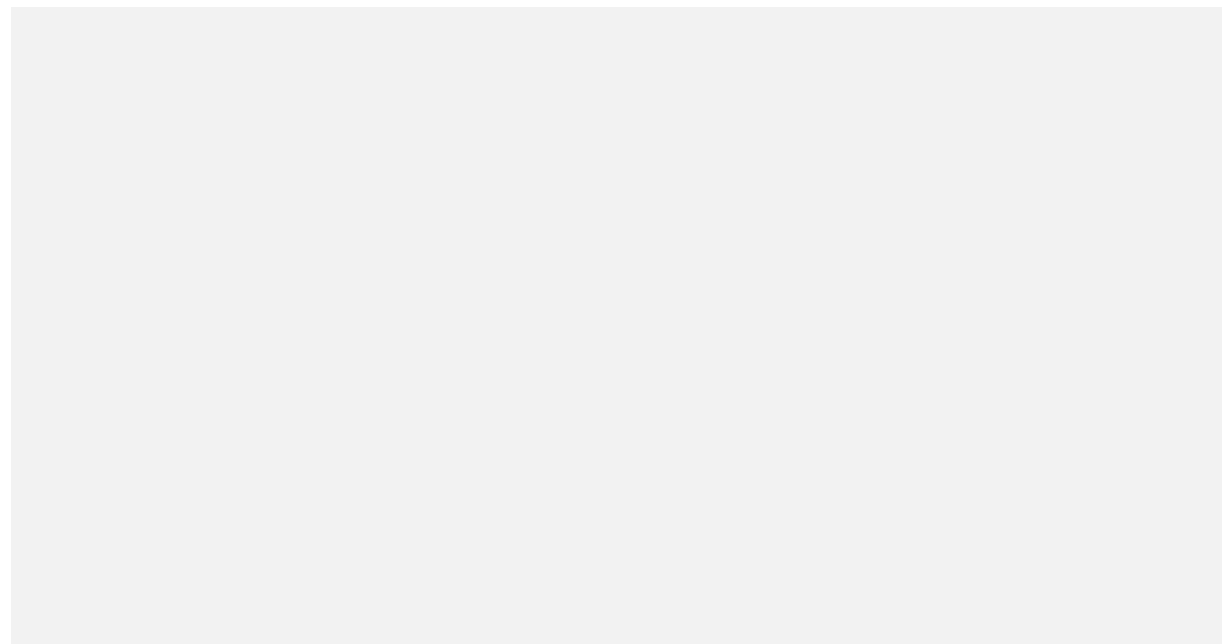
This is a great advantage over viewing just a static list of keywords, or trying to estimate the hierarchy of a competitor's keywords on your own.

You now have insight that will allow you to focus on the best keywords, and you can choose to discard those keywords that only generate a tiny percentage of downloads.

Don't Miss Out On Long-Tail Keywords

You're not forgetting about long-tail ASO keywords, are you? Never leave home without incorporating long-tail keywords into your strategy!

The *Keyword Research* module provides a wide range of keyword suggestions, including one-word as well as long-tail keywords.

As with all keywords, you shouldn't just select your long-tail keywords randomly. Use the right criteria to choose keywords to incorporate into your strategy. *Search Score* and *Chance Score* can inform which long-tail keywords to use.

Remember that our Search Score uses Apple Search Popularity data, so you know that you will always have the most accurate data.

For more information on Search Score and Chance Score, see this post.

Track Your Competitive Keywords

Remember that keyword discovery, and competitive analysis in general, is not a one-time endeavor. It's something you'll have to keep an eye on over time, as trends change, markets develop, and app store algorithms shift.

That's why tracking is so important. Once you decide which competitive keywords to use, you can follow them with Mobile Action's *Keyword Tracking* module.

From the *Keyword Research* module, you can click on the plus sign next to a keyword to track it, and they will appear in your *Keyword Tracking* module. On this dashboard, you'll see metrics such as *Search Score*, *Chance Score*, *Total Apps*, and *Current Rank* of your app.

To stay organized and incorporate any relevant information, you can also customize your list of competitive keywords with editable notes and color codes.

Try out Keyword Tracking for free here

Conclusion

You now have a collection of tools and tactics to not just discover competitive keywords, but to choose the right keywords, understand the data around them, and track your progress over time. Happy hunting.

About the Author

Rachel Wilson is a writer, marketer, and content creator living in NYC. She's worked for technology companies like BetterCloud and Microsoft, and believes her English degree prepared her to write about pretty much anything. She misses the ocean and the mountains of the Pacific Northwest but can't give up New York pizza.