

How to Create an App and Start Earning Money in 7 Days

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How to Create an App and Start Earning Money in 7 Days

Introduction

Creating the next killer app isn't beyond your reach. There are millions of users waiting for you to give them something truly amazing to download. It's only a matter of creating it and reaching the users.

Plan Your App

You'll need to plan your million-download app to be something that a million people will really want or need. They don't need to look at your toenail clippings collection. They need a new way to get into Facebook or a new game that is totally different from any game they've ever seen before. They might even need to see a cat with the body of a pop-tart fly through space while singing a really annoying song.

Create Your App

Creating your app with AppsGeysler is easy. Assemble your content on a webpage or as a web widget, and it's easy to turn it into a native Android app.

Give it a Great Name, a Great Description, and Put it in App Stores

Distribution is the most important part of app success. Nobody searches Google's web search for apps. They look in app stores. It's essential to put your app in the Android Market. There are a number of other markets that you might wish to use for your Android app. You can find a listing of many different Android Markets <http://www.wipconnector.com/appstores>.

Keep it Up!

No app gets downloaded a million times in its first day or even in its first week. Keep improving your app and spreading the word, and if your app is a truly great app, you'll get your million downloads and have the next killer app soon!

Chapter I: Planning Your App

1. Making an App: Deciding What to Create



Have you ever thought that you should make an app?

Are you not sure what kind of app you'd like to create? Here are some steps you can take to decide what your app will be:

1. Think about your personal and professional interests. Which of them do you think are interesting to other people?
2. See what the market has to offer in your selected field. How can your app be different or better?
3. Focus on a few specific elements. If you try to do too much, you won't do any of it well.
4. Decide what you want the app to be for: Entertainment, a utility, or a teaching tool. For example, if you're a stand-up comic, you could make an app that has some of your jokes, an app that helps comedians generate material, or a series on how to be a great stand-up comic.
5. What kind of content do you want? Decide whether you want videos, text, music, a game format, or something else.

Once you've decided on these things, it's time to assemble your content, organize it, and create an app.

Image by [Valerie Everett](#) on [Flickr](#)

2. A Guide to How-To Apps

Guide or how-to apps are in high demand in the Android Market. Good guidance apps are installed as many as 4000 times a day, and for good reason. They help Android users solve a real pain or problem.

There are a number of types of how-to apps that do well:

1. Android-related Apps – These apps focus on solving technical issues for Android users. They help Android users use Flash, use browsers, solve memory problems, or solve other real Android issues.
2. Universal Problems – These apps focus on problems that anyone could have. They can help people navigate the difficulties of dating, give dieting strategies, explain how to buy or sell a house, how to potty train a toddler, or other everyday problems that people need guidance for.
3. Game Guides and Tips – If you've played a game and can walk another player through it, or you know some great tips for getting high scores, game guides get downloaded like candy.
4. Any subject where you have expertise and you can offer genuine help. If you can offer help getting out of debt, pruning a rose bush, or ridding your cat and dog of fleas, even a travel guide to a city, people will download the app.

Building a guide app is easy. You can use your existing blog or create a new one using a free blogging tool like WordPress or Blogger. If you're using an existing blog, you can point your app to a single post, or to a number of posts by using categories. If you're using a new blog, you can add new posts daily or weekly to keep the app interesting and fresh and keep your audience reading on a regular basis.

Once you've built your app, you'll need to choose a catchy name. Try out two or three different names in the Android Market and see which one catches on. Remember that the app's name has to tell people what the app does. Be sure to use a great icon.

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3. How to Have Your App Downloaded a Million Times

There's just one secret to making an app that everyone downloads . Make an app that everyone wants. There are a few ways to do it. The first thing you can do is create an easier, quicker, or just better way to access an already popular application.

What do we mean? Take Facebook for instance. Millions of people use Facebook every day. If you can make a better way for them to use it from their Android phone, then millions of people will use your app. That's what Flipboard did for the iPad (sorry for the Apple reference – but this is the most lucrative example available.)

You can't just make an app that lets people log into Facebook. You have to put your own twist on it. Make it show the friends list a different way, show messages better, show status updates better, use a different way to update your status, use a new way to set your location. It has to do something better than the official Facebook app. Then people will download it in droves!

Remember, this doesn't just apply to Facebook. You can apply it to any online application. Take Hotmail, Gmail, Twitter, Yahoo, 4Square, your favorite YouTube Channel – anything that you might want to use from your Android phone, and create a better interface. Give it an awesome name, an awesome description, and put it in the Android Market.

The next thing you can do is hop on a trend bandwagon. Take the NyanCat app, for instance. It might be the silliest app ever written. All it shows is a cat head with the body of a Pop-Tart riding on a rainbow while singing a silly song. You can do that. Anyone can do that. To succeed, you have to be the first one to do it while the meme is trending. That is, you have to be the first one to do it and get it noticed.

Another thing you can do is invent something truly different. Inventing something truly different and getting it to catch on is really hard, but with a lot of determination, and great marketing, people might just be lining up outside your (virtual) door to download your app by the millions!

4. How to Keep an App in Constant Use

When you're planning a great app, it's important to consider more than just getting the app downloaded. It's also important to think about ways to keep the users coming back to the app frequently.

Some apps are likely to make people come back, just by virtue of the type of app. Most people use Gmail and Facebook regularly. They use their favorite games whenever they're sitting at the doctor's office waiting for their appointment. Unfortunately, not all apps are like that. Even for other apps, though, there are a lot of ways to keep users coming back.

One way is with games. Users come back to play games. If your app is a game, or if it has a game tab in it, users will come back to play whenever they're bored. You can find free online HTML and Flash games and turn them into tabs in your app.

Another way is by offering new content regularly. If the app is a guide app, updating the information on the blog with new tips and tricks regularly may keep people checking back in regularly. If people know the information is new, they may check back. You can also do this by hooking up a Facebook page to your app like StreetTeam did.

If you only update every several weeks, update the application itself, and upload a new version to Android Market. When customers see the app update, they often open it to see what's new. Don't do this more than once every 4-6 weeks, or your customers will uninstall.

When there's something new and exciting on the app, and it's important to re-engage customers, don't forget the power of push messaging. These messages go into the same feed as text messages, and don't require opening the app to be read. These should be used with care. No one likes to be spammed. Use these messages only when there is something truly exciting to share.

5. Apps: A Lean Forward or Lean Back Experience?



Lately, I've noticed a lot of people talking about the concept of lean-forward versus lean-back experience. The idea seems to have originated with Jakob Nielsen. The basic premise is that there are two main types of user experience:

Leaning Forward – Imagine a person at their desk, working on a document.

Leaning Backward – Imagine a person on the couch watching their favorite movie.

When it comes to television, the experience is almost always lean-back, and when it comes to computers, the experience is more likely to be lean-forward. That leaves us with the question of where tablets and smartphones fit in.

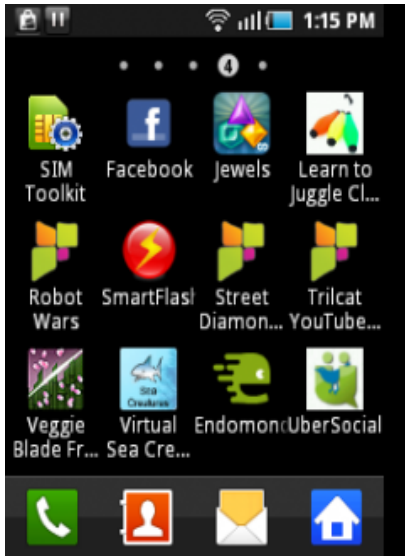
Tablets are created for content consumption. People watch videos, read books, and catch the news on their tablets. These are all lean-back experiences. That's not to say that you won't find people working on documents, taking notes, or even playing AngryBirds on a tablet. It's just not as likely.

Phones are usually lean-forward devices. People use phones to check their email, look up an address, or bring up a map. While some users watch videos or listen to music on their phones, the primary use of a phone is an active, lean-forward experience. So when you're creating your app, here are a few things to consider:

- Keep the user active. Make sure that they need to get their hands on the screen or do something frequently.
- The less typing is involved, the better. There should be a lot of touch, but not a lot of text.
- The app should respond to the user's actions. Response is reward.
- Unless your app is a video app, keep videos short and to the point.
- Likewise, unless your app is all about the written content, don't put too much writing on the screen.
- Keep the user leaning in, and they're more likely to spend more time on your app, and more likely to come back.

Picture by [FredCamino](#) on Flickr.

6. What Apps Are Android Users Looking For?



According to Distimo's May report, as of May 2011, there are over 200,000 apps in the Android Market, and I have about twenty on my phone. I don't think I'm terribly unique, either. I'm sure some people have dozens or even a hundred apps on their phone, but most people only actively use a small number of apps. Even with half a million new Android activations daily, not every app is going to get a lot of usage. As app creators, it's important to look at what people want.

Generally speaking, apps can be divided into utilities and games. According to the Distimo Report, in April 2011, two of the top ten free downloaded Android apps and three of the top ten paid apps were games. If you're a game developer, this is pretty good news. People want games, and sometimes, they're even willing to pay for them. Invent a great game, and even notoriously thrifty Android users will pull out their wallets for a chance at it.

The other apps that have made it divide into a couple of categories.

- Entertainment apps: music players, online radio apps, YouTube
- Phone productivity utilities: keyboard utilities, file managers, backup utilities.
- Social media apps: Facebook, chat utilities.

Interestingly, Facebook was downloaded less than YouTube. Being social comes after watching videos. What does this mean for app creators? The best bet is to entertain. Android users want games, videos, and music.

7. Seven Reasons to Create an App Even if You Have a Mobile Web Version

You have a great website and it even has a mobile version. Great! Are you wondering what an app can do for your business that a mobile website doesn't already do?

Here are seven reasons your business needs an app:

1. Android users tend to search for apps rather than using web searches. If your content is available by app, it's easier to find.
2. Android apps load quickly – much faster than mobile web sites.
3. Control app content. Sometimes, not everything on a site is important for mobile users. With an app, the content can be limited to what's really important.
4. Special content – You can offer extras to people who download your app.
5. Music content – If you have music links on your site, the app turns an Android device into a music player.
6. Video content – You can provide a video channel through your app so that users can watch your videos on the go.
7. Push notification – Once a user has downloaded an app, it is possible to send messages to them, even if the app is closed. This is ideal for informing users of new content.

8. What Kind of App Should My Business Have?



Many times, people ask me what kind of apps they should have for their businesses and ventures and why. The first thing to consider with an app is the preferred use case. Seth Godin, one of the best known names in marketing, both online and off, wrote about preferred use case on his blog.

Seth cites examples, saying that someone is unlikely to use a \$500 kitchen knife to open a can of paint, even though such a use is possible. Likewise, he points out that many suburban libraries are most often used as a place to borrow DVDs. His point is that businesses need to consider carefully who is most likely to use a service and how it is most likely to be used in order to make the service successful.

So let's take Seth Godin's blog. His blog is a typical content blog. He does short posts daily and his readers are almost fanatical about his work. What kind of app would work well for him?

A simple blog app would be a great fit. Marketing people love Seth Godin – and many of them have smart phones. Why not make it easier for them to read Seth Godin's Blog?

By creating an app for your blog content you are enabling your readers to access your posts more easily and quickly if they so choose (meaning, if they download the app). Seth (or you) could use push alerts to tell your readers when there's a new post. And the nicest thing about an app versus reading via RSS or email – an app could be set up so that people could share posts easily on social media. And isn't that the main strategy to grow readership – enabling sharing?

So we decided to see how easy it would be to create a blog app for Seth's blog. The answer – it took about one minute to turn it into an app, and another ten minutes to make an icon, write a description, and get the screen captures to put it into the Android Market.

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9. How Do I Build An App For That? Looks at: Insurance Agents



Nobody likes to think about insurance. Insurance is a chore. It's a necessity, but it's not fun and exciting. Some insurance companies might have us all looking at their little lizards, but we still think that insurance is about not getting into trouble when things get tough.

An insurance app should be about getting your customers the information they need easily. They should be able to get phone numbers, email addresses, policy information, and insurance quotes quickly, without a lot of hassle.

When you're building an insurance app you want to make sure your customer can do several things easily:

1. Get an insurance quote (if you give those out over phone and internet).
2. Get contact information for their agent, especially in case of a car accident or other emergency, and make sure the phone number is a link, so they can dial it right away without the hassle of writing it down or remembering it.
3. Start or suspend a policy or call the right person to do it.
4. Check if their policy is in order or call the right person to do so.
5. Check their billing status, if it is available online.

Customers who can access their information from everywhere feel more in control, and are more likely to remain loyal customers. Make sure your app breeds customer loyalty!

Image by [Eric Ward](#)

10. How Do I Build an App For That? Looks at: Clothing Stores



Some days, I work from home. On one of those days, my boss called me and told me that an important client was in town and wanted to meet me. 'Sure,' I said, 'no problem.' I don't like to disappoint. There was a problem, though. All of my 'meet important clients' clothes were in the laundry. I dug them out, but they really couldn't be worn. I chose the next best, which is 'I could kind of get away with wearing this to work if no one's looking' clothes, and decided that I was going to buy something when I got to the place where we were meeting up. Fortunately, we were meeting up at a mall.

I hopped a train, and pulled out my trusty phone to look for stores at the mall. None of them had apps. A few had mobile web sites, but none of them were designed well, so I had to wander into the mall, look for a store that I usually have good luck with, try on some likely looking clothes, and hope for the best. The gods of fashion were shining down upon me, and the first outfit I tried on matched, fit, and was fully appropriate for meeting important clients in. It cost more than I'd hoped to spend, but you can't win 'em all, right?

This brings me to the idea of apps for a clothing store.

When you're building an app, you have to think about your preferred use case. You're not going to get many people who buy their full summer wardrobe on an Android app. What's really likely is a shopper in another store who wants to see if you have a matching top to the bottom she's seeing. You're going to get someone on the street who sees a sweater and wants to see if the store carries that particular style. You're going to get people who want to create an outfit quickly and easily.

Because of these uses, a mobile app for a clothing store should focus on making it easy to match colors and create outfits. It should easily link to other online purchase accounts so that customers don't have to work hard to enter information. If they're not a returning customer, allowing them to use PayPal saves them entering their home address.

Chapter II: Creating Your App

1. How to Create an Android App from Your WordPress-Powered Blog



WordPress is one of the highly popular blog engines available as a hosted or self-hosted solution. We love WordPress – it’s powerful, very customizable, and easy to use. In fact, the AppsGeyser blog runs on WordPress.

Ok, so you have a WordPress-powered blog, too, and you want to make an app from it. It’s easier than you think. First you need to make sure your blog is mobile-friendly by installing one of the mobile plug-ins. Here are a few options:

WordPress Mobile Edition

This WordPress plug-in easily converts your blog for better mobile experience. It’s pretty nicely designed and looks good.

WPtap

This is a plug-in and set of themes you can choose from. The plug-in is free and some of the themes are free, and there are commercial themes available for a fee as well. All are very nicely designed.

These plug-ins works very simply. Once activated, they detect what browser/device your visitor is using and if it’s mobile, the mobile-friendly version is displayed, correctly adapted and formatted for small mobile screens.

Here are the steps to create your Android App from your WordPress blog:

1. Download, install, and activate one of the WordPress mobile plug-ins.
2. Open AppsGeyser and click **Create Now**.
3. Choose **Mobile Website**.
4. Type or paste your blog URL as is in the URL field.
5. Complete the remaining fields.

Now you’ve got your own Android App.

2. Create Your Twitter Feed Android App



Twitter is an important and ubiquitous tool. Being able to turn your Twitter feed into an Android app can make your followers feel more connected to you. In this section, we'll show you how to create an app from your Twitter feed.

To get started, open the Website Widgets page on Twitter and choose Profile Widget. Enter your username and you'll get your widget. Note that you can adjust many settings here such as color and size, and you can also preview your widget. When finished, click the "Finish & Grab Code" button.

Now copy your widget code and go to the AppsGeyser website. Click the **Create Now** button and choose **Web Widget Code**. Paste the Twitter widget code and fill in the remaining fields. You'll then get your Android app that you can offer to your followers.

You can also create a separate Android app for watching specific topics. Open the Twitter Website Widgets page and this time, choose Search Widget. Here you can input your search phrase or use a more advanced query. For example, if you enter the search term 'Android phone' you'll get a widget that will show all real-time tweets containing the phrase 'Android phone.' And if you enter 'Android phone OR tablet' you'll get all tweets about Android phones and tablets. To make more sophisticated queries, visit Twitter's help pages.

Again, once you have your Twitter widget, open the AppsGeyser website and follow the same steps as above. This type of App can be very helpful when you need to follow trending topics on the go – for example, for conferences or trade shows.

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3. How to create an Android App from your Blogger-powered blog

Many of you have asked us how to create an Android App from your blog. Most blog platforms allow you to create a mobile friendly layout, and this time we'll use Blogger as an example.

There are two steps to creating a mobile-friendly version of your blog. First, you'll need to go to your blogger dashboard, and select **Settings**. Then select **Email and Mobile**.

Make sure that the checkbox is checked next to Yes. Show mobile template on mobile devices.

Then, to create a mobile-friendly version of your blog, all you need to do is to add **"?m=1"** to your URL.

For example, if your blog address is: <http://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/>



Simply use this URL: <http://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/?m=1> to format the blog for mobile devices.



Now open AppsGeyser, click the Create button, and choose the Mobile Website option.

Place your mobile-friendly URL <http://googlewebmastercentral.blogspot.com/?m=1>, complete the remaining fields, and you've got your Android App for your blog.

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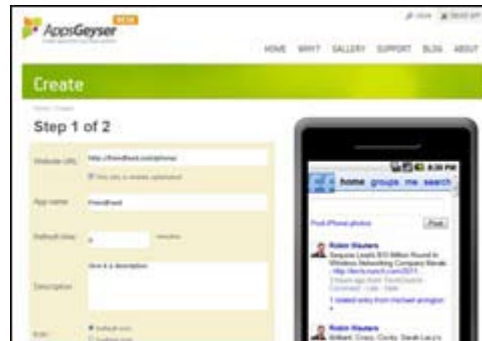
4. Create Beautiful Android Apps from Web Apps



Creating nice Android apps is no more just a privilege of specialized agencies. If you have a nice website, you can create an Android app.

How can you create a similar app? Let's follow the simple steps and create a FriendFeed app.

1. Click **Create App** button
2. Select **Mobile Website**



Now input FriendFeed mobile-optimized website URL, the name and description of the app, and proceed to the second step.

The second step is required only if you have not registered at AppsGeyser. You only have to provide your credentials, and you are done.

It's not just an RSS feed; it's a fully interactive app that you can use every day: you can browse your feed, add friends, join groups, publish posts.

It took us just 2 minutes to create this app without any lines of code. You can create your own app the same way. Just change your mobile site and the app will be changed for all users, the rest (like supporting new Android versions, features, and devices) AppsGeyser does for you.

Now you can offer your app to your audience. Most of us search for apps using the Android Market, so you just need to submit your app to the Android Market in order to get found and generate traffic.

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5. How to Make a Facebook Mobile App Using Javascript and Get Millions of Installs



Recent research shows that the top performing apps are those that interface with social networks (like Facebook or Twitter). So if you're looking for a million installs, it's a good idea to consider something using Facebook's API.

Just the basics:

1) You need to register your own Facebook application to get Facebook API access.

As soon as you have your API key you can start writing your JavaScript code that will access Facebook. (If you don't know JavaScript, but you have a great idea, you can hire someone to help you with this on Elance or vWorker.)

2) Below are some great examples we have used to start creating our Facebook client application:

[Official Facebook resource.](#)

[Several examples & demo on how to actually work with Facebook from JavaScript.](#)

[Another example on how to work with the friends feature on Facebook.](#)

[Another great article detailing building a nice-looking friends list in JavaScript.](#)

[A small example on how to use the Facebook API to work with messages.](#)

3) Once you have finished creating your app, you just need to convert it into a native Android app using Appsgeyser's Create App from Widget or From URL option. And voila! You have your next Facebook client app created and ready to be published in the Android market.

Please remember that you do not need to have all the functions within your app. You can simply provide a way for the users to use one specific Facebook feature within your app (like check or write messages.) For the rest of Facebook functionality, you can redirect people to Facebook mobile website.

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6. Create Angry Birds with AppsGeyser in 2 Minutes

Martin Bryant from TheNextWeb wrote, "Let's be clear before we start, this isn't going to let you create the next Angry Birds or Foursquare."

Why not? Let's create Angry Birds! It's easy.

We'll use AngryBirds as a widget. Open the AppsGeyser website, click **Create Now**, and then choose **Web Widget Code**. It's not necessary to use a real web widget – you can place here any HTML (or HTML 5) code, JavaScript, or embed Flash.

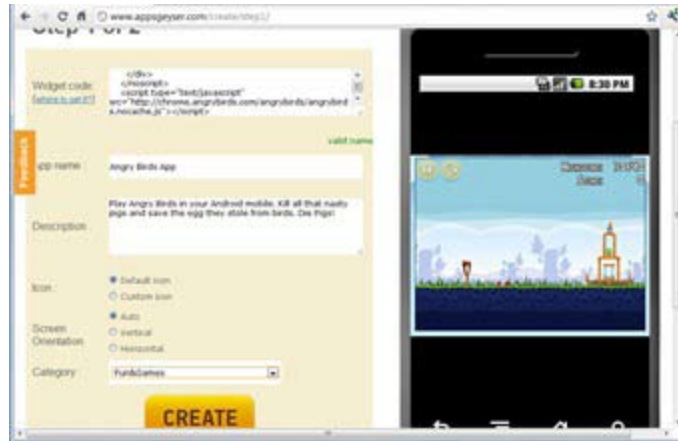


Open the AngryBirds website, and right-click anywhere on the page and choose **View page source**.

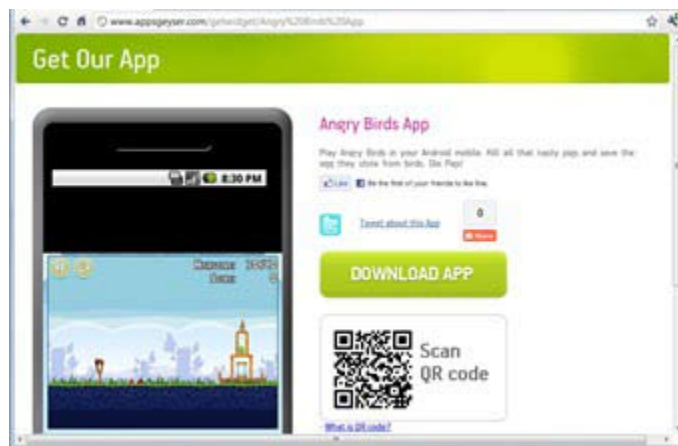


You'll see the webpage's source code in new window.

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Copy the code and place it in the AppsGeyser Widget Code form. You need to adjust this code to remove unnecessary tags and change relative paths to absolute. Fill in the remaining fields, add an icon, and you're done!



This is what the download page for the app you just created will look like.



You can install this app on your phone using QR-code, or share it with your friends.

7. How-to: Geolocation apps



Geo-location is a hot and trendy topic these days. We've heard a lot of people talking about creating or using geo apps, and we've seen several of our users creating geo-related apps using HTML5.

Here are the steps to take to help you get started:

- 1) Create your app using Appsgeyser.com (use `http://html5demos.com/geo` as a mobile site URL to test).
- 2) Access your dashboard edit page.
- 3) Click the **Advanced** tab and turn the location checkbox on.

4) This will allow your App to access geo locations using HTML5.

Here is a Javascript sample to use in your app to get the location:

```
function success(position) {  
  alert(position.coords.latitude);  
  alert(position.coords.longitude);  
}  
  
function error(msg) {  
  alert(`error`);  
}  
  
if (navigator.geolocation) {  
  navigator.geolocation.getCurrentPosition(success, error);  
} else {  
  error(`not supported`);  
}
```

So if you are looking to create the next Foursquare or Gowalla phenomenon, Appsgeyser is a pretty easy place to get started.

8. Getting Millions of Downloads With a Silly App



Surprisingly, there are lots of apps that succeed that are just the opposite. There's a whole genre of completely useless apps. There are apps that tell you not to push the button or to push the button to get a surprise. There are apps that make farting noises. There are apps that do all kinds of fun things that aren't exactly necessities, and yet, people download them. Some of these apps have hundreds of thousands of downloads. Think of the fart app as a modern whoopee cushion. Other apps are downloaded just because people are curious.

These apps aren't hard to make, either. With a little bit of effort, you can create an app that makes people laugh, cry out in surprise, or even gasp a little bit. First, you'll need to think of an idea. How will you make people download your app? What kind of hook will you use? Then, what kind of surprise will there be for users who download the app? Then, it's time to create it.

Let's take, for example, a "How will I look in ten years?" app. You have two webpages. The first webpage shows a picture of a button with the words "push the button to see how you will look in ten years." The button is a link to another page with a picture of (for example) a hippo with some silly text. Turn it into an app and when the user pushes the button, the app loads the picture of the hippo and the text. That's all the app needs to do.

You may wonder what the use of this app is. There are a few things that this app can do for the developer:

1. People download these apps. They download them, because they're curious and bored. Then they make their friends look at them, too.
2. Not only they download this app, but they see other apps by the same developer, giving your other apps a boost in terms of visibility.
3. Some developers have made their money by simply making a whole suite of equally silly products. You can too.

Chapter III: Distribute Your App

1. Naming a Million-Dollar App



Let's say you've developed the most fantastic app in the world. It's exactly what everyone needs. It does something fantastic that people have been waiting for their Androids to do for months or even years! It's beautiful to look at. It's easy to use. The next thing to do is give it the right name. The name has to do one important thing:

It has to tell people what the app is or does.

Everything else is secondary. It can be pretty or flowery or gimmicky, but if it doesn't tell people what the app does,

it's not a good name.

If the app is a faster way to log in to Facebook, then it should be called Facebook-Fast Login or Facebook Speed Login or Speedy Facebook Login. Whatever name it has, it needs to say exactly what the app is and does.

If the app is a way to read mail from Gmail and Hotmail at the same time, it should be called Gmail and Hotmail Reader. Call it something gimmicky like GHotmail-Reader and people won't find it or know what it is when they do. If there is one thing you take away from this post, let it be this – it's more important for the name to tell people what your app does than for it to be a catchy name.

If the app is a game, the name should describe what happens in the game, so that people don't describe the game as "that game with the yellow balls that fly up and you have to catch them." If people don't remember the name of the game, their friends won't download it. Everyone remembers Pong. Everyone remembers Pac-Man. Think of short names that sound like what's happening in the game.

Here are some important things to keep in mind:

1. Try to keep the name short. Two or three word names are best, but some apps might really need four or five words to explain what they do.
2. Follow grammatical rules. People remember things better when they're grammatical.
3. Spell keywords correctly. If you misspell words, they won't show up in search.

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'Howse Bilder' may look cute, but 'House Builder' is a search term.

Remember that it's very important to take your time choosing an app's name. Once an app is in the Android Market, it is possible to change the description. Changing the app itself is called upgrading, and it's an easy process. Changing the app's name, on the other hand, isn't allowed. The only way to do it is to create an entirely new app with a new name, description, and screenshots.

2. Marketing Your Android App: Give Your App a Great Description



You've created an Android app that you think is fantastic. Now how do you get people to download it?

There are a number of elements that go into determining which apps are popular and which apps are a flop, but the title and description are essential parts of any campaign. There are two reasons why the title and description are so important:

1. Searches. If your app is a diet calorie calculator, and the words "diet" and "calorie calculator" don't appear in the description, it won't be found.
2. Help people decide what to download. When people search for an app, they don't download every relevant app. They look at the descriptions and choose the one that best matches their needs.

The Name Should Tell What the Application Does

This seems obvious, but often app publishers look for a cute or gimmicky name that doesn't give users any clue about the app's function. An app called "My Best Friend" could be an app for keeping in touch with friends, an app about dog care or any of a number of things. Instead, give a meaningful name to your app that helps people know what it does without looking at the description.

How To Create a Great Description:

1. Don't waste the first few words. Some search results show only the first three or four words. If those words are "This is an app that...", it doesn't help get downloads.
2. Make sure there are relevant keywords in the first line. If it's a horoscope app, make sure the word horoscope is the first or second word.
3. Explain exactly what the app does. Give a feature list or overview. If the app has a limited number of features, list them all. If the app is complex, make a list of the key features.

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4. Without mentioning or criticizing your competitors, make sure that the list of key features highlights any features that your app has and other apps don't have.
5. Call to action – even though it sounds irrelevant, asking people to Download Now (or an equivalent) actually does help.
6. Sense of urgency – do you plan on making your app a paid app in the future? Let people know. Use phrases like "Free for a limited time."

Writing a useful app description means that more people will find it and download it.

3. A Winning Icon for the Million-Download App



Remember that commercial that said "You never get a second chance to make a first impression?" I don't remember what the commercial was for, but the words really stuck with me. It's true with apps too. The first things people see when they search for an app are the icon and the name.

The icon is crucial. According to some experts, the icon may account for as much as 90% of the decision whether or not to download an app. This is one place you don't want to skimp.

Do not download one of those applications where you can make an icon pixel by pixel. You will work hard, and unless you're an artist,

the results will not be good.

Make a great icon.

You're probably thinking that we mean you should hire a designer and spend a fortune on your icon. Don't worry. We know that you're working on a budget. There are ways to get a great icon on a budget. We're going to tell you one easy way to do it.

Start by finding a picture. There are a few ways to do it:

1. Take a picture from your app
2. Take a photograph of something relevant to your app
3. Draw something and scan it in (only if you're artistic – no doodles)
4. Search Creative Commons for shared-license pictures that you can use
5. Search sites like iStockPhoto or Shutterstock for photos that you can buy rights to use inexpensively.

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Look for a picture that is square (or very close to it) without too much detail, because remember we're going to make it very small later. The picture shouldn't be too small to begin with, though, because Android Market asks for a high-quality picture. If you use Shutterstock or iStockPhoto, be sure to download a photo that is 512×512 or bigger.

Next go to <http://www.roundpic.com> and round your picture's corners to make your picture prettier.

Then, if you don't have a graphics program that you're comfortable with like PhotoShop you'll need to download a program called IrfanView. (If you have a Mac, try Gimp instead.) IrfanView is free, and it is a great program for an app developer to have because you can use it to make any picture into any size and any graphics file format. Download IrfanView and open your picture in IrfanView.

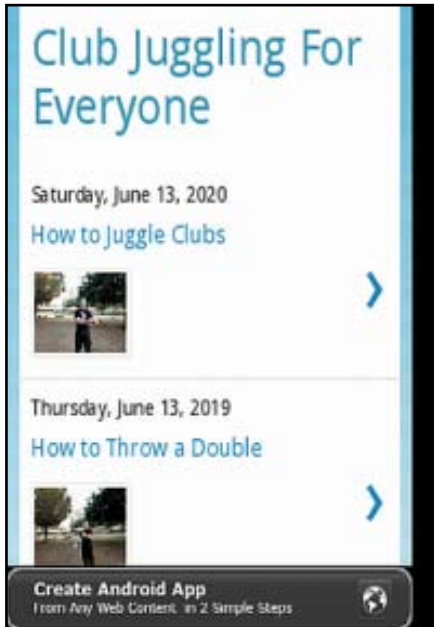
1. From the Image menu choose **Resize/Resample**
2. Under **Set New Size** type Width: **72** Height: **72**
3. Click **OK**
4. From the File menu, choose **Save As**
5. Be sure to **Save As Type:** PNG (Portable Network Graphics)

You'll need another copy of this same icon with the width and height set to 512. That one will show up in Android Market.

There you go! Now you have a custom icon, from a nice picture and you can use the 512 by 512 version to upload to Android Market so that you can get millions of fans to download your app right away!

Remember that if you're updating an app that's already in Android Market, you'll need to re-upload the APK file to Android Market in addition to adding the high-quality version to Android Market.

4. Fabulous Screenshots for the Million Download App



Now it's time to discuss another equally important part of presenting the app's overall image to consumers before they download. Let's talk about screenshots.

Android Market requires them and it's important that these screenshots be good and that they represent your app. Screenshots should look nice. They should show something interesting or fun in the app.

Android phones don't have a hardware camera button, which means that they don't automatically do screenshots, so you'll need a special program that makes your phone do screenshots. There are ways to do screenshots for free, but they involve rooting your phone, and we can't recommend them. Instead, we recommend the inexpensive Screen Capture Shortcut. (It costs around one US dollar.) You'll need to shake the phone to get your screen captures and then either email yourself the photos or link up your phone to your computer to get the pictures. We highly recommend this method.

If you don't have an Android phone, or you can't use screen captures for some reason, you have a few options. We don't recommend this option except as a last resort, as this will give you only one picture, and you really need two, and this won't give you a great picture. Another option is to go to the website you're using for content, capture some of the screen, using PrintScreen, and use IrfanView or another image editor to crop it to the correct size and shape. It will be hard to make the images look nice this way, but it is possible.

Whichever method you choose, remember that screen captures are part of the first impression of your app and they should be created and chosen carefully.

5. Which App Store Should I Use?



Our neighbors across the fence, the ones holding the fruit-labeled phones – they don't have to worry about where to distribute their apps. They have one store, and that's the only place to distribute their apps. It's not like that in the world of Android. In addition to Android Market, there are a number of other app markets where you can distribute your Android apps. If you are only going to distribute your app in one market, make it Google's Android Market. It's the biggest, gets the most downloads, and gives you the most value for your effort.

Don't think it's the only market out there, though. There are at least three other markets out there that are important to consider.

The biggest is Amazon's App Store for Android. Placing your app there can improve your chances of having your app be seen. If your app is a paid app, you can apply to have your app be the free giveaway of the day, which gives your app exposure. There are a few caveats, though. Our friends at Inneractive did some research, and they published [a post on Amazon's app store](#), finding that being free for the day doesn't necessarily lead to increased downloads in the future. They also found that Amazon sets your price, not you. To top it all off, registering for the Amazon App Store is pricey, at \$99.

An option we (and they) like better is GetJar. The downside with GetJar is that it's an all-free service, which is great if your revenue model is in-app advertising or in-app purchases, but less good if you want to sell the app itself. GetJar is a friendly place to distribute your apps. Even though it won't get you the kind of traffic that Android Market does, it's probably worth the ten minutes it takes to register your app for GetJar if you have a free app.

Another option that's not bad is AndroidPit. There is no sign-up fee, which is great for those of us on a tight budget. The bad news: they only share 30% of the revenues. But they work with PayPal and Click&Buy, so customers who can't use Google Checkout (which is the only payment system available on Android Market) can purchase your app.

There are several other markets, but these are the main ones. While listing your app in other markets probably won't hurt, be careful. First, if your app is a paid app, be wary of the terms and conditions for payment in other app markets. Second, we don't recommend paying for listings in other app markets. Paying for listing in the Google Android Market is worthwhile. Paying for listing in other app markets is likely to cost you more than you'll earn.

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6. Marketing Your Android App: Submit it to the Android Market in 5 Easy Steps



The best way to increase downloads is to list your app in the Android Market.

It's very easy to get your app into the Market. The sign-up fee is just \$25, and anyone with an app can get in.

To publish your app to the Apps Market:

1. Sign Up as a Publisher.
2. Download your Android app
3. Click on the "Upload Application" button, and upload your app.
4. Add screenshots, an icon, and a good description of your app.
5. Publish.

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7. How to submit an App to the Amazon AppStore

Amazon recently launched its own AppStore for Android Apps that seems to be very promising. There's a lot of buzz around it so far, and it's growing very quickly.

Unlike Android Market, Amazon is not so crowded at the moment and your App has a higher chance to be found. And another big plus: Amazon allows adding a great description of your App, which can be text and images. Just compare the Angry Birds Rio page on Google and Amazon.

For these reasons, it might be worthwhile to publish your App on Amazon.

How to submit your App

Open <https://developer.amazon.com/welcome.html> to add your App. You must join the Amazon developer program, which costs \$99 annually.

Once you've signed up, click **Add New App**. There are 4 steps you'll need to complete.

1. Provide general information

Enter a title, category, and description for your App. You can set an App price if you want to sell it, and you also need to provide support contact info here. Be sure to provide valid contact info, so users can contact you.

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2. Set Content Rating

Select the appropriate options from the 10 drop-down lists and your rating will be automatically calculated.

3. Upload media files

Upload at least one App icon 114×144 pixels, one icon 512×512 pixels, and 3 screenshots. You can also upload your promotional graphics and video here. Uploading promotional materials will greatly help in promoting your App on Amazon. However, if you don't have these materials, that's not a problem – just skip it.

4. Upload APK file

The easiest step. Just upload the APK that you got from AppsGeyser.

Once you submit your App it will be forwarded for review. There is no guarantee regarding how long it takes to review your App, but be aware that it does take more time than Google.

8. Getting Your App to the Top of the Android Market



In the Android Market, no one factor determines what apps reach the top positions. The top position is not reserved for the best-selling apps or the best ranked. Instead, Google has one of its famous "black box" algorithms working to determine which apps reach the top.

Some things are clear, though:

1. Apps that are downloaded more are higher up.
2. Apps that have a high review rate with positive reviews are higher up.
3. Apps with a high retention rate – that is apps that people don't delete after downloading – are higher up.

How do you make your app achieve these things? First, you make apps that people can find easily, by using relevant keywords in your super-charged description.

Second, make an app that people want to review. Make sure the app is so spectacular that people are just dying to give it five stars. Then, remind them to review the app. In the app's welcome screen, put a reminder like "Have you reviewed this app yet on Android Market?"

Third, and most important, make sure the app is an app that people want to keep. Make sure the app is one that does what it says it does, and make sure that when competing apps come out that do it better, your app improves and releases a new version to keep pace with what's out there. That way, there's no need for customers to download something else and delete your winning app. This increases retention and keeps you on the road to the top of Android Market.

Chapter IV: Grow Your App

1. Marketing Your Mobile App: Know Your Audience

When marketing an app, knowing the target audience is crucial. If the app is designed to appeal to mothers, for example, then focusing on tech blogs to get word out is probably a mistake. For a horoscope app, targeting to blogs against astrology is not a great idea. There are a few steps to determining who your audience is.

1. Think of your friends. Which ones would use it?
2. Think of different groups of people and how they might use the app. Would businessmen use the app? Would college students? Would mothers?
3. Describe in words how the app would be good for these groups. For example, if it's a game, businessmen might use it to blow off steam between meetings, mothers might use it while waiting for appointments, and college students might use it to kill time.
4. For the group or groups that make up your target audience, find blogs that they read, Facebook groups that they join, and influential Twitter users.
5. Join your audience to get to know them and become part of the conversation.

After joining the conversation with a target audience, telling them about a great app is a natural part of the process. Be sure to stay engaged, though. It's important to hear critiques from users so the next version of your app will be even better and even more finely honed for your audience.

2. Nine Things to Know When Marketing Your Android App: Know the Competition



The Android Market is open to everyone, so it's likely that there's another app a lot like yours. To make your app successful, it's important to make your app stand out. The only way to do this is to learn exactly what the competition is doing and how the market is reacting to their actions.

1. Search the Android Market – who is on the front page for your area?
2. Are the apps free? If not, what do they cost?
3. Read the reviews! This is probably the most important part. See what features people are asking for

and what pitfalls there are.

4. What is the competition's key messaging (the three main points that they focus on in their marketing.)
5. How is the market responding (you can check compete.com and alexa.com for website numbers)
6. What are the advantages to your app and are they being clearly communicated to your market?

When writing your app's description:

1. Explain your app's unique selling point. What features does it have that aren't available in the competition's app?
2. Explain how your app avoids the pitfalls that users complained about in the competition's app – without mentioning or criticizing your competition. For example, "The most information available in a weather app. Our app gives you..."

Show Android users that you're offering them something they can't get elsewhere and they'll download.

Image by [johnthescone](#) on [Flickr](#)

3. Twelve Reasons to Give Your App a Facebook Page



A few years ago, if you had a product that you were trying to sell, you would put up a website and build up content so that people could search for the product and find it. That meant doing a lot of search engine optimization and search engine marketing in the hopes of being found online through search. Today companies can go where their users already are – Facebook. Users have changed. They search directly on Facebook, they ask friends for recommendations, and they look at what their friends like to find out what they might like. Giving your app a Facebook page gets you into the loop, because your page does several things that a website can't do:

1. When people 'Like' your page, their friends may see it, meaning they may 'Like' it too. Remember that most people only see updates from their top 150 friends, so this isn't a sure thing
2. Unlike e-mail, a wall post is automatically listed on the customer's screen when they open Facebook. It's all but impossible to hit 'delete' without reading at least some of it.
3. While a blog requires full articles, Facebook posts just require one idea, so you can connect with customers much more easily and much more frequently. (But the blog is important too!)
4. Many people won't read something long, but it's easy to read a short snippet on a Facebook wall.
5. It's easier to get a customer to click through to your blog when you post a short description on Facebook than to get them to subscribe to your blog.
6. Convincing a customer to hit 'Like' is a lot easier than getting bookmarked.
7. Facebook allows you engage your followers in discussions, both about the product and about related subjects.
8. Everything you share with your users on Facebook can be easily shared with their friends.
9. Many people search Facebook instead of Google. It's important to make sure your product can be found.
10. Once users have Liked your page, it's easier to get them to your website.
11. You can have users add content by asking for photos, quotes, stories, and more.
12. Since you're in constant contact with users, you know what they want, giving you more

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opportunity to create viral content.

Building a Facebook page takes just a few minutes, and gives you a whole new way to communicate with your audience. Just remember that creating it is only the beginning. We'll be talking more about how to build up and engage a fan base soon.

4. Six Steps to Bring More Fans to Your App's Facebook Page



Last month, a friend created an app, and asked me how to market it. I said "Get it out on Facebook." My friend immediately built a Facebook page for it and sat back and watched... as nobody 'Liked' it and the page sat empty. After a day, he sent out an invitation to all of his friends, and many of them joined the page. There were even a few friends of friends who joined the page, but all told, it was only about 60 users. After some analysis, he dutifully put up content regularly, and still the page had no discussions, few new users, and very little going on.

This is all too common a scenario with Facebook pages. A Facebook page doesn't really attract traffic on its own. There are a number of ways to make a Facebook page attract traffic, though. One important thing to know is that you can use Facebook as the page. This will allow you to post things as the page instead of as your username. You do this by going into the top right corner, where it says "Account" and selecting "Use Facebook as a Page." Once you are using Facebook as a page, there are several ways to draw attention to your page:

1. Search for pages that are relevant to your app and 'Like' them.
2. See if there are any discussions going on. Contribute to the discussion. It may seem tempting to plug your product, but it will seem like spam and may even be removed. If you contribute to the discussion, people will see your name and logo and be interested in finding out who you are.
3. Go back to the discussions and watch them. Keep commenting as long as you have something interesting to say. If a discussion ends, join another one.
4. Ask people to upload stories, quotes, or pictures.
5. Encourage people to vote for their favorites. (Many pages run contests or sweepstakes, but it's important to check Facebook's rules before running a contest, because some of these can run afoul of Facebook's Terms & Conditions.)
6. Once you have people joining your page, make sure there's content there. Post things that are interesting, ask for people's input, and respond to what people say.

A Facebook page can be a great tool for getting your app out there, but it only works if you have active, engaged fans.

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5. Five Reasons to Use Twitter to Market Your App

When Twitter first came out, I signed up with an account, looked at it a few times, and just didn't get it. As time went by, I tried out Twitter a few times, but I didn't quite understand what it was good for.

Then my boss said "Get on thee on Twitter." So, I sat down with him and said "I don't get it. Why do I need to be on Twitter?" Over the next few days, he gave me his answer in bits and pieces. Here are five key points that he explained to me:

1. It's short and sweet. You don't need to come up with paragraphs of copy. Just get one idea and put it out there.
2. You can talk to anyone. Find someone who's talking about something related, jump into the conversation, and anyone who's following them can quickly see what you're saying too. You don't need to wait for an invitation or even a follow to jump into any conversation.
3. Get brand exposure. Even if you never talk about your product, if you're talking, people will keep seeing your name and get curious about what you do.
4. Find people where they are. People are already on Twitter, waiting for content to fall into their laps. You don't have to hope people search for you, just use keywords that relate to you, and anyone looking for the topic will find you.
5. Find out what everyone's talking about. With a quick search, you can find out what topics are hot in any specific area of interest, and you can fine tune your message to that.

6. How to Use Twitter to Get Your App Noticed

In the last section, we talked about why Twitter is such a great tool for getting your app out there, but we didn't explain how to use Twitter. For a new user, Twitter might seem like walking into a room where there are multiple conversations going on and some people standing on soapboxes spouting information. And it kind of is. Which is totally ok. You can join the conversation, say what is interesting to you, find out what is interesting to others, and establish a rapport with people. Remember that your goal is to create conversations. Here are five tips to help get you started:

1. Fortunately, someone doesn't have to be following you for you to have a conversation. If you use their username preceded by the @ symbol, they will almost certainly see your message.
2. Find interesting people and follow them. Look for people chatting about subjects related to your app and follow them. Some of them might follow you back, but even if they don't, you can watch their posts and talk with them.

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3. Look for people who have followers and actively engage. If they aren't following anyone, the odds are they won't follow you. On the other hand, if they are following everyone and chatting with them all...
4. Retweet the interesting. People like to be retweeted. If you retweet someone, they might take a look at you. Even if they don't, your followers will appreciate being told the interesting information. And when you're retweeted, a "thank you" is always nice.
5. Be your awesome self. Nobody wants to talk to a robot. Laugh at things that are funny, ask questions, talk about your life. Don't make the whole discussion about your app. Give people a chance to talk to you, not your app. People don't follow apps, they follow people.

7. Eight Ways to Get Started Advertising Your App on Empire Avenue



Empire Avenue is generating a lot of buzz. You can read Scott Monty's article on the [Gamification of Social Media](#) or Mashable's article entitled [Why Top Brands Are Investing So Much Time In a Social Media Leaderboard](#) to find out more about Empire Avenue and why it's a great tool for your brand.

Empire Avenue is a whole new way of connecting to people, and you can use it for a lot more than app marketing. First and foremost, it's a game. You buy and sell stocks, you chat with people, and you get dividends if your stocks perform well. How well you do is measured by your holdings and your stock price.

Each person or business – you can register as either – has a stock ticker, a profile, and a share price. The share price goes up with achievements, people purchasing your stock, and your activity in social media.

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So how does one use a stock exchange game to market an app? Like all social media, your goal is to connect rather than just to advertise. It's not a black and white process, but here are some tips to start you off:

1. Make your ticker name the name of your app or similar to your app name.
2. Set up your profile so that anyone looking at it will get information about your app.
3. Make sure that at least some of the interests you have listed are in line with your app. People find you when you have common interests.
4. Buy stocks in users that have similar interests to you, and leave them a shout out that will pique their interest. Don't advertise your app. Try to start a conversation. If your shout out is interesting, you're likely to get a response. Shameless plugs don't start conversations.
5. Join communities that match up with what your app does and leave interesting notes on the bulletin board.
6. If your app is location-specific, be sure to join the city that's nearest to the target location.
7. Be sure your Twitter account and your app's fan page are connected. Connect your blog, too, if you have one!
8. Enjoy the game. If you're not playing the game, you won't be able to make your mark.

Another important aspect of Empire Avenue is that it provides you with a realistic look at how you're doing in the social media world. If you're not making good dividends, it's because you're not out there enough. Playing Empire Avenue reminds you to keep yourself out there interacting with all of your potential customers.

Empire Avenue is still fairly new in the social media world, so the rules for success aren't hard and fast. You'll need to explore the possibilities to find your niche.

8. Using Social Media for Customer Service



A few months ago, I downloaded a screenshot utility from the Android Market to my Android phone. I had to pay for it, but I needed it for work, so I was fine with shelling out the dollar or so that it cost. (It was actually 100 Japanese Yen.) It worked great and I loved it. I used it for the screenshots in my app and in many of my blog posts. About two weeks ago, my phone started acting weird. The home screen didn't come up right, so I asked my husband, who in addition to being a juggler, is also an engineer, and he said "reset it."

I reset the phone, and it worked perfectly. My contacts are stored my SIM so I didn't lose any. I went to Android Market to download the app again, and something had changed. The app wouldn't download to my phone. It registered that I owned the app, but the app was no longer compatible with my phone. I looked at the developer's information, got their Twitter handle, and tweeted them a message. Within minutes, they asked me to email them, and within the hour, they'd changed whatever they needed to change in Android Market to allow me to download the app again.

This is an example of what you should be using your social media for – getting problems solved. There are a few things to take away from this example.

1. Try to be on top of things. Speed is important. You obviously can't be on 24/7, but try to be on at least once every 24 hours. The faster you get to a complaint, the less time a person has to spread the complaint to all their friends.
2. Take complaints out of the public forum. Get them to email you immediately. Once they've emailed you, everyone sees you're working on a solution, and no one has to see if the solution fails.
3. Try to give your customer a good solution. Even if your product is inexpensive or free, you still want your customer to take away a good experience so that they'll recommend you to others.
4. If you can't give the customer a solution, apologize, but not too much. Let them know that you hope they'll find a good solution and that you'd love to have them use your products another time.
5. If a customer paid for a product and can't use it because of a flaw in the app or a change in the app and you can't find a solution, refund their money. This might hurt, but it's good business. It also means you won't get a negative review from them. Remember that negative reviews also hurt your ranking in the Android Market.

9. Marketing Your App: 8 Great App Review Blogs



You're so proud of the app you want the world to know about it. A great way to let a lot of new people know about your app is to have it reviewed by someone with an apps review blog. There are a number of great app review sites. Here are some that we particularly like (in no particular order):

1. [AppBoy Blog](#) reviews mainly utilities, but also reviews games
2. [Android Tapp](#) reviews all kinds of different apps for Android and for iPhone.
3. [Androinica](#) reviews apps rarely, but a review there is great press.
4. [Lifehacker](#) – Create an account to log in and “send a

tip” if your app is a life-hack

5. [Android Geeks](#) reviews really top-notch apps
6. [iKid Apps](#) reviews games for kids
7. [Best Kids Apps](#) is another reviewer of apps for toddlers and little kids.
8. [Droid Android Games](#) is a great place to get your games reviewed.

How to get an app blogger to review your app:

1. Read their blog to see if your app is the type the app blogger would review.
2. Read through the site to make sure they haven't reviewed your app yet. If they have, thank them.
3. Check to make sure that they don't have a business relationship with your competition.
4. Look for contact details on the site and follow their contact instructions.
5. In emails, be friendly and polite.
6. Represent yourself honestly. An app creator shouldn't pose as a disinterested user.
7. If the reviewer says no, thank them for their time and ask them to keep the app in mind for the future. Don't take it personally.

After a blogger reviews your app, thank them and let them know how many downloads you received after their post.

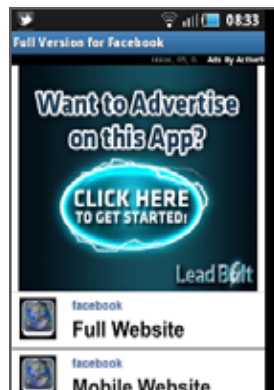
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10. How a Facebook App's Growth Strategy Can Work for You

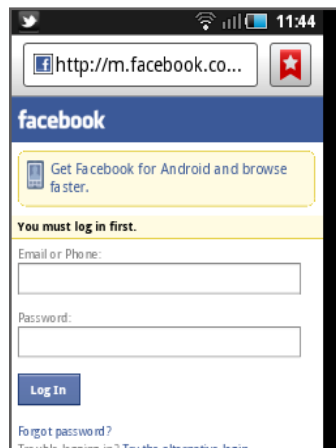
Active9's Full Version for Facebook have managed a great strategy for engaging their audience and growing their app.

They created an app that allows people to use all of Facebook's features in the standard, browser-based way, instead of the way that the Facebook app works. To be honest, their app isn't anything Earth-shattering.

Download their app, and get a screen like this:



Click either option and it takes you to Facebook's mobile web page option as seen here:



It's easy to build something like this on AppsGeyser's system in three easy steps:

1. Create an HTML page that links to <http://touch.facebook.com/>
(You can also link to other sections of the website like <http://touch.facebook.com/#!/>)

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messages/ for getting directly to the messages view, for example)

2. Add links to your blog, Facebook fan page, or other relevant pages.
3. Use AppsGeyser's Mobile Website option to convert the URL into an app.

Despite the fact that this app is simple to create, doesn't offer a particularly unique functionality, and isn't the official Facebook app, half a million people have downloaded Full Version for Facebook. There are a number of reasons why:

1. The app gives users something they want.
2. The app does only one thing.
3. It has a great name.
4. The icon is attractive.
5. The description is simple and clear.
6. The developers have an active Facebook page that encourages users to share their experiences and talk about the app.
7. There is a suite of products that all do similar things, leading customers to believe that the outfit has specific expertise.

When you're growing your app, look for these factors, and you too can grow your app to astounding numbers of users and usages!

11. A Super Secret to Getting More App Downloads



We're going to reveal a secret way to increase app downloads even more.

The secret to more downloads is regularly updating your app

That's right. Updating your app is a great way to increase downloads. Every time an app is updated, it gets placed in the "What's New" section of its category. This means more views, and more views means more downloads.

Don't abuse this. Be sure to change something before performing an update. A good idea is to look at user comments and implement a feature that users have requested. This will make improve the app, please the users, and justify updating the app all at the same time. Don't update too frequently, but don't let it slide either. A good rule of thumb is to update every four to six weeks.

Since app downloads are highest on holidays and weekends, time updates to coincide with holidays and weekends in order to maximize the benefit.

Be sure to use this secret wisely, and enjoy the benefits of many more downloads!

Chapter V: Earn Money

1. 3 Ways to Earn Money With a Free Android App



According to the Distimo report, it's really hard to make money by selling Android apps. I know, that's a painful thing to read. Just to make it more painful, here are more cold, hard facts:

1. 80% of all paid applications in the Android Market have been downloaded fewer than 100 times.
2. Only two paid applications have been downloaded more than half a million times. Apple's App store has six different paid applications that do better than that in just two months in the United States.
3. In the Android Market, only five paid games have

scored more than 250,000 downloads.

4. Distimo also reports that it's harder to get into the top apps list in the Android Market than in the Apple App Store.

Basically, it seems like Android users just don't want to spend money on apps, so unless you hit the absolute top, selling your app is going to be a real uphill battle.

How, then, can you make money by making an Android app?

1. **In-app advertising:** Running ads inside your app generates revenue. The user doesn't have to pay, and you get money. It's a win-win. Currently, all AppsGeyser apps run ads for you, and when your app gets enough uses, you get paid.
2. **In-app purchases:** Give a game away for free, but have the best goodies available for cash. It works for Zynga, and it can work for you if your game is super-addictive.
3. **Bolster your business:** Some apps help your business generate income by connecting you more directly and interactively with your customers. For a great example of this, look at the Charlotte Mobile Real Estate app.

It seems counter-intuitive, but by giving away your app for free, you will earn a lot more than if you sell it.

2. Should I sell my App or Give it away for Free?



Everyone wants to make a buck. When you make an app, you think you should be able to sell it. Not every app should be sold, though. Some apps are best given away. There are a few ways to make money with free apps, too. These are some of the things you should consider before putting a price tag on your app

Is the app a store or advertisement for something else? If so, it's not fair to charge people for it. If the app is announcing a bunch of tracks on iTunes with samples, the app should be free. If the app encourages people to buy things at an online store, it should be free.

Does your app support your main business? If your app is designed to support a brick-and-mortar business like a shop by helping people place orders or find your location, you shouldn't sell it. You should give it away.

Does the app give a service that is free on the web? If so, it's likely to be a hard sell, unless your app allows access to something inaccessible.

Is there competition? Is the competition free? Is your app significantly better than the competition's? If not, don't bet on being able to sell a lot. You can try a paid version and a free version, and run ads in your free version.

Are you solving a pain for people? If you're solving a real pain that people have, people are likely to pay for it, especially if no one else solves it as well or as cheaply.

Is your app really fun and exciting? If your app is really cool and trendy, people are likely to be willing to pay for it.

3. Pricing Your Android App



If your app is something that you definitely want to sell, the next question is obvious. How much should you charge? Obviously, you'd like to charge a million dollars from each user, but then nobody will buy it. Of course, if you did manage to make one sale, you'd be in good shape. It's important to be realistic, while not undervaluing your service.

First, while a lot of people price their apps at the 99 cent price point, it's not necessarily the best price for your app by default. 99 cents is a good price for a game that kids are going to buy, because it's easy for them to convince their parents to spend a buck on a game.

When it comes to utility apps, there's generally a sense that you get what you pay for, so people might actually choose a slightly higher priced app in the same category.

You can experiment with your price, finding a "sweet spot" – a price where people seem to buy your app at a fast pace. Many app makers find this price to be around \$4.

It might seem counter-intuitive, but if at first, you don't get a lot of buyers, you might want to raise your price to see if you make your app look higher class.

If you're left scratching your head as to what to do, here's our suggestion:

For a game, try pricing your game at 99 cents to attract a younger audience that needs to convince their parents.

For a utility, try pricing at \$3.99 to show that you think your app is worthwhile without hitting a price point high enough to make people really think about the expense.

4. 4 Ways to Make Money from a Network of Android Apps



Making a network or constellation of related Android apps is a huge boost to app discovery in the Android Market. You may have felt that it would be a waste of your time to write a whole series of apps when none of them would earn money except your main app.

Here are some ways that secondary Android apps earn money:

1. Create a store with related merchandise. It's very easy to become an Amazon affiliate, for example. If people purchase the related merchandise, you get a percentage.
2. Run advertisements on a blog. Blog advertisements are often paid per impression, though some are paid per click-through. In either case, having a mobile blog app adds eyeballs, which translates to more money.
3. Create a free version and a paid version of the same app. By making a free version, you not only create an extra avenue for discovery, but you can show off your app's greatness with a limited feature set, giving more people a reason to buy the paid app.
4. Create a wallpaper app with free wallpapers and bonus wallpapers that can only be earned by sharing links on social media. This encourages users to advertise your paid apps at no cost to you!

These are just some ways that a constellation of apps can work for you.

5. 5 Ways to Make Money from a Free App



We talked about 3 ways to make money from a free app. Let's discuss those same ways from a slightly different angle and add another two great tips.

1. **In-app ads** – Banners in your app can make a free app earn you big money. The more people who download and use your app, the better this goes.

2. **Freemium/in-app (boost) purchases** – It works well with games. Give the game for free, but make the goodies and the best levels cost money.

3. **Promote your business** - Use your app to promote your business. An app can give basic information about your business and offer some kind of added value. For example, if you own a garage, your app could include tips on getting better mileage, tips on changing the oil, and a list of ways to know it's time to come in to the garage!

4. **Promote paid app** – A free app can be just the way to prove that your paid app is worth the money. Make sure to give enough functionality in the free app to show off your product while still leaving the big guns to the paid app. You can also create an ad-supported app and offer an ad-free version as a paid app. Be aware, though, that many Android users will choose the ads over the paid version.

5. **App as online store** - If your app is an online store, it can be a great way to make money. Online merchant apps need to be carefully designed, though, because most people don't want to take a whole shopping trip on their phone!

6. 3 Ways to Use an Ad Banner to Bolster Your Business

You can add banners to your apps. Some of you probably have great ideas what to do with those banners. Others of you might not be sure how a banner in an app can mean business for you. We wanted to give you a few ideas for how you can use an app banner to gain customers.

1. Get customers to your paid app. This is the simplest way to turn an app banner into money. It's particularly effective if your paid app is closely related to your free app.
2. Harvest e-mail addresses. You can't do this directly. You'll have to offer an incentive. If you offer something free in your banner, and lead users to a page where they have to register for your newsletter in order to get a freebie, you will have a lot of legal, warm leads! Give away something worthwhile like these great Angry Birds plushies. Obviously, you can't give one to every customer who signs up, but you can give a bird to one in 50 or 500 sign-ups, depending upon how much you value a warm lead!
3. Bring customers to your business site. Imagine if you create a utility app that helps people organize their homes, and your website sells containers for organizing household items. You have an audience using your app for a purpose that integrates well with your e-commerce site, and your app can bring interested customers into your e-commerce site at a time when they're looking for just what you have to offer!

There are many other ways that your business can benefit from using a custom banner in your app!

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7. Case Study: How NASA TV App is already Making Money



Synopsis: Alex Novikov developed an app to let Android users watch NASA's "TV Channel" video feed, and used AppsGeyser's banner share system to monetize it with AdMob. Within just one month, his app earned \$50, easily recovering the money he spent to be listed in Android Market.

The Situation: Mr. Novikov wanted his users to be able to view NASA's television channel from their Android phones. To enable this, he first needed to

bring the resolution down to 120kb/s instead of the 4.4MB/s that NASA provides. Then he made an app using AppsGeyser.

Distributing the App: Mr. Novikov first showed the app to his friends, many of whom asked where they could download it. In order to facilitate an easier process, he added his app to Android Market. This cost \$25, which concerned Alex at first, because his app did not meet the threshold for downloads and uses immediately, so it could not be monetized.

Monetizing the App: Mr. Novikov soon saw that his app qualified for monetization, so he chose to monetize using AdMob. In the first month alone, he made \$50 from AdMob.

Summary: Alex Novikov mad a small, easy-to-use app. In a single month in the Android Market, he was able to not only recoup his \$25 expenditure but earn an additional \$25 as well. His earnings estimates for January are quadruple those of December. He has plans to launch a series of similar applications, and hopes to be able to derive a sizable income from his apps soon!

8. Can I Make Money with an App?



It's hard to believe that you can make money from an app that's so easy to create. The reality, though, is that Android apps can make plenty of money. If you look at the most recent earnings report from Making Money with Android, you can see that it's very possible to make \$1000 dollars a month by creating apps. Obviously, you won't be able to do it in the first month, and you'll need to really put some time and effort into creating quality apps.

The most recent earnings report from Android Hobby Development shows what we already know – selling apps isn't necessarily where the big money is. Advertising is. The developer's sales revenues weren't amazing, but ad revenues were more impressive.

Not every developer is going to make big bucks. You can read the income report for App Development on the Side, and see how one developer just finally managed to make his app profitable.

Looking at these three blogs, it's easy to notice three main trends in getting to profitability:

1. The developers create numerous apps, looking for niches and gaps in the market.
2. The developers use a number of different monetization methods.
3. The developers are constantly improving both the apps and the monetization methods of the apps.

There is no shortcut for hard work, but you'll need to do the legwork to find the right apps. You'll need to create many apps, and have many apps in the Android Market.

There's no getting around it; different monetization methods work well for different apps. Moreover, some monetization methods work well for a while and then stop performing as well. It's important to realize that it takes time to develop an app-making business. Your first five apps might be complete flops, but if you keep making apps, eventually you'll find one that people really want!

Image by 401K on flickr

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9. App Banners – Dos and Don'ts

Here are some tips for correct use of the ad space.

Don't: Threaten the user in any way. If your ad says that your app will brick their phone if they don't click, you will be reported, and your app (and all future apps) will be banned from Android Market.

Do: Let the user know that they can get an upgraded version of the app for a reasonable fee.

Don't: Lie to the user. The banner should not mislead the user into clicking for something free if that free thing is not really available. It's ok to offer a free Galaxy 2 if you're actually giving one away. If you don't plan to give one away, telling people they can get one is legally fraud.

Do: Give away free ebooks, raffle off prizes.

Don't: Lead users to viruses. As above, your app will be reported and Google will ban it and all existing and future apps from Android Market

Do: Give users a good idea of what they will get when they click the banner. For example, "Click here to buy premium pots and pans."

Don't: Use banners that are not related to your app. People looking at a recipe app don't want to be shown an advertisement for home inspection, and people using a real estate app are probably not looking to buy spices in bulk online.

Do: Use banners that are closely related to your app; sell spices, knives, or pots and pans on a recipe app, and save home inspection and mortgage ads for a real estate app.

Don't: Advertise a local business on an app that has global appeal. Advertising dance lessons in Houston, Texas on a dance music app is only marginally helpful.

Do: Give your app local appeal to target local customers or offer an item or service that can be accessed anywhere – consider offering online dance lessons or referring to an affiliate link to a dance DVD.

Don't: Make your ad adult-only when your app is child-friendly. If you make a child's game, don't run ads for a strip club.

Do: Make sure that your advertisement is appropriate to your app-using audience. To make money from a child's game, sell other games or make a deal with a local pizza place.

Don't: Assume that because AdMob belongs to Google, it is the best ad network or the best way to make money.

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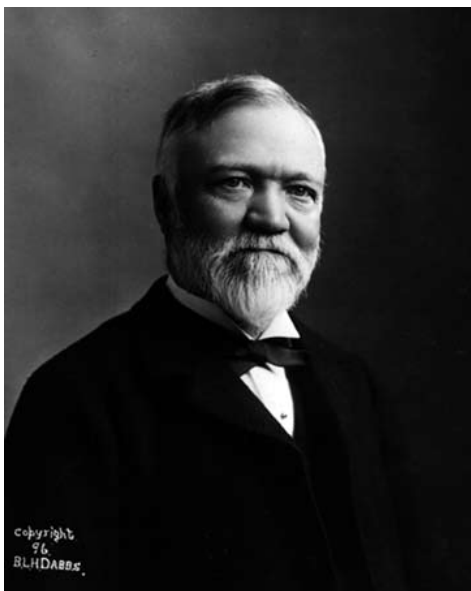
Do: Research a variety of ad networks, and consider the ones that cater best to your audience. You may get better results from an affiliate program than from an ad network.

Don't: Leave things as they are no matter what.

Do: Change your approach often. Use different programs on different apps. See what works better and what doesn't work as well. Check how well each ad does for every app. Your ad space use should be tweaked often!

And last, but definitely not least, **DO** consider the customer! If you want them to click, give them a good reason to click. Offer them coupons, access to information, and good recommendations!

10. Steps to Becoming an Android App Tycoon



Do you want to become an Android app Tycoon? So much information about creating apps and marketing is published constantly that it's impossible to keep up with all of it. It's hard to make sense of the flood of information. Let me lay it out for you in a step-by-step process.

1. First come up with your concept. Write down all of your app ideas on a piece of paper. Look at the options, consider what's feasible, and decide what you want to make.
2. The second step is to design your app. Think of how you'd like it to look, what you'd like it to do. Write down all of the features you want.
3. Build the HTML or JavaScript for the app. Come up with at least 4 different ways of presenting the app, and create each one. The apps can be related apps with different material in each, or they can provide the same basic function but have different styling or focus.
4. Create your apps. This is probably the easiest part of the whole process.
5. Add your apps to Android Market and/or other markets.

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6. Add a monetization plan.
7. Get a good review for your apps. You can solicit one on Fiverr easily.
8. Advertise your app! Build a Facebook page, get on Twitter, make a Google+ page, build a web-page, run advertisements, run QR code campaigns, tell your friends and neighbors about your apps.
9. Improve your apps every 4-6 weeks.
10. Send notifications to your users to keep them interested.

Soon your app will be making good money. Be sure to keep making apps and improving them and you'll be well on your way to being an app tycoon!

11. Make Big Money Embedding Phone Numbers in Android App Banners



We talk about mobile devices. Stop. They're not just mobile devices. The vast majority of them are phones.

Phones. That is, they can make phone calls. Not only they can, they're made for it. They live for making phone calls.

Imagine this: You're looking up information about great pizza shops in Chicago, trying to find a place to call. You find an app that reviews them, and suddenly, you see a link to call a pizza shop so you can place your order right now. It sounds good, doesn't it?

Not surprisingly, websites don't convert to phone calls nearly as well as mobile apps. Often people sitting at the computer can't be bothered to reach for a phone, but if they're already on the phone, and they can just tap to dial, it's great.

Affiliate programs using embedded phone numbers

With OfferMobi, it's easy to find advertisers looking to use phone number advertising. Another avenue for becoming a phone number affiliate is Commission Junction. Be sure to look specifically at their pay-per-call service. The great thing about pay-per-call is that the payouts are really high. It's true that fewer people click to call than click to find out more, but when they do, they're usually close to purchasing. Some of the pay-per-call offers on Commission Junction pay \$40 for a single call. If your app appeals to the right niche, this gets quite lucrative. They track your sales using a unique 1-800 number for each affiliate.

How do I embed a phone number in the banner?

It's really easy. You'll need to use the html tag shown in this example:
`Call to get the best insurance prices!`

That's it. Once you do that, the link will dial the customer's phone.

12. Making Money with Android is Harder than You Thought? Don't Give Up!



Let's face it. Android users are a cheap bunch. They don't like to pay for their software. Putting AdMob on a free app pans out for some app-makers, but it's not likely to replace a salary unless your app gets millions of downloads. Most of us, most of the time, make apps that appeal to a specific niche. We make our apps useful and desirable, but there is an incredible amount of competition in the Android Market Google Play, so we're lucky to get several hundred downloads a day.

It's not all bad news, though. The idea here is that apps are engagement. If you have some kind of online property (a website) or some kind of know-how, you can engage people by creating an app. Once you've engaged them, it's time to think about turning that engagement into cash. Here are some suggestions on just how to do that:

1. Most apps target a specific niche. Figure out what your niche is willing to pay money for and create partnerships with those businesses. For example, if your niche targets mothers, partner with a site that sells diapers at a discount. If your niche is retirees, you can try selling them condos in Florida. It's not an easy sell, but the commission should be high!
2. Use an app as a new avenue for discovery for a website. If a website you have is making money, then use an app to drive traffic to that website. Just the act of putting it into the Google Play arena will give you the site more hits.
3. Funnel them into a paid app. Give them a free app that's good, but missing some essential features. Some customers will be willing to pay well to have their app really do what they need.

I guess what I'm trying to say here is that you shouldn't let the slow earnings get you down. Keep building apps, and keep working different strategies. With a good app, there is potential for good earnings!

13. 5 Factors that Affect how Much Money an Android App Makes



Every app-maker has a goal for their app. In most cases, the goal is to make money. If making money is your goal, then you need to be aware of the factors that affect whether or not an app makes money.

1. **App Quality** – This almost goes without saying. When all other factors are equal, good quality apps perform better than poor quality apps. Poor quality apps may make money initially, but it is only a matter of time before a better quality version is produced by a competitor.

2. **Price Point** – If you're charging for your app, then it's crucial to hit a 'sweet spot' for your price point. Make the app too cheap, and you're not making any money for it. Make it too expensive, and no one will buy it. It might

be true that you only have to sell one copy if you price it at a million dollars, but unless your app is a recipe for producing gold from lead and it actually works, you're not going to get that one buyer. On the other hand, most people who are willing to pay anything are willing to pay more than 99 cents, so you won't lose many customers by pricing the app at \$1.50. This is definitely a factor you'll need to experiment with.

3. **Monetization Strategy** – If you're giving away the app, you'll need to look at a different way to monetize. There are a number of strategies, and you may need to experiment to see which one is best suited towards your particular type of app.

4. **Monetization Program** – For some apps, AdMob is the best solution, while for others, Inneractive or Leadbolt can be a good solution. Still others will do best with a pay-per-call model.

5. **Publicity and Advertising** – No one downloads an app that they don't know exists. Make a Facebook page, Tweet about your app, blog about it, ask for reviews of the app, and even use paid ads to get the word out.

Sometimes, even a great app with good publicity doesn't make it big. Try to get as much money as possible from every app, but remember that Angry Birds wasn't Rovio's first attempt, or even fifty-first. To make big money from an app, you'll have to produce app after app, seeking out the proper niche, and then find the best way to make money from it. Good luck!

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- Review of your App
- Consulting on Promotion and Distribution
- Consulting on Monetization

The best Apps in terms of performance created by readers can apply for free promotion.

