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The Absolute Guide To App Growth

Save 40+ hours per month
growing your app

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Introduction

Alright you wonderful human being, we're going to give you some things that are going to help you gain back your time and create an awesome app growth strategy.

We'll touch on:

- The incredible impact of being data-rich
- How to liberate your decision making
- What App growth and performance insights can do for you
- Informing your Ad performance to improve results
- How to implement it all in three easy steps

We are firm believers in working smarter not harder when it comes to growing an app. In order to do this we teach our clients to take a step back and think about a couple of things first. Typically, you might want to dive straight into advertising to give your app a boost, but there are some fundamentals to put in place first that will ultimately save you a lot of time, energy, and cash.

A lot of business owners fall into the trap of trying to learn 100% of everything on the go. It's easy to do but ultimately it'll dig you a hole that takes all of your effort to climb back out of. This leads to exponential stress, pressure and frustration; the things you could really do without. Our process saves you from all of this and avoids you working without the necessary data and learnings that will ultimately save you hours each week.

It comes down to this...don't go into growth mode blind; not knowing who your audience really is, how to talk to them, where they are, or how they are going to behave in your app makes for some serious consequences e.g. wasting cash, wasting time, and failing.

We all live in a world where the thing we value the most is spent so candidly but can never be bought. Time is the one thing we all wish we had more of at all costs. More time in the day to get that extra task done. More time to see your kids grow up. One more hour to binge watch another episode of real crime dramas scaring ourselves silly that this could happen on our road or in our area.

We've come up with a process that will allow you to have that time and sleep and work smarter as a result.

"Every business needs a data strategy..."

- Bernard Marr, Business and Tech Strategic Advisor. Cited on Forbes.com

What Is Data-Rich?

Think Scrooge McDuck but instead of coins, it's data. One's and zero's.

Being data-rich is the ability see what you users are doing in your app day-in, day-out with invaluable tools at your disposal to keep those very users retained, and your revenue up.

It's having the beauty of thousands of data points to inform your strategy from how your users are using a particular feature, where they are dropping off, how efficient your advertising is being, and how you can improve your app for the long run.

It's about accuracy, innovation and identification.

Imagine having 10x the certainty you have now on how you are going to progress not just your app performance but your advertising performance, too. It is unfathomably valuable to have a clear, defined approach to your businesses app growth. With it you can save months of testing and faffing about.

Typical analytical solutions allow you to see this kind of data but with very little actionable information which leaves you analysing, reading, and splicing data for hours to no end.

Being data-rich is a power play for your business to flex and show off your abilities. Having the capacity to track and analyse indicative results builds a process that you can rely on.

Additionally, data-rich also means having every team in your business unified on one objective through varied lenses. Having one centralised tool and process means developers, marketers, stakeholders and investors are using the same data but unique to their own KPIs.

Three ways data will improve your app growth strategy

1 Personalised Retargeting

Users provide you with value in the form of cash or data, so why not make them feel more comfortable in your app by delivering value back to them? Personalised retargeting is the practice of triggering ads and engagement channels based on specific actions and data. Think 2 steps ahead of your users and keep them coming back for more.

2 Improved Conversion Rates and Retention

Advertising is an amplification of your product. To make it work to the best of its abilities both product and marketing need to work together to maximise the opportunity.

Data telling you about how users are falling through your funnel brings invaluable insight. Learn who is dropping off where and for what reason. Optimise your conversion rates in-app to increase retention and adoption significantly.

3 Predictive Modelling

AI is here and it is not used nearly enough in advertising. What tools there are can be expensive and often need an expert to handle them.

When you do find a tool that offers a smart, easy to use predictive engine it opens a whole new world.

Acquiring users is one thing to get your app off the ground but the constant analysis of new adopters will help you understand what they are likely to do in your app. This allows you to analyse ad efficiency and adapt your growth strategy according to your most valuable users.

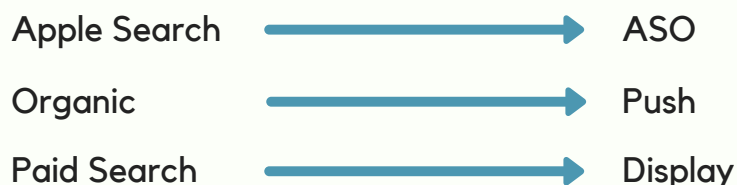
App Growth & How To Leverage It

App growth is made up of multiple channels and disciplines. The term app growth is defined in the way you significantly grow not only the adoption of your app but the increase in retention from users already in it. You then typically segment your activity through direct acquisition and more response-lead campaigns through to user activation in-app.

It typically gets segmented by the channels or practices you can employ that have a significant difference with each platform or channel you use:

- ASO
- Paid Search
- Paid Social
- Organic Social
- Email
- Display
- Video
- Push
- SMS
- In-app messaging

In growth mode it is important to consider each and every aspect to provide you with significant data. Leveraging your data from all of these channels is incredibly important in the early stages of app growth. More importantly you must understand that platforms can inform the strategy of one another.



There is so much you can learn from each platform that will inform the strategy of another; this is powerful to learn and analyse on a granular level as this reduces cash burn and wastage often saving you tens of thousands.

For example, two perfect channels that go hand in hand are ASO and Apple Search (and by extension, Google Search). Both (all) of them rely on keywords and utilising the right ones to attract your target audience.

Apple Search allows you to amplify your ASO by quickly understanding what keywords are going to bring you the highest volume of downloads but, more importantly, what keywords are going to bring you audiences who hold the most value.

In the same fashion, email and push notifications are also best of pals in your strategy. Learning what engages your audiences, what really captures their attention and keeps them around for longer is going to be invaluable to you. Extend that learning to then SMS and in-app messaging, possibly even your organic strategy, and you have a combination of tools and an impressive feedback loop.

"Gone are the days when marketing decisions were guided by intuition and experience. Important marketing decisions are now determined by big data."

- Yas Saran, CEO. Cited on Forbes.com

Now, all of this is great but the dynamic in the entire team does not always align. It can be increasingly difficult to have everyone working to one goal when you don't have targeted business objectives. What's more is when you have these objectives it is concretely important to have them all tracked in one place.

When you start employing a suite of tools to run your advertising and report on metrics, the objectivity of it all gets lost when you're hopping from tool to tool, desperately trying to unify your teams output.

To achieve absolute app growth leveraging data is now going to be your number one priority. You cannot learn to grow exponentially without it, and better yet, you also cannot achieve that growth without having the right data in front of you. You do not have to be the best numbers person to understand the growth of your app, but when that data is not available then you are presented with a bigger problem.

Why Tracking Is King

Tracking and analytics is the bedrock of your performance learnings. It comes as no surprise that tracking is compulsory when it comes to knowing what is going on in your app. But where you can make significant discoveries that save time on a weekly basis is literally track everything.

Of course, you can do this with many different platforms but it comes down to how you do it quickly, accurately, and in a way that maximises the data insights at all times to inform every part of your business.

Typically, the recommendation is to track everything and not just your end goal that determines your CPA. From this, you get funnels and flows that define your app usage. To obtain this you would need to track every tap, swipe and settings change. You might now be thinking about how on earth you can bring all of this into one simple process without moving heaven and earth or paying an arm and a leg, or two, for it.

Enter Mixpanel.

Mixpanel is a tracking and analytics tool that packs a harder punch than you might think it does. Think about a standard analytics tool but informative, easy to use, stunning and definitive.

This tool is important to inform and build your growth strategy because, with this tool, gone are the days of standard tracking. Profiling users as they enter your funnel is a tool you never thought you needed until now. You can physically see WHO is using your app over time and build a profile of their habits to analyse their value.

Above and beyond this, you have all of this loveliness too:

Predictive analysis

Powerful user prediction tech that will compare your historic data to any cohort of your app users and tell you how they are likely to deliver value.

Funnel and flow analysis

A full view into how your users are flowing through your app. Understand what might be tripping users up, what they love about your product, and how this is affecting the bottom of your funnel.

User engagement tools & A/B testing

It doesn't stop with acquisition, there are plenty of tools to utilise that help with activation and ongoing engagement. Email, SMS, Push notifications, in-app messaging and web hooks all complete with A/B testing functionality.

Retention reporting

Understand and analyse how users are interacting with your app on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis using core and important events inside your app at any time.

Live view

Built for developers and product owners - get live view data on how users are interacting with particular features or functionality within your app for a truly granular look in at how to inform your roadmap.

Yes, we're still talking about the same platform.

Mixpanel also boasts a rather favourable commercial model that will leave you data and cash (well, better than you might have been) rich allowing that extra bit of sleep every night.

Personalisation

This has become a hotter topic over the past year or so as tools and tech is evolving to bring better capabilities to our advertising.

Personalisation is a hugely powerful approach to attracting, engaging and retainer users.

This is not just picking up on the significant action like adding a product to their cart, or viewing a specific product to then retarget them with dynamic formats. We're talking super granular behaviour.

Personalisation is all about making the user feel valued in the actions they take in your app. It's at its most powerful when you are providing them with the information they need when they don't even know they need it.

It is very powerful and meaningful and should be at the centre of your advertising strategies.

A superb growth process unlocks this for you.

The three step process to becoming data-rich

It is easier than you might think to become data-rich and be on your way to absolute app growth. We have spoken about the benefits and the tools you should be utilising in order to get there but often these things have processes to follow.

What often comes with processes is some know-how and understanding of certain things that takes up more of your time to learn, get right and, more often than not, go back and re-do because something has changed, or gone wrong - no one has the time.

In a bid to get back more of your time, we have listed out the process for you in three easy to do steps.

It is a simple yet powerful process to get you on the road to impressive app growth. It requires only a small handful of things:

- **Understanding the basics of Mixpanel**
- **Developers**
- **A growth strategy ready to be kicked into hyper-drive**

It is recommended to have these things ready when you are about to implement Mixpanel as otherwise you will see delays, frustrations, and time lost rather than saved.

To get you underway we have listed out a three-step process to you being in a position to become data-rich.

1 Business Objectives & Strategy

Within your business you most likely have objectives that you need to hit that are based on usage metrics and KPIs.

What you must to do is think about what it is you want to achieve so that you can tailor your data-richness to those specific goals. For example, you can run objectives on a monthly, quarterly or yearly basis - basically, what ever makes more sense to you and your stakeholders.

You're looking for anywhere between 3-5 goals to set. An exemplary set of objectives to have would be:

- Quarterly increase in app sessions by 12% (results in higher opportunity of LTV)
- 15% uplift in registrations month-on-month
- 20% quarterly increase in purchases

You're looking for success-defining objectives that you can utilise your data towards actually achieving them. Objectives are not set in stone, feel free to change them as and when you please so you can properly track your progress.

2 Data Spec, Development and Execution

An implementation spec is a document outlining all of your apps events and the information that comes with them.

It is easy to define your events but the real data comes from what information gets users at each event and where/how it is displayed to give you the real value. This then provides immense detail into your user profiles, customer segments and cohorts, and helps you define retention metrics.

First of all, map out each event you have in an action-objective convention (the action the user takes and the end result e.g. Registration complete).

After understanding the different data types you can use, now define what information each event gives you. For example, from a date of the first time they completed that action all the way through to your standard information of name and email address. How you then set the values of this data is important.

Once you have absolutely all the info you need you can send this on to your developers for implementation and testing.

3 Growth Strategy & Scalability

Once you can start seeing live data come through to the dashboard, start to build out your dashboard(s) so you can get quick and easy snapshots of your data whenever you need to - you can also schedule custom reports so you don't have to go looking for the data.

From this you are now in a better position to grow significantly. Using this data, let it inform you of how you are going to react to your user behaviour. Set up engagement flows that encourages people to take further action in your app when they have completed a certain action. Take your customers data and plug it into Facebook and retarget them with highly targeted messages. This informs them you care about what they are doing and how they can do more of it.

Set up a way for your product and dev teams to truly understand how their features are translating to engagement and usage, and how they can be improved or new features built around them to improve the overall experience.

The world is now your oyster.

Closing

We hope you have found this interesting, insightful and motivating. It is a constant struggle for businesses to get off the ground, be successful and do everything at the same time, constantly.

Utilising our data-rich methods and process is something that has been wonderfully defined in many businesses looking to get out of the startup trenches and do something meaningful with their growth without having it cost the earth.

We truly believe in this process and that businesses can make a true difference in their lives to get on top of the things that matter the most to them.

Mixpanel is just one platform out there that can help you define these things that we have outlined but, in our humble opinion, it is one that has seen a large amount of success and truly deserves more credit where it is due.

The sheer ability to learn and collaboratively scale is something that opens up new doors for small apps everywhere.

If you have any questions, comments or just want to chat then the Envision Digital team would be happy to hear from you.

Thank you again for downloading this white paper on absolute app growth, it has been a pleasure to produce it for you.

About us

Envision Digital is an app growth agency working out of London, UK. We operate to serve apps in pre-launch and early stage growth.

Our work revolves around supporting our clients to spend and scale smarter, attracting the right people at the right time. We strategise how to increase retention and loyalty through app growth channels and disciplines using data at the core of what we do; this enables our clients to grow more significantly.

This job or ours is a really creative and innovative one that is super rewarding.

Our partnership with Mixpanel allows us to open up a world of data for our clients that informs a progression strategy over time. From our experience, Mixpanel is a tool that enables clients to scale efficiently and with a large impact. Our recommendation of Mixpanel comes from a place of collaboration and long term planning. Not all apps are going to be suited to this particular tool as the foundation of their growth strategy.

For more please visit our website or get in touch with our founder and head of growth, Josh to discuss how this can benefit your business.

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