ADJUST

Scaling your app to 1 million users: The ultimate guide

Part 2: User retention, localization, and influencer marketing

Contents

# Introduction

App growth matters. It is the core of everything you do as an app marketer. All your metrics, campaigns, and strategies center on building a large user base. But don't worry if you've just started and your number of users is on the smaller side. In this guide, we'll uncover expert methods on how to grow your app from 1,000 to 1 million users.

In Part 1 of our guide, we focused on two core marketing methods—app store optimization (ASO) and paid advertising campaigns. These two primary approaches are used for attracting high-value users to your app. ASO will improve your app's visibility within the app store, while paid campaigns can be used to target and bring in specific audiences. **Access Part 1 here**.
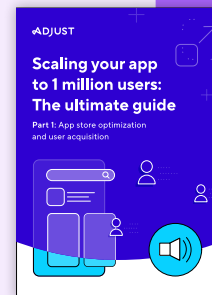
We're going beyond user acquisition in Part 2 of our guide and diving into **user retention**, **launching internationally**, and as a bonus—**influencer marketing**.

When growing your app, you'll discover that a significant part of your scaling journey is keeping your users satisfied and engaged with your app. We'll walk you through how to measure and improve user retention for maximum growth.

And when things are going well, it's a great idea to launch your app internationally. However, this needs to be well-planned. In this guide, we'll cover the major steps you'll need to take before launching your app on a global scale.

Additionally, as promised, we'll also take a long look at one of today's hottest marketing trends—influencer marketing—and how you can use it to further your app brand's awareness and credibility.

1. User retention

Although user acquisition is key for scaling your app, retaining existing users is equally important and often a more cost-effective strategy. At the very least, the two should always be strategized hand-in-hand. User retention is a metric that refers to how many users still use an app after install. It's an important part of user lifetime value (LTV) and can be used to project brand loyalty as well as referrals.

User retention allows marketers to understand how their app is performing over time. This metric is particularly helpful in diagnosing any problems with an app's onboarding process and spotting churn and pain points. Therefore, monitoring your app's retention rate is critical to understanding how to keep your users. In the report, we'll walk through how to measure and boost your retention rates.

2. Internationalization

Launching your app internationally is an excellent way to bring more users to your app. However, doing so requires careful planning and regional-specific considerations such as language and culture. In the second section below, you can find top advice and tips to help you ensure your app's global launch is a success.

Bonus

Bonus: Influencer marketing

In the bonus section of this guide, we look into influencer marketing and how you can use it to expand brand awareness and reach your target markets. We cover popular influencer channels, provide tips, and discuss the key benefits of influencer marketing for your app growth.

Section 1: User retention

High retention rates indicate that users are satisfied with an app. Users who remain active in an app for longer periods of time are more likely to provide higher engagement and more possibilities for monetization. User retention is also an essential metric marketers use to understand which channels are delivering the highest value users. Using insights gleaned from user retention, marketers are able to optimize their user experience to retain more users.

How to measure your app's retention rate

Measure your app's retention rate by dividing the number of users who return on Day 1, 7, 30, or whichever day you want to focus on, by the number of users on Day 0. A healthy retention rate should look like a curve—a gradual, downward slope with users typically churning until Day 30 and then plateauing, creating a flat line towards the end. The users that make it to the end are your monthly active users (MAUs). The higher the curve flattens out above 0, the better.

Day 1 retention rates by vertical

Vertical	Day 1 retention rate
Fintech	24%
E-commerce	22%
Educational	17%
Entertainment	23%
Food & Drink	12%
Games	28%
Health	21%
Lifestyle	28%
Publications	33%
Social	32%
Travel	15%
Utilities	19%
Industry-wide	26%
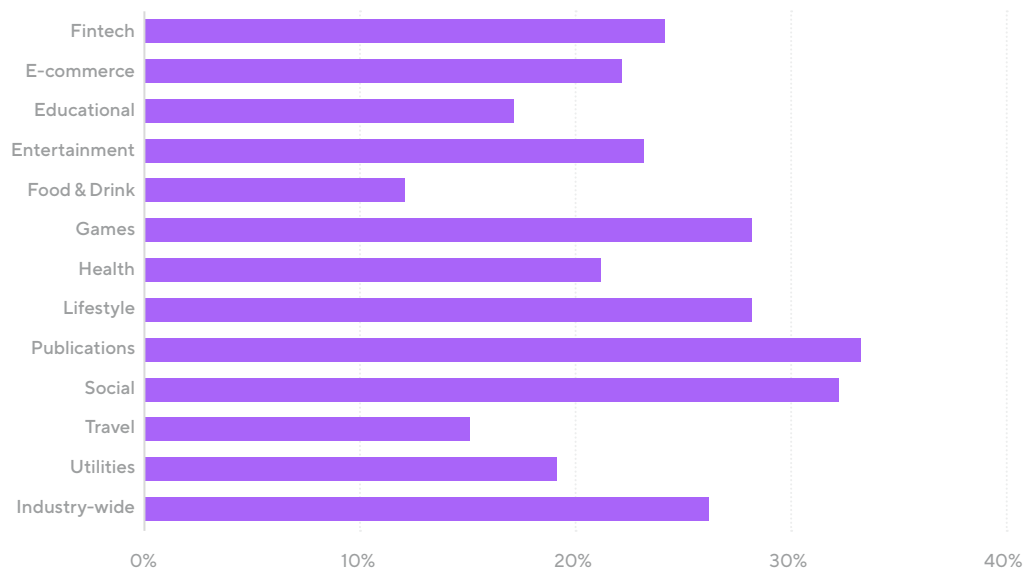
In general, aim to keep more than a third of your users on Day 1 (the day after install). But note that the average retention rate depends on your app vertical and should be determined by testing over time. For example, if you have a travel app, you may have users that use your app only once or twice a year, which is fine.

5 ways to boost your app's retention rate

1. OPTIMIZE YOUR ONBOARDING EXPERIENCE

Your onboarding process plays an important role in your retention strategy. Once you've acquired the user and they've opened your app, it's imperative that you keep them engaged.

> **Consider the following when setting up your app's onboarding process:**
> - If you require user information, only ask for what's essential at the beginning.
> - Highlight core features but don't overwhelm users.
> - End your onboarding with a CTA, prompt for push notifications, or other ways to engage.

2. PERSONALIZE THE USER EXPERIENCE

When your app's user experience can be tailored to a user's specific needs, they'll be more likely to return. In fact, 58% of smartphone users are more favorable towards companies whose mobile websites or apps remember who they are and their past behavior.

You can achieve personalization by using relevant user data to improve your app's experience. For instance, you can enhance the user experience by remembering users' names and making relevant suggestions based on their previous behavior.

3. SEND PUSH NOTIFICATIONS

Push notifications allow you to send messages directly to users whether they're in your app or not. These messages can inform users about changes or get them excited to return to your app. Consider segmenting users via their behavior and then send them custom messages highlighting new content or offers.

Alongside personalization, push notifications are a terrific way to re-engage lapsed users. App abandonment after one use drops from 25% to 16% when an app incorporates push notifications. However, make sure to limit the number of notifications sent out. A Business of Apps study found that ten push notifications is the cut-off point — additional notifications can lead to a potential drop of users by 60%.

4. UTILIZE IN-APP MESSAGING

Apps that use in-app messaging to communicate with users see an increase in retention rates between 61% and 74% after Day 28. In-app messaging is most effective when used alongside user segmentation based on user behavior. These in-app messages can include alerts, updates, or interesting content.

👍 **Tip:** It's not advisable to double up on push notifications and in-app messaging.

5. APP STORE OPTIMIZATION

Organic and non-organic users behave differently, with the former seeing higher retention rates. A quality App Store Optimization (ASO) strategy helps organic, targeted users find your app on app stores, bringing in users who are more likely to use your app. Your target audience is more likely to interact and stay with your app, making them highly valuable.
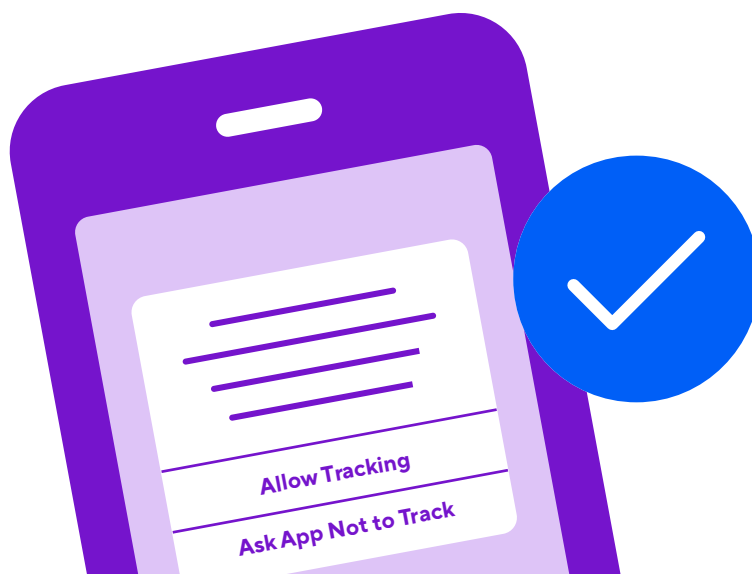
Deep linking: Retention and retargeting

Deep linking plays a critical role in your user retention strategy as it offers users more personalized ways to re-enter your app. Deep linking uses a link from a campaign to bring users to a specific app page rather than an app store for a more streamlined user experience.

Apps that implement deep links have been shown to double their user retention across Day 1, Day 7, and Day 30. All app verticals can benefit from deep linking as they provide a highly versatile approach to building a seamless user experience across marketing channels.
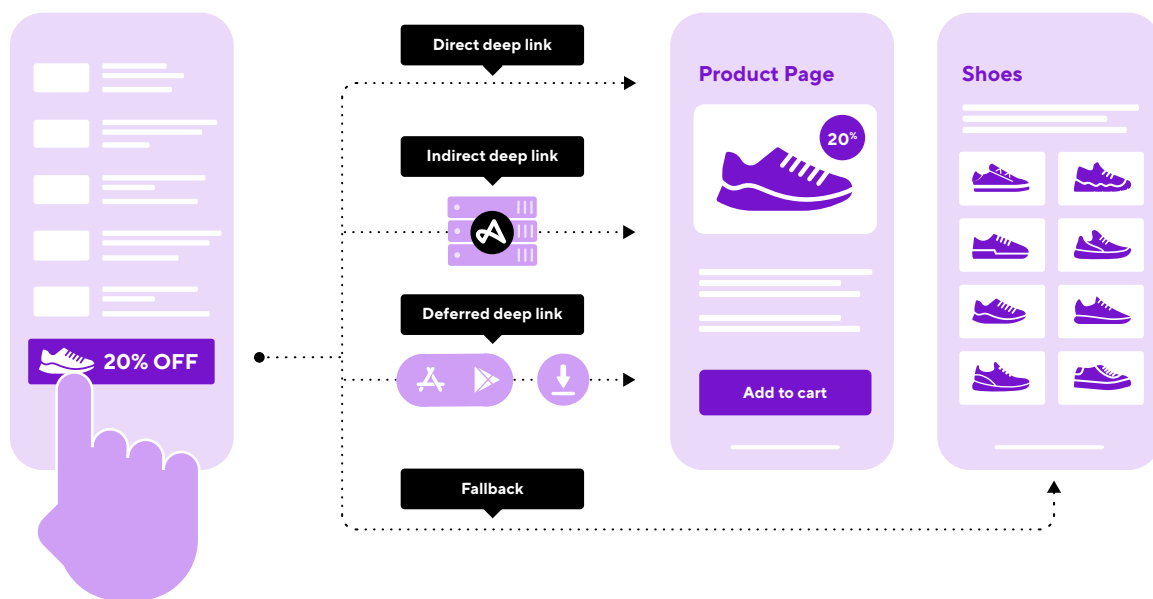
For example, in an e-commerce app, you can notify/target users about offers on products still in their cart, bringing them directly to checkout. Similarly, if you have an educational app, you can prompt users to complete a course, linking them directly to where they left off.

"Every app faces a "chasm of no return," and messaging outside the app experience only goes so far in retaining users. Brands need to show customers they know them and that means providing valuable experiences and in-app messaging in moments they are already engaged with the app. Deep links within onboarding and opt-in flows, feature introductions, and in-app messages make it easier and more likely that customers will take action right away, creating more value for everyone involved."

Thomas Butta,
Chief Strategy and Marketing Officer

AIRSHIP®

Implementing deep links

The purpose of deep links is to create as frictionless an experience as possible. Therefore, poor implementation or setup of these deep links can actively harm your user journey and retention rates. If a deep link is broken or faces other errors, your user will most likely step away from your app. For this reason, make sure to monitor deep link conversions. If users are dropping off, this can be cause for concern. The difference between high churn and high conversions is testing for broken links before re-engagement campaigns.

Next, make sure to apply deep links relevant to your vertical and users. For example, if you have a gaming app, providing deep links that bring users directly to events or challenges rather than the home screen is likely to boost engagement.

Lastly, maximize your marketing channels with deep linking. Then watch as users easily land in your app via email, website, or paid campaigns. Also, don't underestimate email as an effective channel to drive users to specific in-app content, as 46% of email opens now occur on mobile. In summary, assess all your marketing channels for deep linking opportunities.

If you're looking for an MMP with deep-linking capabilities, note that Adjust's LinkMe feature allows you to send users to a specific landing page to drive conversions.

DEEP LINKS IN ACTION

Estimated at $45 million, e-commerce brand FLO was growing quickly and the team desired to continue the growth by reaching as many new and existing customers as possible. The company came to Adjust for support in measurement, attribution, and mapping the customer journey. In addition to Adjust's measurement solutions, FLO implemented deep links to more precisely assess the performance of its shopping campaigns. A user views an ad, taps it, and is taken directly to the product within the app. Deeplinking generated 45% more revenue and provided FLO a direct line of sale in the dataset.

Section 2: Going international

Widen your app's reach by increasing its visibility to new target segments in other countries. Consider launching your app internationally. In addition to English, focusing on other languages—most often Chinese, Japanese, German, French, Italian, Russian, Portuguese, and Hindi—is critical for an app marketing strategy.

To launch internationally, you'll first need to gauge the resources available to your team to determine which languages you can support in the near future. A quick early win is to get your app store descriptions translated for each market you wish to pursue.

COUNTRY	TOTAL DOWNLOADS: GOOGLE PLAY
India	4,791,296,159
Brazil	3,209,807,168
United States	2,640,312,953
Indonesia	1,802,370,019
Russia	1,337,870,380
Mexico	1,123,004,519
Turkey	1,088,637,296
Vietnam	890,934,397
South Korea	706,739,472
Thailand	659,071,473

COUNTRY	TOTAL DOWNLOADS: APP STORE
China	3,482,995,207
United States	2,092,100,653
Japan	516,614,612
Great Britain	437,682,610
Russia	363,598,228
France	245,939,355
Germany	221,266,898
Canada	199,144,203
Brazil	185,718,570
Korea	176,176,953

apptopia Q1 2022

Tip: Promote the iOS version of your application in the countries in which Apple devices are more common, such as the United States, the U.K., Japan, Germany, and France. Then, for more Android-focused countries like India, Brazil, and Indonesia, you can focus on the Android version of your app.

In most markets, simply translating your app won't make it appealing to your target audience. The next step is to localize your app's content. Localization goes beyond translation to make the content appear as though written for the local population. It involves analyzing relevant keywords in each target market and identifying essential characteristics of each region, like religious beliefs or dominant cultural features. Learning and implementing the country or region's user behavior, preferences, and choices will bring infinitely better results.

LOCALIZATION IN ACTION
Tamatem, a leading mobile games publisher in the MENA region, wanted to launch "Fashion Queen" adapted from Nanobit's "Hollywood story" and localize it for an Arabic-speaking audience. Initially soft-launching in the GCC region, Tamatem used statistics from Adjust to analyze the performance of the creatives for different ad groups and optimized accordingly. They were then able to increase the app's Day 1 retention rate by 7% and LTV by 30%. Thanks to the success of the campaigns, the app's marketing budget has scaled five times since its launch.

Steps to launch your app globally

1. Translation
- Translate app store descriptions.
- Upload translated app screenshots or videos to the app stores.

2. Localization
- Translate mobile app text string, metadata, tips, push notifications, and FAQs.
- Translate privacy policy and other user license agreement information.

3. Internationalization
- Hire local marketing and customer service support.
- Translate the company website and blogs.
- Create a localized social media strategy.

Tips before launching internationally

1 **RESEARCH COMPETITION**

Before releasing your app internationally, plan your approach by researching competition in your target countries. Find out what they're doing to know how to leverage your app's unique selling propositions (USPs). While the scale of your international marketing capabilities depends largely on your budget, if you can clearly spotlight your app's USPs to the target audience, your app has a higher chance to edge out the competition.

2 **LOCALIZE ASO**

Gaining more organic users and boosting your visibility early on is vital for succeeding in a new market. Therefore, make sure to localize your App Store Optimization for each new market. Pay attention to fonts, colors, and symbols. Any creatives or visuals should also feel like they have been specifically designed for the individual market. Localization will enhance the value of your content for the target audience and drive organic traffic.

3 **SOFT LAUNCH**

Poor app performance will lead to user churn and bad reviews, ruining your ability to scale before you even get started. Your app needs to be functionally ready to share with a larger audience before launch. Any app performance issues must be addressed before scaling. A soft launch can help do this. As a limited release of your app, a soft launch will allow you to get early customer feedback, positive reviews, and a chance to take care of any lingering issues before launch. Running a soft launch for your app is also an excellent way to test whether your app has potential in the market.
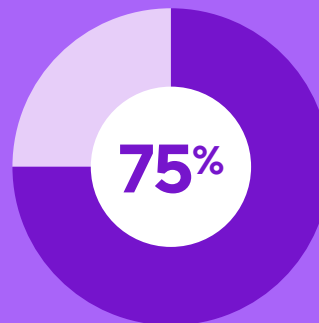
Bonus: Influencer marketing

With 49% of consumers relying on influencer recommendations to make a purchase decision, influencer marketing is proving to be a worthy investment. In fact, the industry is projected to reach $16.4 billion in 2022. Influencer marketing can add great value to a brand as influencers are more likely to be trusted than traditional advertising. Depending on your app vertical, it can be a great way to drive traffic and increase users.
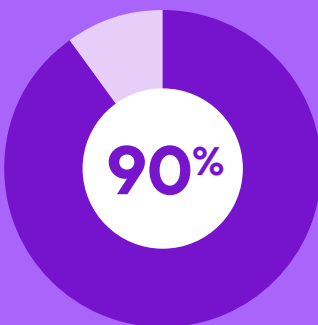
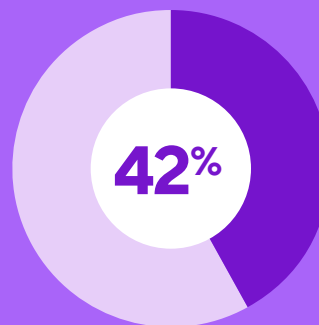## MARKETERS ON INFLUENCER MARKETING

60%

60% say that influencer-generated content performs better than branded content

75%

75% intend to dedicate a significant budget to influencer marketing in 2022

90%

90% believe influencer marketing to be an effective form of marketing

42%

42% believe that conversions and sales are the most important influencer marketing metrics

Channels for influencers

Instagram

Instagram

Instagram is generally the best performing platform for brands wanting to reach new audiences quickly. It's also the best channel for social action, with an average 3.2% engagement rate compared to 1.5% across all social networks. Instagram users are more likely to comment, like, and share the content they consume. It's also beneficial to show an influencer's ads on your social media as they have great click-through rates and can often outperform your creatives in terms of ROI. When measuring ROI, you should also consider brand lift (ad recall, brand awareness, and consideration) in addition to conversions.

Twitch

Twitch is another popular option, where distinct communities are built around particular streamers and personalities who interact and chat regularly. This heightened interaction creates a sense of belonging on the platform. Twitch states that 80% of its users are open to brands sponsoring Twitch streamers and esports teams, making it a powerful influencer marketing platform.

Twitch's live setting adds an increased sense of authenticity. Although larger streamers may have influence over a bigger audience, smaller streamers can notably influence their audience in much more direct ways. Viewers get regular attention and form more intimate relationships than those influencers with larger channels and thousands of viewers.

In addition, Twitch offers a bounty program that gives smaller channels the chance to boost their profiles by being sponsored by potential partners. For example, brands can post a bounty for streamers to play a certain game for a duration with a required average concurrent viewer count and set a payout amount.

We've found that engagement rates tend to drop with larger influencers and that smaller influencers see higher CTRs — around 100k subscribers is a healthy balance of both.
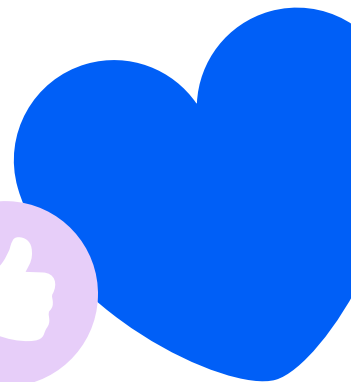
TikTok

The short-form, video hosting platform TikTok is one of the hottest places right now for influencer marketing. With over 1 billion monthly active users, almost 50% of TikTok users said they use the platform to help them make purchase decisions. Unsurprisingly, the social media app has one of the highest engagement rates, at 12.43% for nano-influencers and 13.7% for mega-influencers, according to Statista.

Even with a smaller budget, you can partner with nano or micro-influencers, called content creators on TikTok, and see significant return on ad spend (ROAS). But it's essential to first identify your brand's niche and which audience to pursue. From there, you can select a content creator who is already connected to your audience and create a campaign with them.

YouTube

The video-sharing platform YouTube has long been associated with influencer marketing campaigns and remains a highly effective channel today. In fact, 26% of US social media users say that YouTube is the most successful channel in getting them to try new products.

An example of the power of influencer marketing on YouTube is Lion Studio's Love Balls. The hypercasual game gathered momentum when a popular YouTuber who focused primarily on mobile games showcased it on their channel. As a result, Love Balls achieved 250 million downloads and shot to the number one spot on the App Store. They worked strategically worked with an influencer who talked about the game and allowed the network to use footage of them for Love Balls' ads, crediting the influencer's handle.

Influencer marketing can be highly beneficial for both parties as the influencer can build up their audience while also promoting an app to a wider audience. In addition to being a solid brand marketing tool, influencer marketing can also help drive direct response marketing to improve your ASO ranking.

Where is influencer marketing succeeding?

While there's no one-size-fits-all approach to influencer marketing, it's important to consider the top-performing platforms, most receptive audiences, and learn from successfully implemented influencer campaigns.

Top-delivering influencer platforms

- Instagram is the most popular platform for influencer marketing.
- Facebook delivers the highest ROI among all social media platforms for influencer marketing.
- YouTube is most effective in getting U.S. consumers to try new products.

Gen Z most trusts influencers

- Gen Z, born between 1995-2010, are the age group that most trusts influencers.
- Two-thirds of Gen Z follow influencers.
- TikTok, Twitch, Spotify, Instagram, and Youtube are the top five platforms preferred by Gen Z.

Examples of successful influencer marketing

Example 1: Visa and Tacobell

Visa, together with TacoBell, partnered with YouTube influencer BigDawsTV to promote their joint offer. The offer: Individuals using the digital wallet Visa Check (now called Click to Pay) to purchase food within the TacoBell app would receive half off their order. BigDawsTV, known for his pranks, offered users a "halfway hug" to promote the limited-time Visa offer and, in a 4-day period, drove a 20% CTR.

Example 2: Gymshark

As the world's largest audio platform, Spotify offers excellent organic reach for little to no cost as one-third of the listening time on Spotify is attributable to user-generated content. The fitness brand Gymshark partnered with fitness influencers like Mr. Olympia Christopher Bumstead, to build branded audio playlists. Gymshark would then share these fitness inspo playlists on Twitter and Instagram. The result: As of 2022, Gymshark has accrued over 76,000 followers on Spotify with which they can continue to share brand-related content.

Example 3: Headspace

Headspace, the mindfulness and mediation app, cleverly subverted influencer marketing fatigue by having influencers post reflective, long-form endorsements of the app. By encouraging influencers to express vulnerability in this way, Headspace's marketing campaign came across as natural and authentic. This type of content is a powerful way to gain traction on social media platforms.

How influencer marketing can help your app

Opt for influencers relevant to your key target markets. Don't choose influencers based solely on their number of followers, subscribers, or average views or impressions. These aren't necessarily the KPIs that will benefit you. Instead, investigate the influencer's audience engagement by reviewing comments below posts and noting their response to sponsored content. Furthermore, ask the influencer or their agency to provide demographic information like age groups and location to better understand their audience and whether they will relate to your app.

Key benefits of influencer marketing include:

Increasing brand awareness

Effectively reaching target markets

Building credibility and trust

Measuring brand awareness

As stated, one of the main benefits of influencer marketing is increased brand awareness. Initially, influencer marketing was predominantly made up of 'single-shot' campaigns, where marketers pay influencers upfront. However, this method presents challenges as it makes linking compensation to overall performance difficult. More recently, marketers have switched to a 'pay-for-performance' model. Combined with a service/influencer marketing platform like Linqia, marketers can get granular insights regarding the ROI of their influencer campaigns. They'll be able to measure not only brand awareness but also purchase intent, ad creative impact, and recommendations to discover what works and iterate what doesn't.

"We've found building native ads featuring influencers in the video-sharing platform TikTok has boosted our clients' user acquisition efforts. In fact, collaborating with TikTok creators can increase ad recall by 27%. Why? Authenticity sells."

Jidé Maduako,
CEO and Co-Founder

YOKE
network

It's vital to be able to **justify influencer marketing spend**. Yet, this can be quite challenging—80% of mobile marketers would like to have more methods for measuring the ROI of influencer marketing. Luckily there are multiple measures you can take.

80%
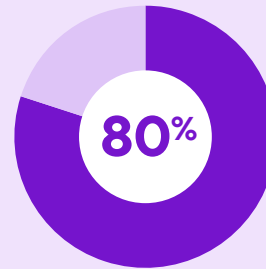
3 ways to measure influencer marketing ROI

1   **Examine referral traffic by providing influencers with unique referral codes and discounts.** In this way, you can see exactly which of your avenues are performing.

2   **Include custom deep links or deferred deep links** to gather conversion metrics to see the impact of your influencer marketing on brand awareness.

3   **Pay attention to brand name mentions**. You can use Google Trends to see where your mentions are coming from and whether they're increasing or decreasing. Tools like Brand24 allow you to get data on your mentions and engage with them accordingly.

Macro, mid, or micro-influencers?

Captiv8, a San Francisco talent agency, recently shared influencer marketing figures highlighting that macro influencers with up to 7 million followers make, on average, $75,000 per promotional post on Instagram. Rest assured, if you're building from 1k to 1 million users, you do not need to engage with high-end influencers to run an effective campaign.

> 👍 **Tip:** Finding an influencer that's a good fit for your product is more important than choosing one based on their number of followers.

Mid-tier influencers can be a great investment as well, depending on their engagement with sponsored brands. In one study, a mid-tier influencer (defined by the industry as having between 50,000 and 500,000 followers) managed to achieve a 3.67% engagement rate with their relatable content. By recognizing the importance of building a relationship with their target audience rather than focusing on quick sales, mid-tier influencers not only connect with their target audience but build towards an authentic digital presence, furthering their momentum.

Micro-influencers (followings between 10,000 and 50,000) can often be more effective because their niche attracts a more dedicated audience. Influencers with 1,000 followers generated 85% higher engagement than influencers with a following of 100,000. Micro-influencers are very likely to make product recommendations, with a study finding they are 22.2 times more likely to engage in "buying conversations."

In short, influencers with more followers are potentially less likely to push your app, with engagements tending to decrease as followers go up. You can find influencers that are a good fit for your product either through agencies or by searching through hashtags for content relevant to your app. This allows you to pinpoint potential influencers that actively post about your product's vertical.

Conclusion

Scaling your app from 1,000 to 1,000,000 users takes time, an in-depth strategy, and persistence. In both Part 1 and Part 2 of this guide, we've laid out several practices you can follow to ensure your app is moving forward toward your goal of competitive growth. We hope you now feel better equipped to grow your app's user base.

Starting with ASO and UA and moving into retention and internationalization, the sequence in which we've presented these strategies is a suggestive order for implementation and can vary by app. Once you start utilizing them, you'll create a continuous cycle of user acquisition and retention strategies that should develop as you grow. We say 'continuous' because you'll always need to focus on user acquisition and retention, as both should be part of your ongoing marketing strategy.

To stay on top of your marketing budget, it's also essential to partner with a mobile analytics platform to help you accurately measure mobile attribution. A mobile measurement partner can provide important user acquisition and retention metrics like app installs, in-app sessions, and monthly active users—to name a few. Don't spend all your time organizing your data. Streamline your data analyses and campaign optimization with a mobile measurement partner—and Adjust's Datascape—to exponentially grow your app.
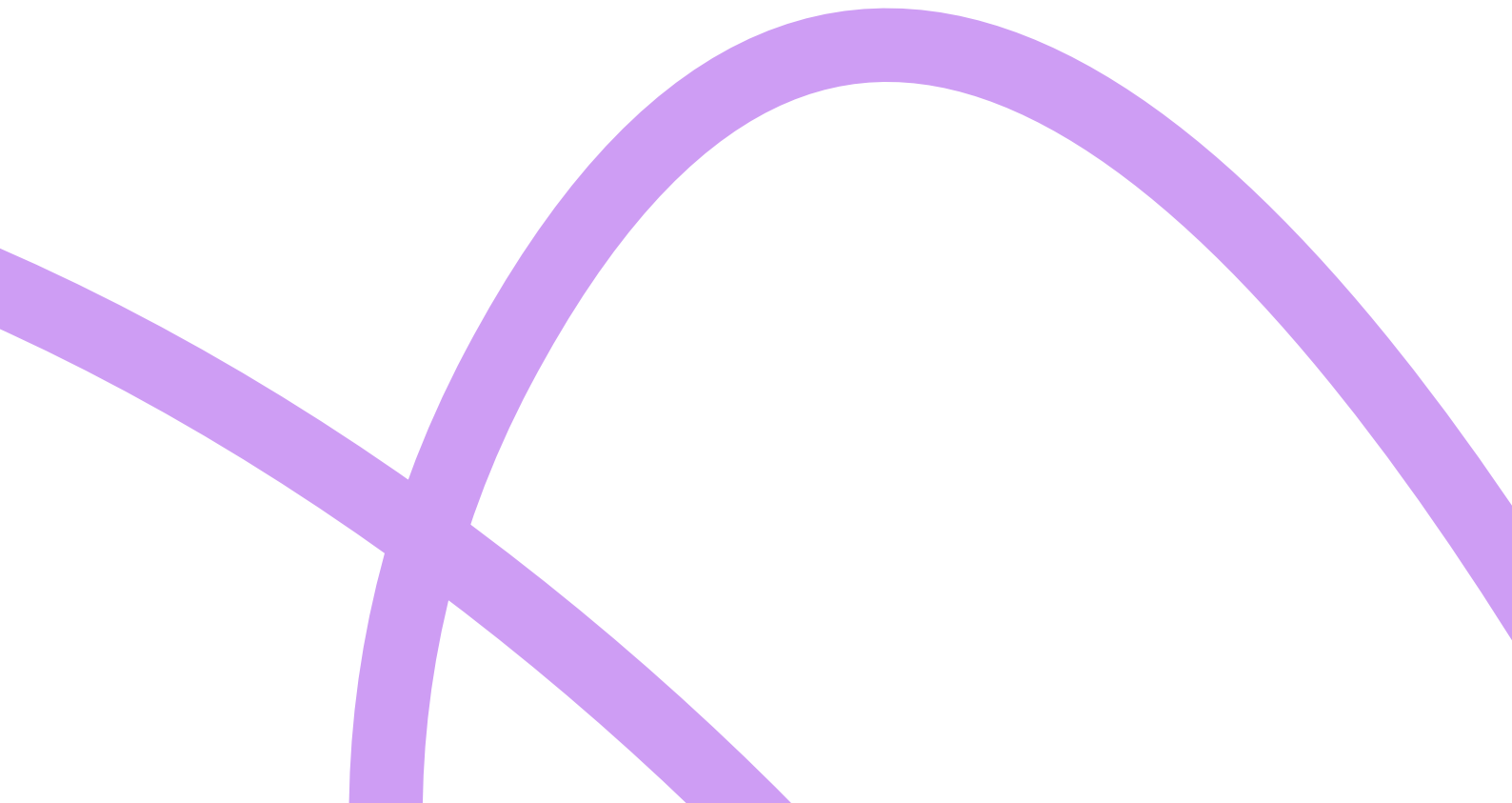
ADJUST

ABOUT ADJUST

Adjust is the mobile marketing analytics platform trusted by growth-driven marketers around the world, with solutions for measuring and optimizing campaigns and protecting user data. Adjust powers thousands of apps with built-in intelligence and automation, backed by responsive global customer support.

In 2021, Adjust was acquired by AppLovin, a leading marketing software company providing developers with a powerful, integrated set of solutions to grow their mobile apps.

Learn more about Adjust at:
www.adjust.com

in adjust.com   @adjustcom