

# Top hacks on how to build a billion dollar App that goes viral

As of 2017, there were more than 2.8 million Apps on the Google Play Store and 2.2 million Apps on Apple's App Store, the two leading App stores in the world. Despite these large numbers, only a handful of Apps gain the attention of users.

According to Anushka Bandara, co founder and chief executive officer of Elegant Media, Australia's leading App development company, "one of the ways of getting thousands of downloads is by building an App that has the possibility of going viral."

"The question everyone wants to know is, what is a viral App, what features should you include to increase the likelihood of it going viral and how do you know when it has gone viral," Anushka added.

"A viral App is an App that users share of their own accord on social media platforms or through word of mouth without any forced incentive from the builders of the App. An App that catches the attention of the user, adds value to the user's experience. This compels them to recommend the App to other users, making an App go viral.

"In simple terms, a viral App is one that people love to use to the point where they strongly advise other people to use it too. It is an App that is not just downloaded by many people, but is also used by everyone who downloads it continuously."

The most dependably accurate way to measure virality is by using the viral coefficient method. "The best way to explain this is through an example," Anushka explains.

"Take for instance that an App is downloaded by a single user first. That one user likes the App so much that he recommends it to three of his friends. Those three friends also like the App and further recommend it to three more people. This means that one user brought in three more users and those three users brought in three more users each. Therefore, the viral coefficient for this example would be 3.0. In general, a viral coefficient of anything more than 1.0 is considered sufficient to ensure that an App goes viral. The higher the coefficient is, the faster your userbase will grow."

The more simple way to measure an App's virality is to look at the number of times it has been downloaded within a fixed time period, and then compare it to the user rating it has on the App store. An App which has at least 10,000 downloads within a few days, a user rating of at least 4.0 out of 5 and at least 80-90 percent positive reviews can safely be put in the category of a viral App.

"For an App to go viral, there are certain metrics that an App developer can work on so that the virality can be influenced from the day the App is launched," Anushka added.

Anushka has provided a list of tips to follow to increase the likelihood of an App going viral.

. Design it to be extremely user-friendly. The interface should be such that it can be understood even by those who are not too tech savvy. The design should be something that appeals to the masses and provides a genuinely good user-experience that will encourage them to refer the App to others.

. Include share options in the App so that users can directly share the App's content on their social media accounts. The sharing process should be quick and uncomplicated. Most popular social networks such as Facebook and Twitter have their APIs to make this process easier during development.

. Give it a good title and description. An App that is not easily visible on the App store will never attain the status of a viral App simply because it is difficult to find. Make sure that the App's title and description contain some specific keywords which will increase its visibility on the play store.

. Ensure it adds value for users. Add features that will make users want to share the content with their friends. By doing this you will increase the likelihood of the App going viral.

"The best way to make sure that an App goes viral is to keep a good check on the analytics of the App's usage so you know when and where it is going wrong. If you see a lot of users uninstalling the App, you should immediately take corrective action and update the App to make it more appealing," Anushka said.

"Apps also need positive reviews so they look more appealing to new customers. It's really important to ask customers for reviews and connect with them to solve any problems so they write positive reviews. Apps can also be used periodically to ask users if they are happy with the App, and if so to rate it in Google Play or Apple's App Store.

"Apps need to be well targeted. Resources should be invested in introducing an App to an initial set of customers who can then help to make it go viral. An App's target customers must belong to a well-defined group depending on age, gender, nationality etc. This will save a lot of time, money and effort.

"Rewarding users is also important. This strategy is being practised by a lot of high-growth Apps. This simply requires App users to be rewarded for sharing the App with their friends. Friends can also be rewarded by clicking on a link.

"Candy Crush Saga is a viral App that nearly every smartphone user has heard of and used. It's easy to understand gameplay, beautiful graphics,

and addictive gameplay has contributed to the App's virality.

"Uber is an example of a viral App that has popularised incentivised user-acquisition. However, this approach can get expensive and isn't ideal for everyone. On the other hand, Snapchat is an example of an App that went viral purely because users shared content on the App on their social media pages.

"There are key rules involved in developing a successful App. These combined with a good marketing strategy can deliver life changing results."

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