

App Planning Worksheet

A cheat's guide to building a killer app that
adds value to your brand.

Introduction

You're ready to build your app and you want to dive straight in to feature sets, platform decisions and launch campaigns, right? Wait up, Boss, you've missed the most important piece!

There are over 5 MILLION apps in the App Store and Google Play. You know which ones succeed? Those that are grounded in strategy, user profiling and most importantly, solving a universal problem.

So while the design is the fun bit, if you want your app to work (and who doesn't?), first spend some time mapping your plan to ensure you build a killer app that adds value to your brand.

Let's dive in.

Five Critical Questions to **Building a Killer App**

1 **What exactly do you want your app to do?**

Get specific. No wishy-washy “it will bring more sales to my business” or “it will migrate our web portal to mobile”. No. Get picky, fussy, detailed and focused. In one sentence, outline exactly what the app will do that will make it a critical asset for your business. (Don’t be tempted to write a list of features or benefits here, or to add more than one thing. Focus equals success. Concentrate on the one reason your business needs an app, then drill down even further to uncover the singular purpose of your app for your users. That’s your answer.)

2 **What problem is it going to solve?**

If your app does not solve a universal problem, it will fail. Your app can be niche, it can be internal, it can be specific. But it has to solve one problem common to a collective group of users for it to be useful and gain traction. So tell us what problem your app solves:

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Who is your target audience?

Don't be tempted to skimp on this question. Get deep in the heart of your target audience. Develop a persona for your ideal user - how old are they, what do they do, what's their family situation, when will they use the app, where will they use the app, what are their favourite apps, what triggers will make them act, where do they hang out (online and IRL), are they early adopters or laggards, Apple or Android lovers, do they already engage with your brand or are they new prospects? The more you can imagine your target using the app, the better you will plan the design, navigation, on-boarding, features and marketing.

Target Audience (Persona 1)		
Age/Gender/Marital Status	Personality	Brands
<i>eg. Female, 24, receptionist, single, NYC.</i>	<i>Are they introverted, analytical, loyal or passive etc?</i>	<i>What brands is he/she inspired and influenced by?</i>
Motivations	Goals / Needs	Frustrations
<i>What motivates he/she to get up in the morning?</i>	<i>eg. to better understand the hair and beauty industry.</i>	<i>eg. cannot find the right online course for hair and beauty.</i>
Online Habits	More Information	
<i>How does he/she interact with online media and through what device?</i>	<i>Anything else you can think of that will help you understand your target market.</i>	

Target Audience (Persona 2)		
Age/Gender/Marital Status	Personality	Brands
<i>eg. Female, 24, receptionist, single, NYC.</i>	<i>Are they introverted, analytical, loyal or passive etc?</i>	<i>What brands is he/she inspired and influenced by?</i>
Motivations	Goals / Needs	Frustrations
<i>What motivates he/she to get up in the morning?</i>	<i>eg. to better understand the hair and beauty industry.</i>	<i>eg. cannot find the right online course for hair and beauty.</i>
Online Habits	More Information	
<i>How does he/she interact with online media and through what device?</i>	<i>Anything else you can think of that will help you understand your target market.</i>	

NOTE: Print this page out if you need more personas. Remember, the more detailed you get, the better your app will be.

4 What pain points does your app solve for your users? (And are those pain points harsh enough to make them download your app?)

Get tough on your idea - what are the reasons a user will download your app, and are those reasons significant enough for them to (a) search for a solution and (b) download your app on their already-full phones? You might need to drill down even further - try the 5 Whys technique: ask "Why" five times, to peel away the symptoms and get to the root problem.

Why do my users need my app? (What pain point does the app solve?)

Why is this a problem?

Why is that?

Why is that?

Why is that? [Root problem]

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Who is your competition? What can you do better? Why will users choose and use your app?

Time for a little light stalking. Check out your competitors and their apps. Don't just think about your existing, known competitors. You may have challengers lurking in the App Store that you don't even know about yet. Search for competitors by name, then conduct a Category search to see who else is targeting your users. Download their apps, use them and take note of vulnerabilities - poor user experience, difficult navigation, disruptive advertising or pop-ups. Identify what they do well, what you will do better, and what they do poorly that you can capitalise on. Then polish your idea again to make it even better.

Top 3 competitors:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How are they killing it?

What can my app do better?

What can I offer that will make a user choose my app over the competition?

Conclusion

Alright! You're ready to start scoping your app. You've articulated a rock-solid idea, nailed the user profiling and gotten crystal clear on why your app is necessary and valuable. You're already ahead of most of the 5 million apps currently available for download.

Additional Resources:

Now it's time to start building. Check out our [Guide to Building a Killer App in 7 Steps](#).

Already got it? Don't miss our [5 Questions to Ask Your App Developer](#) before you choose your dev team.

Just want to get started? [Talk to us](#) about your idea and we'll turn it into a killer app.