

How to Rank & Bank APPs and Games on Google Play & iOS in 60 Days on Less

Step-by-Step guide with secrets revealed that helped me rank free apps and make \$500+ per month from one mobile game.

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Intro

Hi there,

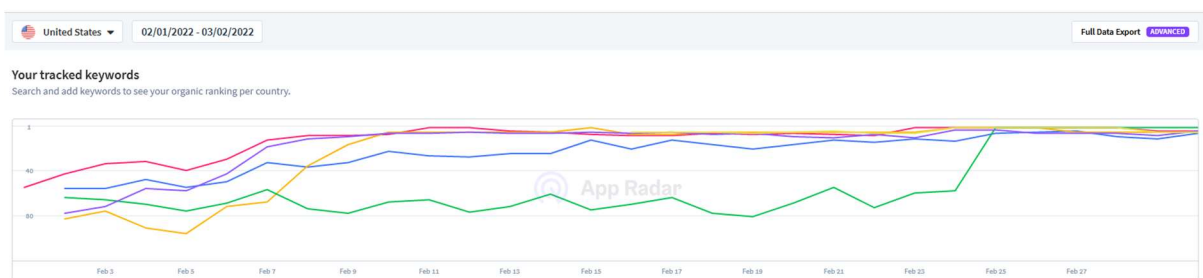
My name is Dave and I will teach you how to rank free Android apps on the top of Google Play.

I tested this strategy first with my apps, a few close friends, and for over 2 years now I've been helping developers and studios boost their apps on Google Play.

This strategy works with both new and established apps to improve their rank by relevant search keywords and so, get more targeted organic traffic from Google.

The goal is clear - get your app in front of the people who want it and are looking for it, get more installs and positive user feedback and increase your revenue.

My results for a new game published at the end of Nov. 2021



Keyword Tracking [Get Started](#)

KEYWORD	SEARCH RANK		ASO INSIGHTS	
	↑ RANK	CHANGE	SEARCH VOLUME	DIFFICULTY
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ilpawka wylizanie</i>	6	NEW	26	78
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ilpawka wylizanie</i>	6	NEW	33	67
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ilpawka wylizanie</i>	7	NEW	5	63
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ilpawka wylizanie forte</i>	8	NEW	38	66
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ilpawka</i>	9	↑ 85	29	76
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>wylizanie ilpawka</i>	12	NEW	35	79
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>wylizanie ilpawka</i>	13	NEW	11	72
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>wylizanie ilpawka</i>	20	↑ 79	26	65
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>wylizanie ilpawka</i>	28	NEW	8	76
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ilpawka wylizanie forte</i>	41	NEW	26	69
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ilpawka wylizanie forte</i>	48	NEW	11	63
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ilpawka wylizanie</i>	52	NEW	33	73
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>ilpawka</i>	52	NEW	22	74
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>wylizanie ilpawka</i>	53	NEW	8	79
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>wylizanie ilpawka</i>	54	NEW	35	70

Over the time, my apps rank for more keywords.

How are your keywords performing ?

Keyword Rankings



All Tracked Countries ▾ 01/25/2022 - 02/23/2022

Show all Keywords →

How are your keywords performing ?

Keyword Rankings



All Tracked Countries ▾ 01/25/2022 - 02/23/2022

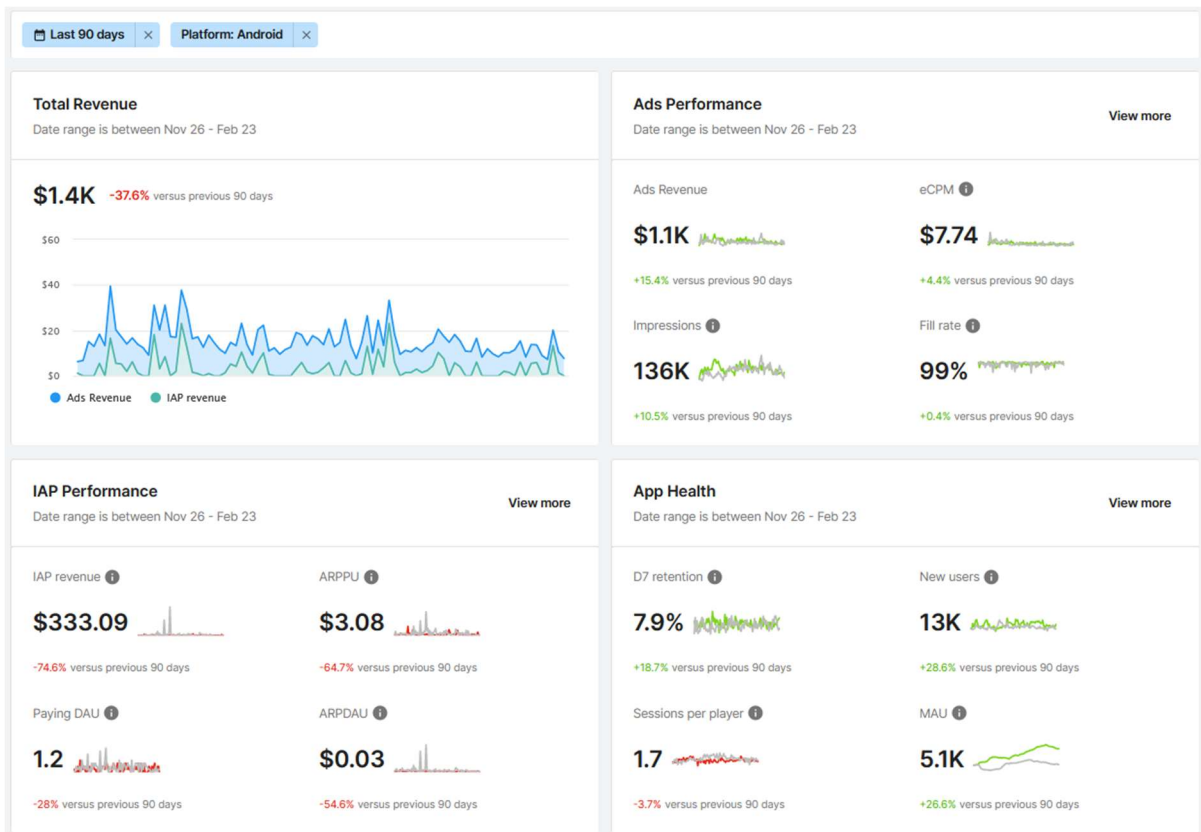
Show all Keywords →

You can see my other similar app is featured in multiple categories and countries. The list is growing.

The screenshot displays the app store page for '*** Card Games Play'. On the left, a 'Featured Apps' section shows the app's performance over time: 'A month ago' (1 APP, Sunday, January 23, 16 featured), 'Week of Jan 16' (1 APP, Jan 16 - Jan 22, 168 featured), 'Week of Jan 9' (1 APP, Jan 9 - Jan 15, 193 featured), 'Week of Jan 2' (1 APP, Jan 2 - Jan 8, 237 featured), and 'Week of Dec 26, 2021' (1 APP, Dec 26, 2021 - Jan 1, 2022, 237 featured). On the right, a detailed view shows the app is in 6 categories and 108 countries. A 'SORT BY' menu is set to 'NAME', and a list of countries is shown with their respective ranks. The list includes: United States (49th), United Kingdom (32nd), Canada (30th), Germany (41st), Italy (50th), Albania (25th), Armenia (34th), Bahamas (25th-34th), Barbados (20th-30th), Bosnia And Herzegovina (44th), Cambodia (24th-33rd), Chile (40th), Czech Republic (35th), Denmark (48th), Estonia (22nd-41st), Fiji (33rd), Guinea-bissau (39th), India (49th), Lao People's Democratic Republic (28th), Latvia (18th-49th), Liberia (15th), Lithuania (29th-36th), Malta (23rd-42nd), Nepal (16th-22nd), Paraguay (27th), Qatar (35th), and Republic Of Moldova (24th-30th).

Of course, I expect increase in revenue as well.

This is a screenshot of my Unity dashboard. All traffic is from organic search on Google Play. Traffic and revenue are stable, see last 90 days.



Monetization is IAP and Unity Ads. I am going to switch to Applovin Max and expect 20% increase.

The red -37.6% decrease in revenue compared to the previous 90 days is due to one big in app purchase. These purchases happen from time to time and sometimes I make more money.

Ads revenue is stable.

To make this happen we need to use a few paid services, but most of them have a free or free trial plan, so you can actually implement this strategy at minimal extra cost.

All external links in this guide are *no* affiliate links. You can use other similar services and tools but I cannot vouch for them.

Let me teach you how to boost ANY free app to the TOP of Google Play!

Chapter 1: About me

Back in 2018 I didn't have a clue about app development and publishing. I just bought an app from sellmyapp.com and asked a freelancer to reskin it. It turned out to be a good reskin of a popular mobile game, though.

I came up with a cool name, wrote a detailed, keyword-optimized description and uploaded it on Play Store. I added a set of stunning screenshots and... got zero installs in the first month.

Duh!

I thought I need to run UA campaign, went to FB ads just to see CPI of \$2.3 in the USA. I tried Google Ads, Unity Ads, AdMob and a few others with similar or worse results. Nothing worked for me.

On top of that, maybe because of the aggressive ads in the app, it got a ton of 1-2 star ratings...

Weird...

I checked the competition and found a bunch of new games in the top charts and most of them with tons of 5 star user reviews...

I made a list of similar apps, signed up for a free account at SensorTower and booked a free demo.

Their goal is to sell their expensive SaaS, so they have no problem demonstrating how great it is, so they were happy to analyse my "random" three apps. If you decide to book a demo with them just make sure you do your homework! SensorTower is massive, powerful, feature rich SaaS so don't waste your chance to get the data you need.

As an entrepreneur with solid marketing background, it wasn't hard for me to reverse engineering their launch and rank strategy. I was shocked how they did it.

It took me about 6 months to analyse a bunch of other successful apps. I spoke to a couple of CMO in the mobile game publishing and came up with a strategy I tested on my apps.

It worked well right from the start, but I tweak and improved it a lot and tested it again and again with a few close friends to confirm results.

Let me teach you how to boost ANY free app to the TOP of Google Play!

Chapter 2: Market Research

Every business starts with a research especially if this is your first steps in app publishing.

You have to check the competition and choose your niche and sub-niche wisely, as this can make or break your business and determine the potential of your app and the monetization strategy.

One of the ways to check competition and demand free is with AppTweak.

Let me explain it.

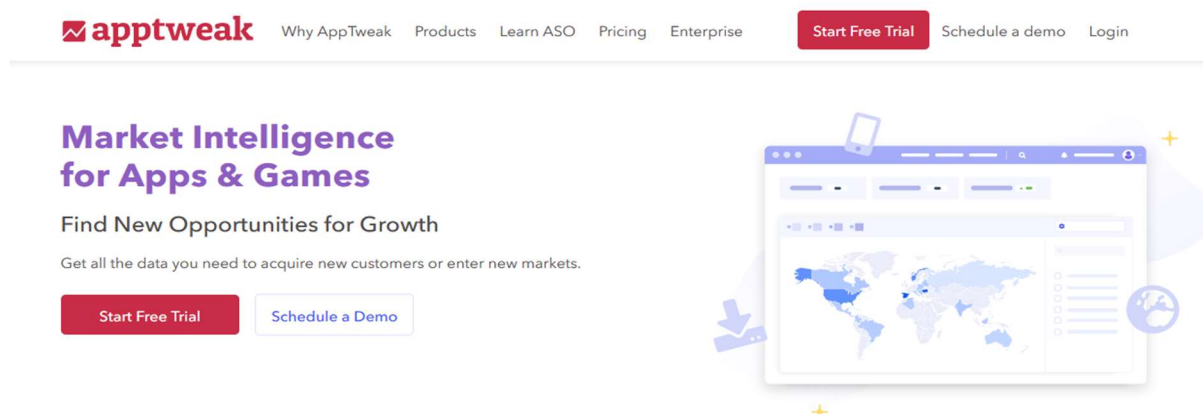
Go to apptweak.com/en/market-intelligence

and open a free trial account to check how much downloads are necessary per category for an app to get to the top on Google Play.

To create an account you will need a CC or PayPal. Most of VCC works but I always prefer to use my PayPal, because it is a lot easier to manage my subscriptions and cancel later – all you need to do is login to PayPal and cancel subscription so they can't charge you more.

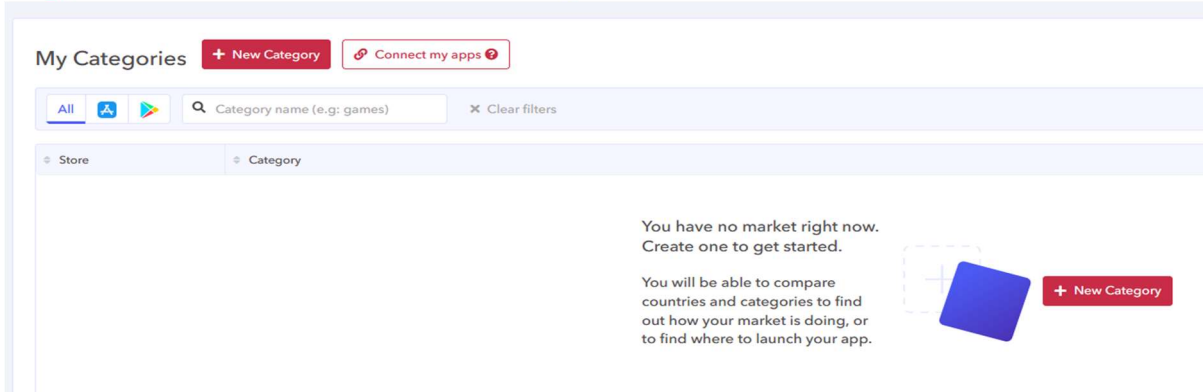
The other cool hack that works with AppTweak is that you can open multiple trial accounts with one CC when linked to your PayPal. Just create new email account, add it to your PayPal and sign up for a 7-day free trial. You can cancel on the day 6 and start a new trial with a new email. Don't abuse it!

Please note, AppTweak offers several different instruments and now we need the Market Intelligence tool.



The screenshot shows the AppTweak website's 'Market Intelligence for Apps & Games' section. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the AppTweak logo and links for 'Why AppTweak', 'Products', 'Learn ASO', 'Pricing', and 'Enterprise'. A prominent red 'Start Free Trial' button is visible, along with 'Schedule a demo' and 'Login' links. The main heading is 'Market Intelligence for Apps & Games' in purple, followed by the sub-heading 'Find New Opportunities for Growth'. Below this, a tagline reads 'Get all the data you need to acquire new customers or enter new markets.' Two buttons are present: a red 'Start Free Trial' button and a white 'Schedule a Demo' button. To the right, there is a graphic of a laptop displaying a world map with data points, surrounded by decorative elements like a smartphone icon and a globe.

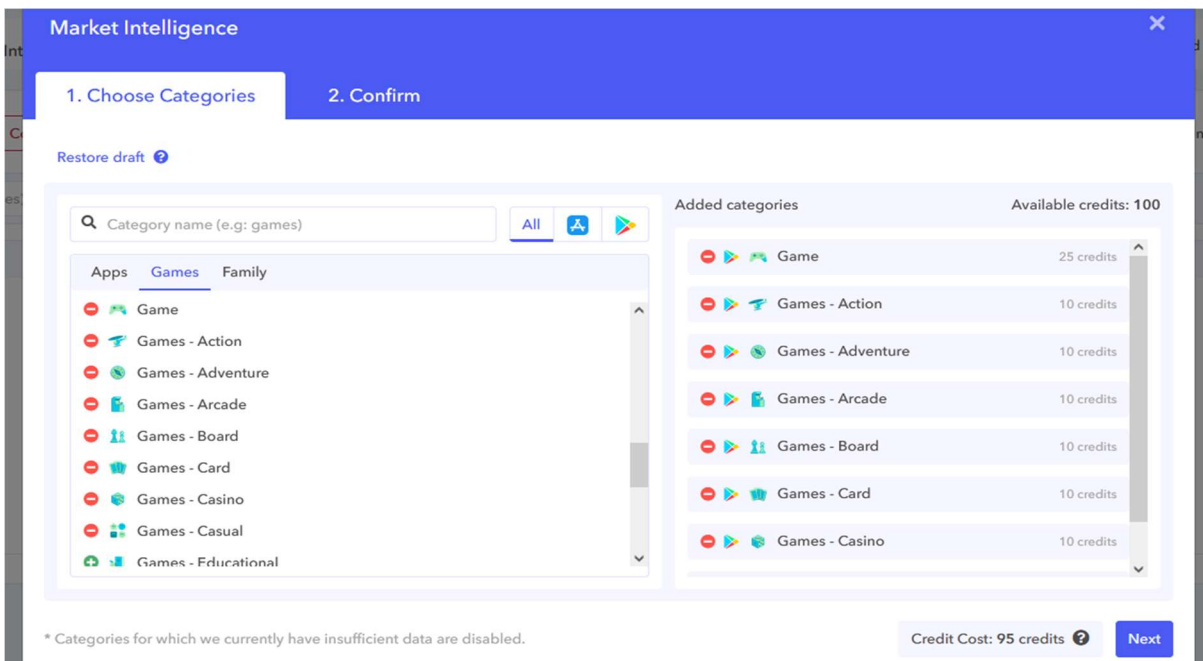
Sign up, go to the Market Intelligence and create a New Category



Let say we want to check Games in the Play Store, USA, UK, AU and Canada.

With a free trial account, you can use up to 100 credits so let's select:

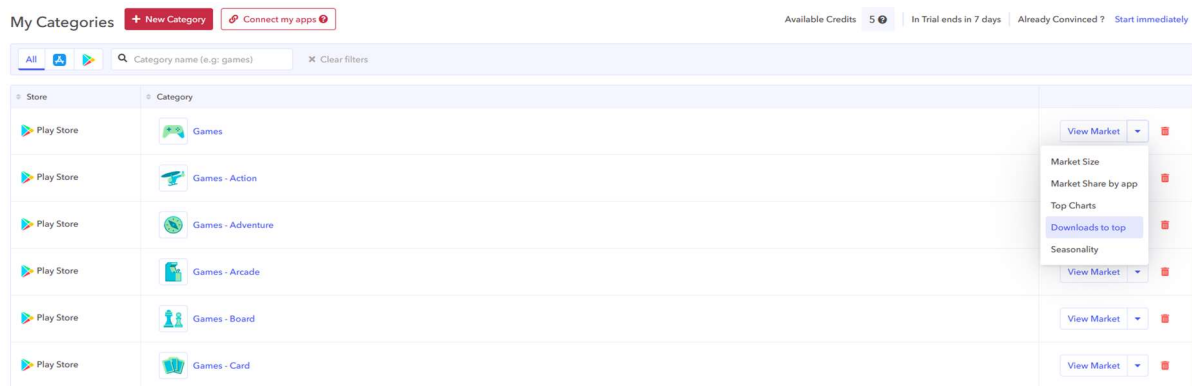
Games, Games – Auction, Games – Adventure, Games – Arcade, Games – Board, Games – Card, Games – Casino, Games – Casual



Next and Confirm.



There is a View Market button in each row, go to the first one, click on the drop down, and select Downloads to the top.



Now select your target countries. Let's choose the USA – the biggest market ever along with UK, AU and Canada. We aim for the best, always. Scroll down to the table and check numbers:

Country	Top 100	Top 50	Top 10	Top 5	Top 3	Top 2	Top 1
United States	10,077	13,480	25,168	31,128	37,169	41,920	52,709
United Kingdom	2,289	2,901	5,122	7,841	9,425	8,537	7,294
Canada	1,026	1,348	2,212	3,459	3,998	4,608	4,089
Australia	662	882	1,516	1,890	2,495	2,623	3,732

This means your app will get 37k+ downloads per day if ranked in the top 3 for Games category on Play Store in the USA, 4k in Canada and 9.5k in the UK.

Ranking in Games is next to impossible to let's check Games – Casino

Country	Top 100	Top 50	Top 10	Top 5	Top 3	Top 2	Top 1
United States	452	1,603	5,195	6,567	7,922	7,931	7,898
Australia	18	74	315	693	921	1,356	1,433
United Kingdom	53	137	390	443	498	769	897
Canada	32	91	437	449	496	561	638

You see, a slot game for example needs 6.5k daily installs to get into top 5 USA and 7.9k daily to hit #1 spot in the USA. We can start with a smaller market – say Canada or UK so we need 500 / day.

The thing is that when you rank in one country the app usually ranks in other countries as well.

The plan is first to rank by keywords, get organic traffic, check our KPIs, improve app, and reinvest in UA campaign to hit the top of the charts. When you rank in top chart, your app can become a featured and so Google will market it for you, especially if there is a cut for Google in terms of IAP.

If your app is new with low downloads it'll need an initial boost with Google Ads, more on this later.

With AppTweak you can check any GEO and category to build up your launch and growth strategy.

Fill these numbers in a table; don't forget you have 7 day free trial to get the max of this tool. Go and repeat this for each category on Google Play and App Store.

When you are ready with all 8 categories go back and remove them and start with New Categories to check the rest as we have a limited points with free trial account.

Check as much GEOs and Categories as you want. This is a boring task but it worth. You can collect data for both iOS and Android.

Here is a table for Android, USA, Games.

Category	TOP 100	TOP 50	TOP 10	TOP 5	TOP 3	TOP 2	TOP 1
Games	10,272	13,022	26,178	33,147	40,562	44,006	53,133
Games - Action	2,813	5,640	12,917	15,405	16,962	22,848	37,603
Games - Adventure	990	2,122	5,335	8,495	12,700	13,053	27,391
Games - Arcade	2,029	4,105	9,389	12,690	16,478	18,009	52,711
Games - Board	354	983	4,477	7,206	8,311	10,602	13,973
Games - Card	489	1,201	7,968	9,985	13,940	14,019	16,493
Games - Casino	442	1,474	5,047	6,318	7,199	7,454	7,684
Games - Casual	3,143	5,520	12,684	14,985	18,861	29,679	34,608
Games - Educational	1,160	2,225	4,657	5,719	6,224	8,355	13,044
Games - Puzzle	2,794	6,707	15,224	21,011	25,469	33,796	47,632
Games - Racing	566	1,454	5,325	6,637	7,339	11,392	23,438
Games - Role playing	904	1,691	5,883	7,095	7,709	7,581	9,961
Games - Simulation	1,690	4,599	10,093	12,240	13,725	15,958	24,470
Games - Sports	640	1,761	4,786	6,475	9,189	13,724	17,801
Games - Strategy	562	1,549	6,676	7,849	9,709	10,947	17,279
Games - Word	265	899	7,710	10,854	19,370	23,581	27,276

Why do we need these downloads to the top by a category?

- These numbers speak for both competition and potential.

The bigger the number the more competitive the market is, so it will take you more time and money to rank. If you have a limited budget, it is better to start with a smaller market size.

If you already have apps and you want to rank in the top chart then these numbers helps you get the picture – how difficult it would be get in the top and the potential number of installs you should expect if you app ranks in the top of the chart.

AppTweak is a power tool and I am glad we can have it for a free trial. This is a gold mine, I believe.

There is a plenty of information you can get for each market, by country, seasonality, top ranked app in each category being your main competitors. You can check how much money apps in each category make in general but the two main things we need are:

- Downloads to the top
- Market Share of Top Apps in Your Market sorted by Revenue.

1) Both of these are important. There are high competitive markets with low revenue and there are low competitive markets with big revenue. What would want to get into?











2) The other important thing is the market share by apps. You don't want to enter a market where only top 2 or 3 apps are making most of the money.

You want to enter a low competitive market where all top 10+ apps make good money.

According to AppTweak Market Intelligence, for example, a puzzle game needs 25k downloads per day to get into top 3 while a casino game needs 7k to get into top 3 on Google Play, USA.

On the other side, we can see Revenue per download is almost the same for Puzzle and Casino games. Therefore, with Casino game we should expect to make more money out of less players. Keep this in mind when you plan your UA campaign.

App Name	DL share	Est Avg DL	DL growth	Revenue Share	Est. Avg. Rev.	Revenue Growth	Rev per DL
 Slotomania™ Casino ... Playtika	3%	9.4k	-20.1%	8%	USD 342k	+61.5%	USD 36.3
 Cashman Casino Las Vegas ... Product Madness	2%	6.5k	-10.5%	7.3%	USD 310k	+30.8%	USD 47.8
 Lotsa Slots - Casino ... SpinX Games Limited	2.9%	9.5k	+49.8%	5.4%	USD 230k	+28.6%	USD 24.2
 Cash Frenzy™ - Casino ... SpinX Games Limited	2.3%	7.2k	-22.9%	5.3%	USD 228k	-19.4%	USD 31.7
 Lightning Link Casino ... Product Madness	1.7%	5.4k	-18.2%	5.2%	USD 223k	+38.1%	USD 40.9
 POP! Slots™ Vegas ... PLAYSTUDIOS INC	0.65%	2.1k	-57.1%	4.4%	USD 186k	-9.56%	USD 89.2
 DoubleDown Casino ... DoubleDown Interacti...	1.6%	5.1k	-10.5%	4.1%	USD 173k	+5.05%	USD 33.6
 Slots: Heart of Vegas ... Product Madness	1.6%	5.1k	+8.2%	3.9%	USD 168k	+25.1%	USD 33.1
 Jackpot Party Casino ... SciPlay	1.4%	4.6k	-17.2%	3.7%	USD 160k	-49.7%	USD 35.1
 Huuuge Casino Slots ... Huuuge Games - Play ...	1.4%	4.4k	-25.4%	3.7%	USD 159k	+1.05%	USD 36

App Name	DL share	Est Avg DL	DL growth	Revenue Share	Est. Avg. Rev.	Revenue Growth	Rev per DL
 Royal Match Dream Games, Ltd.	1.2%	17k	+449%	14%	USD 327k	+53.9k%	USD 19.3
 Toon Blast Peak	0.61%	8.9k	-23.9%	13%	USD 305k	+18.6%	USD 34.2
 Empires & Puzzles: ... Small Giant Games	0.087%	1.3k	-59.9%	7.5%	USD 179k	-22.7%	USD 140
 Merge Dragons! Gram Games Limited	0.27%	4k	-50.1%	7.3%	USD 175k	-14.3%	USD 43.8
 Lily's Garden Tactile Games	0.89%	13k	+137%	5.7%	USD 136k	+14.7%	USD 10.4
 Fishdom Playrix	1.4%	20k	+6.42%	5.6%	USD 134k	-30.8%	USD 6.7
 Toy Blast Peak	0.16%	2.4k	-62.4%	4.7%	USD 113k	-19.7%	USD 46.8
 Harry Potter: Puzzles ... Zynga	0.21%	3.1k	-66.5%	3.6%	USD 86.8k	+4.47%	USD 27.8
 EverMerge: Merge 3 ... Big Fish Games	0.18%	2.7k	-71%	3.1%	USD 72.9k	-1.85%	USD 27
 Matchington Mansion Magic Tavern, Inc.	0.23%	3.4k	-50.6%	2.8%	USD 67k	-31.6%	USD 19.9

Market Share of Top Apps in Each Country

Find out which apps have the highest market share in each country.

[How to use Market Share](#)



Market Share of Top Apps in Each Country

Find out which apps have the highest market share in each country.

[How to use Market Share](#)



Do you see the difference?

It is easier to rank a casino (slot) game than a puzzle game and all casino games in top 10 make almost equal money. With Puzzle first two games get most of the money.

AppTweak Market intelligence can help you check the demand, the competition and the opportunity for your app business to grow per country for both Google Play and App Store.

If you ever rank in top 3 for a category your app will get tons of free, targeted traffic. Yes, it is not easy but is doable. All you need is a budget or the right strategy.

I guess you don't have a big budget, so I'll teach you a strategy to rank in the top 10 by keywords and eventually end up at the top of the charts, or at least get into the featured apps.

Why ranking by relevant keywords is important?

When you are in the top of the search, your app will get targeted users who are looking for an app like yours so they are more likely to choose your app, install it and either buy your IAP or watch ads.

When your app ranks by keywords, Google can promote your app in various ways as "you might also like", a featured or similar apps, in top charts, top-rated apps, etc. so when your potential customers are browsing the Google Play they can see your app and try it.

The more installs your app gets, the better it ranks for the category.

At this point, you should know your numbers:

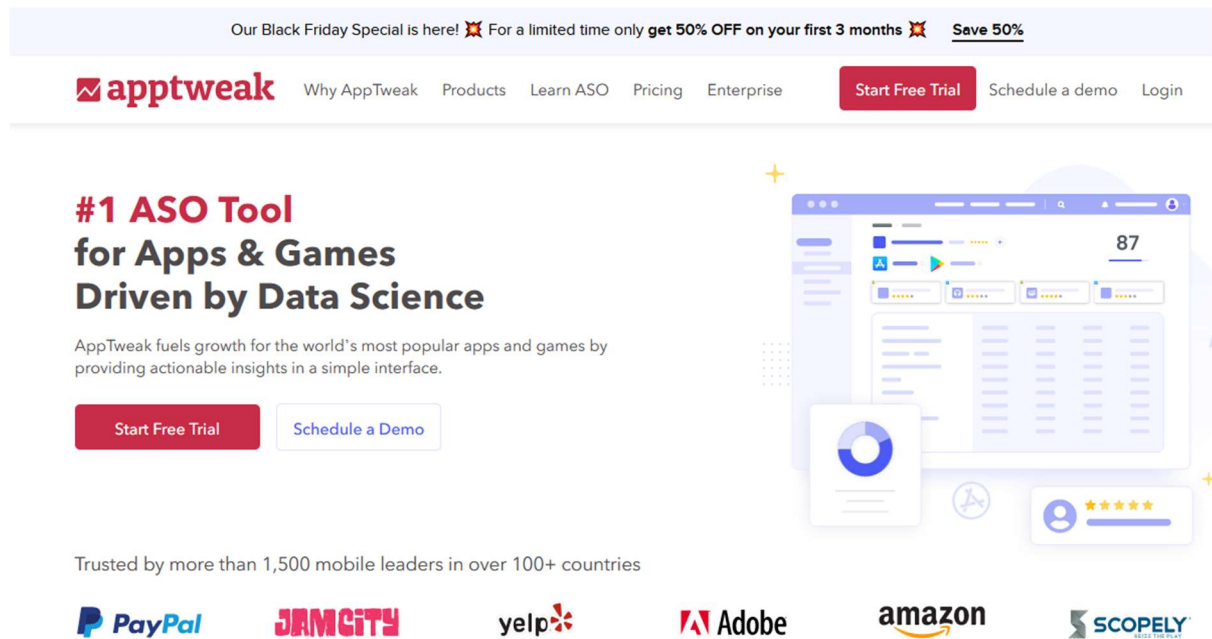
- What does it take to rank on top of a category?
- What are your main competitors?
- What apps make most of the money?
- If you don't have an app, what type of app should you build?

Chapter 3: Keywords Research

Being on top of the chart is great but first, we want to rank by relevant keywords unless you have a deep pocket for UA campaigns.

The best way to keyword research is to analyse your main competitors, apps that already rank on the top of the charts. With AppTweak free trial, you can check the keywords they rank for and the amount of traffic they get for each keywords in any GEO.

Go to apptweak.com/en and open a free trial account if you haven't already.



You can either connect your app or search for an application.

By connecting your Google Play console, you are able to pull all your apps automatically into your dashboard and benchmark performance against competitors or market trends. For keyword research, you need to add several similar apps (competitors) and check the keywords they rank.

How to Spy your competitors' keywords?

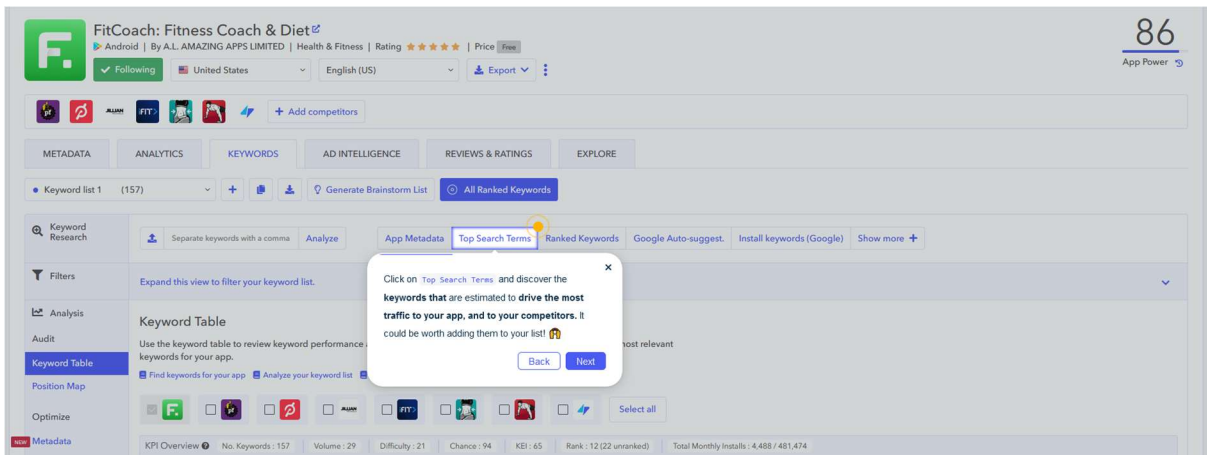
ASO Intelligence by AppTweak is here to help, for free.

Add an app you want to spy and go to the Keywords Tab. You can add more than one app and you should do this for several of your competitors. The goal is to collect as much as possible data.

Let's assume your app is a Fitness Coach or Diet subscription app so we can start with

FitCoach: Fitness Coach & Diet.

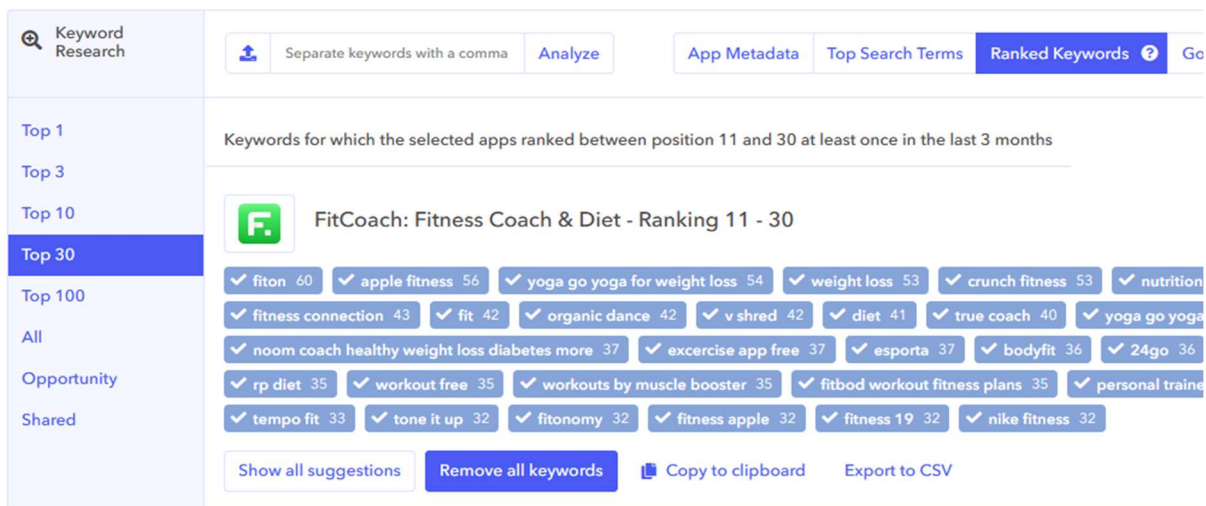
Choose the USA as target country – this is the biggest market in the world we want to rank. When you rank in the USA, your apps should rank in other countries as well. My advice is always to focus on the USA market; this should be your main target unless your app is local.



In AppTweak select a competitor and go to KEYWORDS tab to check the keywords they rank.

Add as much as possible keywords to the Keyword Table by going through App Metadata, Top Search Terms, and Ranked Keywords.

Click the Analyse all keywords button below the Title Keywords, Short Description Keywords and Description Keywords when you are on the App Metadata tab and make sure you select top 30 on the left when you are on the Ranked Keywords tab.



Head on the table below, sort by volume and remove all keywords that are just too broad, are not relevant to your app and brand terms. Sort by Installs to check the traffic volume this app gets for each keyword.

Keywords	Vol.	All Inst.	Diff.	Chance	KEI	Relevancy	Rank	Growth	Installs	Inst. %	Display
* fitness coach	51	5,966	14	97	99	-	2	+	546	9.15%	Live Search
* fitness	66	59,877	58	76	93	-	Unranked	+	385	0.64%	Live Search
* zing coach	25	1,115	4	99	64	-	1	+	335	30.04%	Live Search
* daily fit	29	1,449	15	97	69	-	2	+	233	16.08%	Live Search
* 28 day workout challenge	32	1,743	4	99	76	-	3	+	202	11.59%	Live Search
* dailyfit	27	1,232	28	93	64	-	2	+	192	15.58%	Live Search
* fitness coach	34	2,002	16	97	78	-	2	+	183	9.14%	Live Search
* fit on fitness apps coach gym	27	1,218	34	91	62	-	2	+	137	11.25%	Live Search
* fitness online	25	1,086	21	96	62	-	2	+	103	9.48%	Live Search

Do this for all competitors and create a list of 10-15 keywords you want your app ranked in top 5 on Google Play. You need one main keyword with good search volume and medium diff. score, several secondary keywords and several long tail keywords.

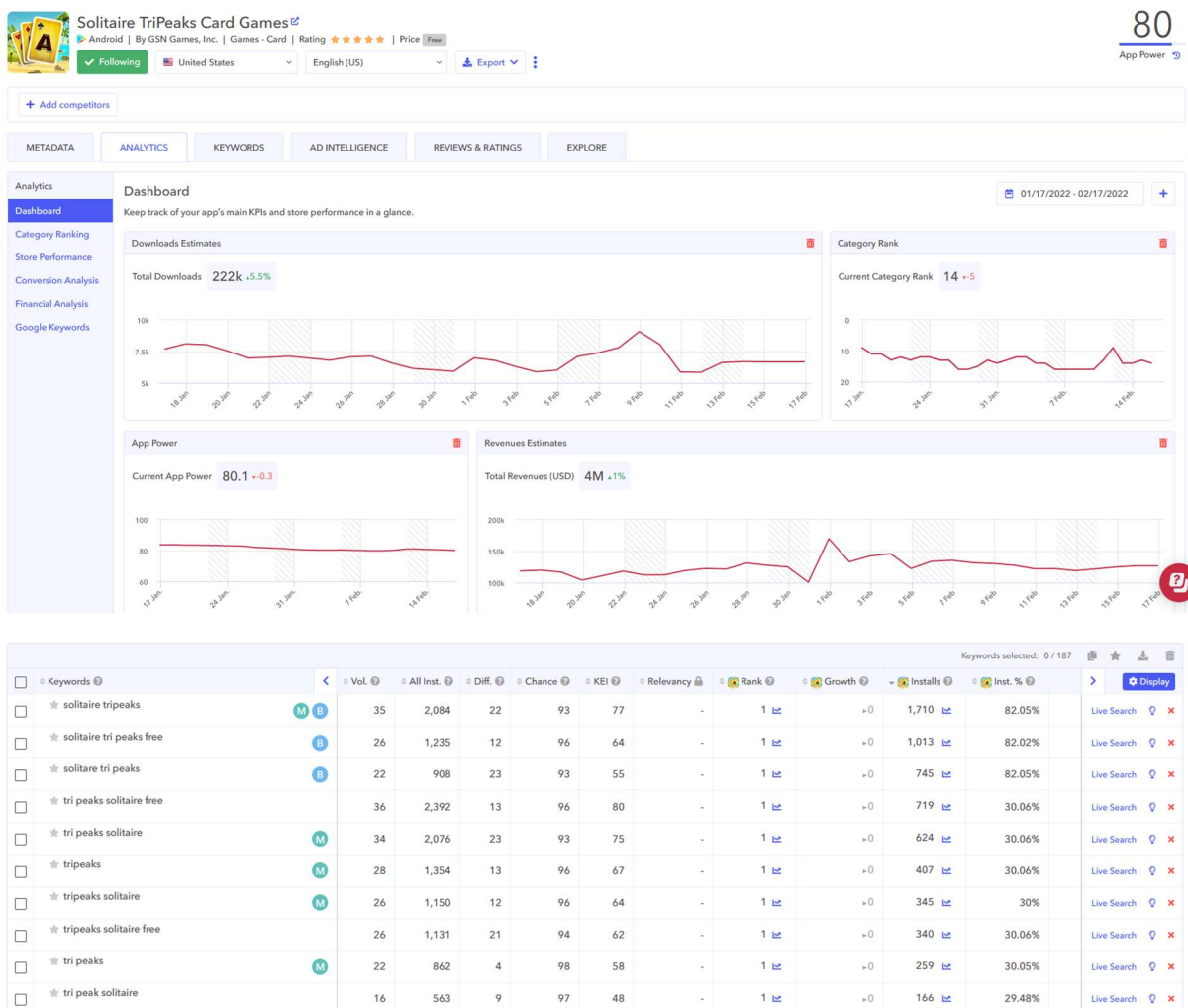
Look for Vol > 10 and Diff. < 50-60. Use the Live Search next to each keyword to check the relevance.

Try to be as focused as possible. Here is a list of keywords I chose for a Solitaire game.

My main keyword would be Solitaire Tripeaks.

free solitaire card game, solitaire tri peaks free, solitaire tripeaks, solitaire tripeaks journey, solitaire tri peaks, solitario, tri peak solitaire, tri peaks solitaire, tri peaks solitaire free, tripeaks solitaire, tripeaks solitaire free.

You can see <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.gsn.android.tripeaks&gl=us&hl=en> being top ranked by these keywords gets massive free traffic and good revenue.

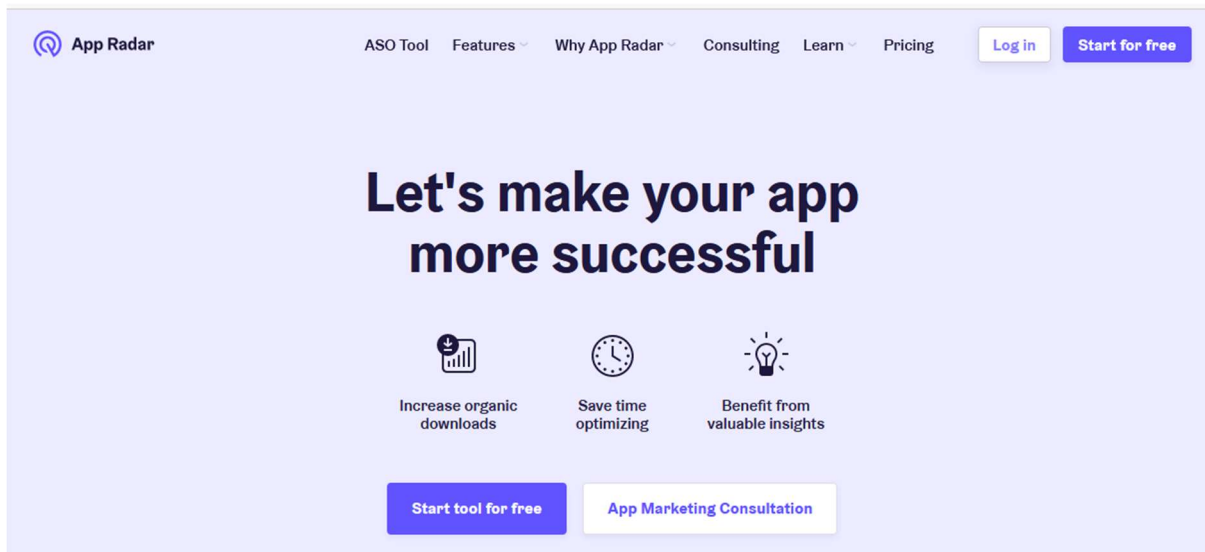


Our goal is to rank as high as possible for these same keywords along with all long tails people use to find a solitaire card game.

Please note – no spy tool is 100% accurate so we will double check our list of keywords before we plan and start our campaign. There are many keyword research tools available but I like AppRadar.

I use AppRadar to double check keywords search volume, difficulty score and track rank by keywords.

Go to appradar.com and sign up for a free trial account.



Connect your app and add your keywords you already collected. Go to Analyse Keywords on the left -> tracking and add your keywords. AppRadar can check keywords an app is already ranking for and the keyword finder is a nice feature as well.

KEYWORD	SEARCH RANK	METADATA	ASO INSIGHTS	SEARCH RESULTS	ACTIONS			
			SEARCH VOLUME	DIFFICULTY	APPS	OWNER	LIVE SEARCH	DELETE
tri peaks solitaire free	6	Q	38	61	100	[App Icon]	Live	[Delete]
solitaire tripeaks	5	Q	35	79	100	[App Icon]	Live	[Delete]
tri peaks solitaire	27	Q	33	62	100	[App Icon]	Live	[Delete]
tripeaks	5	Q	30	76	100	[App Icon]	Live	[Delete]
tripeaks solitaire free	26	Q	26	69	100	[App Icon]	Live	[Delete]
tripeaks solitaire	2	Q	26	72	100	[App Icon]	Live	[Delete]

We are in a research mode so try to analyse your competitors as much as you can.

You need to create a list of keywords to improve your App Title and Description and collect ideas for icon and screenshots. You need a relevant list of keywords to rank for and know your competition.

Remember your free trial will expire soon, so collect as much information as you can. Download reports and take screenshots. When collecting keyword ideas choose the one in orange.

At this point, you should know your main competitor, your main keyword and have a list of 10-15 keywords with decent search volume. Don't stress much about the difficulty score in AppRadar.

In the screenshot above you can see 61 difficulty score on the first line, but because this is a long tail keyword, we can easily get in the top 5.

Chapter 4: ASO - App Store Optimization

At this point, you should have your main keyword along with 10-15 relevant keywords. Now it is time to optimize and improve your listing.

Go to and check your main competitors ASO score with AppTweak and AppRadar and the number of ratings and reviews they have. Check overall number and the recent number of ratings and reviews.

Check their Update Frequency Benchmark and Metadata History to see how they improved their listings. Pay special attention to their visuals – icon and Screenshots. Make your listing look similar but better. Learn from them as much as you can. How have they improved their listings over time?

If you added your app to AppTweak will see your ASO score along with some advice on how to improve it. Don't stress too much on this, just apply what you believe is good for your app not being looking spammy on Google Play. Here are the key sections you should check and improve.

- Title – your main keyword must be in title, followed by secondary keyword or a filler word.
- Short Description – Your short description should explain in one sentence what your app does. Try to start with your main secondary keyword and make it appealing as this is what most of users read before they choose an app.
- Keywords in the short description have a lot of weight in the search algorithm; therefore, it's a great opportunity to expand your app's discoverability and increase impressions. The short description can also help users get a better idea of what your app is about and thus increase conversions.
- Your app name is one of the most important factors in App Store Optimization. It has a significant influence on the Google Play Store algorithm. Therefore, words contained in the title are taken into account for the referencing of your app and every word should be carefully chosen in order to maximize your chances of success.
- Integrate the most relevant keywords possible in your title, as they will help to improve your ranking in the Play Store. You might put your Brand Name along with the main relevant keywords.
- Long Description – must be long enough (2000 words or more) and keywords reach. Do you remember SEO in 2010? The same applies here. Start the description with your main keyword and keep the keyword density of 2-3%. Add your secondary keywords in the description as well plus any relevant keywords.

How to write good app description?

Your competitors are your friends.

Find similar apps, copy-paste and mix sentences from your competitors. Edit content to make it better and relevant to your app and highlight your unique advantages and selling points.

Then go to Fiverr and find someone to rewrite your app description for a small fee to avoid duplicate content and plagiarism issues. This is what I do and it works wonders. There is no way to get a good description written from a stranger than does not know your app so you are the boss here.

When you get your app description, give it a read before you publish it. You must be sure it is relevant, with no errors and your keywords are in place.

Pro advice: Check your content with Google Natural Language AI before you plush it.

Go to <https://cloud.google.com/natural-language>

Scroll down the page and paste your description in the Try the API box.

Google Cloud Why Google Solutions Products Pricing Getting Started Search Docs Support

Cloud Natural Language

DEMO

Natural Language AI

- Benefits
- Demo**
- Key features
- Our customers

Documentation

All features

Pricing

Take the next step

Natural Language API demo

Try the API

Try the API

Enter text to be analyzed...

ANALYZE

See supported languages

KEY FEATURES

Three natural language solutions that work with your text

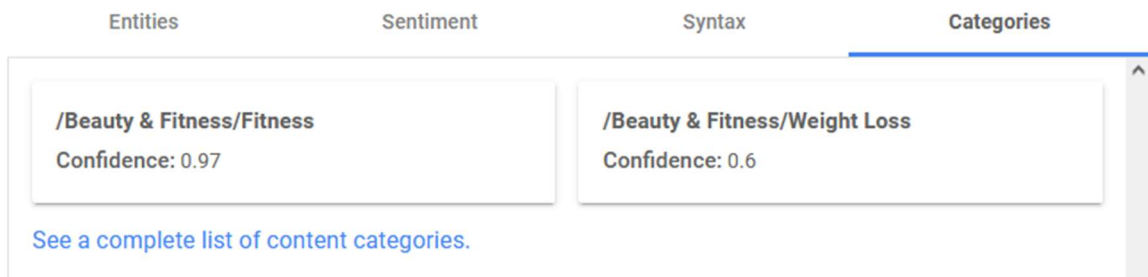
It takes a few seconds the text to be analysed and when done click on the Sentiment tab.

	Score	Magnitude
Document and Sentence Level Sentiment		
Entire Document	0.4	19
Lose weight without stress!	0.9	0.9
FitCoach is a fitness app for those who want to start a new active lifestyle, build healthy habits, lose weight, get fit, tone up, and feel amazing.	0.9	0.9
With our 30-day fitness plans, you can easily change your lifestyle, adjust your diet, and get effective advice on caring for your body.	0.9	0.9
Beginner workout is also available.	0.5	0.5
Accept fitness challenge, eat healthy get fit and lose weight with our fitness app!	0.9	0.9
WHO IS THIS APP FOR?	-0.3	0.3
The FitCoach app has been developed specifically for people who care about their health and want to slim down and get in shape but don't have enough time to go to the gym.	0	0
It's also for those who want to change their lives and pay more attention to their health.	-0.1	0.1

I'm not a native English speaker so for me this is a good way to check the quality of the content I pay for before using it on my websites. This tool is not perfect, but it is better to use it than not. I am not quite sure if this would help to rank better on SERP or Google Play but it won't hurt, I do believe.

Moreover, it is a fast and free way to check if Google AI likes your content or not.

When you are ready with sentences give the Categories tab a click to see how Google categories your description.



Having a score of 0.97 for a fitness app is quite good. Looks like the FitCoach did a great job when it comes to ASO. It is not a surprise, their app is a top ranked with ASO score of 95% in AppTweak.

In short, you need a well-written description with your keywords in place, no errors and a relevant confidence score of 0.90+; ideally above 0.95.

Keywords in the name and short description have a lot of weight in the search algo so use them wisely as you want to expand your app's discoverability and increase impressions while also help users get a better idea of what your app is about and thus increase conversions.

Chapter 5: The Visuals

Don't lose a user because of mediocre visuals.

Having a good, keyword-optimized app description is good for search engines, but I bet no user will read your 2000 word long app description, right?

A picture says thousands of words and guess what?

AppTweak will show you the competitor's graphics and screenshots plus the history of change - the path they took to get here. You don't want to repeat their mistakes so just replicate what works best for them. The chance is that it will for your app as well.

Having good visuals is important as it determines the conversion rate - the percentage of users who will install your app when they see it on Play Store. Our plan is to rank for keywords just next to big players in the category so we have to have a way to attract more users.

Always split test and improve visuals as they influence your conversion rate. Good conversion rate and recent positive ratings and reviews have positive impact on app rank.

The search volume per keyword is limited so a small change in CR can have a big impact.

Moreover, Google will reward your app when the CR and retention are good. You know, they claim their search engine is made for users and their goal is (or should be) make users happy.

“Google ranking systems are designed to do just that: sort through hundreds of billions of webpages or apps in our Search index to find the most relevant, useful results in a fraction of a second, and present them in a way that helps you find what you're looking for.”

– Google

Please note I am a bad designer so I cannot give you advice on how to create stunning visuals for your app but I am going to share with you how I outsource it for cheap with great results.

Again, Fiverr is our best friend.

There are thousands talented artist there ready to deliver quality work quickly and cheap. Go to Fiverr and look for graphic designer gigs. Before you order, ask for samples or portfolio. Every designer has a different style so you need to find someone who fits with your requirements.

Collect 3-4 icons from top ranked competitors, send the designer clear instructions, and ask him to make something in the same style but for your app without too many details. It needs to be attractive and original, as you want stand out from other apps.

Do this with screenshots and featured graphics as well. Ideally, you should create a promo video too.

“While a promo video is not required, it's highly recommended as a fun, engaging way to show your potential users the features of your app.”

– Google

Google recommends keeping the video between 30s and 2 minute. I advise to stay under 1min, and 30-45s should be enough to show your app in the best way possible and don't bore users.

Pro advice: Check the Timeline report in AppTweak to see how often your competitors update their apps and visuals. I have found out than 2-3 app updates per moth helps to keep the rank. You don't have to make big changes - just make a new build and publish it.

People prefer to look at screenshots rather than read a long description so it is necessary to optimize them. You can add up to 8 screenshots for each supported device so take an advantage! Add both portrait and landscape screenshots.

<https://support.google.com/googleplay/android-developer/answer/9866151?hl=en#zippy=%2Cscreenshots>

Your screenshots can really help convince a user to download your app. They should give an insight on the look and feel of your app while showing your app's best features. Make sure to include some text to describe your app on each screenshot.

Pro advice: use a short text on the top or the bottom of each screenshot to describe the feature or benefit shown. Also, localize your screenshots and app description.



Another thing, translate app description and visuals for each mayor different country. You want your audience to understand what you are telling them and this would give you a boost in these markets.

Google Play offers high-quality human translations translation service at USD 0.07 per word.

<https://play.google.com/console/about/translationservices/>

Chapter 6: Ratings and Reviews:

Ratings and reviews matter.

It is essential for each app to have a score above 4.3 and decent number of positive reviews for success. Getting more ratings and reviews should be your goal.

People tend to like what others already like.

If your app has low downloads, low ratings, or bad reviews, no one will choose it, no matter how hard you push it. CPI is going to be high and you will have a hard time to find new users.

You can check Ratings and Reviews with both AppTweak and AppRadar so you use whatever tool you like in most. I won't get into details here with screenshots as I do believe you should be already familiar with both AppTweak and AppRadar interfaces and both tools offer great customer support.

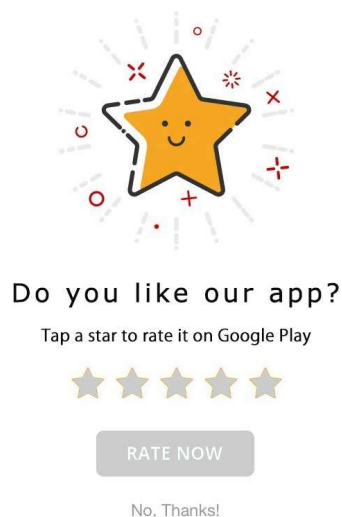
In general, you go to Reviews & Ratings tabs and check the score and number of ratings and reviews your competitors have in the USA or any other GEO you want to rank. Google has recently moved to geo-based ratings and reviews, so choosing the correct GEO is important.

Pro advice: According to my own research and results, I see a big impact of *recent* ratings and reviews volume on app's rank on both Google Play and App Store. The more ratings and reviews your app gets the better it ranks for keywords and in a category.

When Google see users like your app it should reward it, make sense?

How to get more 5 star ratings and positive reviews for your app?

Here is the workflow I have a great success with in my games. It should work for all apps.



The Rate Us window should appear after ~5 minutes of the gameplay (1.5 minutes for Kids Games) before showing an ad (if it is possible, before the first ad). Some kind of game success should work like a trigger, for example, a moment when a player finishes the level.

How the window works:

When the window appears, the rate button and the stars should be inactive. Rate button should become active only when the user has clicked on some number of stars.

If a player puts 5 stars: redirect them to the store. Never show the window again.

If a player puts less than 5 stars: DO NOT redirect him to the store. Never show the window again.

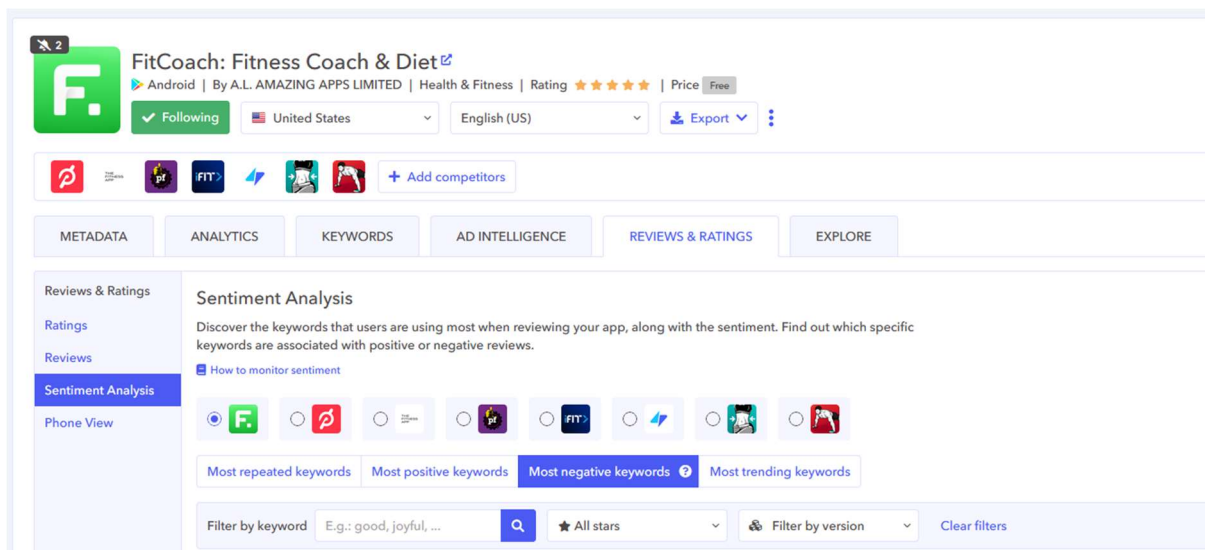
If a player closes the window: Show the window again after 24 hours. The window should appear after some game success, for example, when a player finishes a level, also after ~5 minutes of the gameplay before showing an ad.

It is a good idea to thank users after they rate the game with the "Thank you" window.

Pro advice: You should have Rate Us in all of your apps. Getting a lot of possible positive ratings and reviews build trust with users so more users will install your app and so more revenue for you. Sadly, this can take time as only 1 out of 50-100 users tend to leave a review, and I found out angry users are louder than happy clients. This is why you should buy ratings and reviews regardless of how many organic reviews you get, as there are always low-star reviews. You can also try embedding your keywords in the reviews you buy.

Reputation managing is important for every business and keywords help to rank better.

Pro advice: With AppTweak you can check the Sentiment Analysis for reviews. Pay a special attention to the negative reviews for your main competitors, learn from them and make sure you have these fixed in your app and highlight them as new cool features in your app description.



Chapter 7: Hit the TOP by keywords in 5 STEPS

At this point, your app listing should be published and listing should be optimized for results (ASO + CRO) with great visuals and proper keywords in title and app description.

Now it is time to boost your app to the top in 5 steps.

STEP 1

If your app is new with very low installs, you must to get initial installs. Don't worry about GEO, because I have tested it on my applications and it is working and India is the best geo to start with.

First, you need to buy installs from Google Ads: price should be no bigger than 0.10\$ / install for apps, a bit more for games. Target: India.

You can start with 100-300 installs per day for new apps and more for established apps. You should not extend 2000-3000 / day. The goal is to get 1-5k installs for new apps. The more the better.

You should see you have rankings in AppRadar in other countries, also in USA. Installations from India can also boost USA rank. If you want, add some USA installs, but CPI is going to be around 0.40\$ for apps (even more for games) currently, so it doesn't worth. If there is no rank in the USA don't worry.

I am using AppsFlyer to track all app installs, events, etc. for all different ad networks. Its free plan is enough and integration is easy. They have a good guide and helpful support. AppsFlyer is the best free ways to check your KPIs per GEO, traffic source, campaign, and even at ads level.

Running ads on Google helps in three ways:

- Initial boost of your app. People prefer apps with a numbers of installs, not a brand new one.
- Check your KPIs as D1 & D7 retention and app usage time.
- Test your visuals. You should split test all the time and improve your listing.

Why Google ads?

It is easy and works. With Google Ads you don't have much choice of who to target and this is okay. Google AI is there to help so just select your country and language.

What you do is add a few ad sets, titles and descriptions and Google is doing all the work. My ads are simple text ads with 5 Headlines and 5 Descriptions, no images, no videos, no HTML.

I tried PropellerAds, FB and Unity Ads and it didn't work out at all. CPI rocket so much. With Facebook Ads the CPI has never been lower than Google Ads for me and in my experience this is only for advanced users with large budgets or at least you should have trained your pixel well.

With FB ads it all depends on visuals – you must have really good video ads. Targeting is a good thing, as long as you know how to take advantage. You should try FB ads for sure, just make sure your pixel and events are set up correctly and your app already has a number of high quality users.

Headlines (up to 5) ⓘ	
Free Match 3 Games	18 / 30
Match 3 Games for Adults	24 / 30
Match 3 Puzzle 2020	19 / 30
New Match 3 Jewel Game	22 / 30
Free Match 3 Puzzle Game	24 / 30
Descriptions (up to 5) ⓘ	
Try to pass 19 levels today!	28 / 90
Are you tired? Play this game now!	34 / 90
Easy and fun offline game.	26 / 90
Classic Free Game.	18 / 90
How many can you Match?	23 / 90

STEP 2

To rank your application for keywords, you need fake reviews. Sorry, we cannot do it 100% white hat if everyone is doing fake reviews. You need reviews for your app with your keywords.

Each review must be around 300-450 characters!

NOT SHORTER!

Prepare 50-100 custom reviews with your keywords included in each review. You should have a list of 15-20 keywords so it should not be an issue to write different reviews and use each keyword several times, one time per review, though.

Important: Each review must be unique so don't copy-paste! Google is smart enough to catch this and reject dupe content. Reviews should be in the language you want to rank e.g. English for the USA and you can add emoji here and there to make them unique and look cool. Don't overdo it.

I had a hard time to find a reliable provider, been using ASOWords, Keyapp, Apptimizer and a few others for keywords installs and reviews and they are not bad but not all installs are showing in Google Developer Console and sometimes reviews drop.

I only use [appranky.com](https://www.appranky.com) to buy kw installs, ratings and reviews. It works fine, not as good as it used to be, but Google is getting harder to trick, so be careful with this and do your own due diligence.

Don't share this source with anybody as they have limited capacity for high retention keyword installs and you don't want your competitors know this service works so well.

The thing is that appranky mimics real user behaviour very well, almost undetectable by google.

You should keep install / review ration at 30:1, for example, if you need 100 reviews, they are going to deliver 3000 installs and reviews are no instant! They wait a few days up to 2 weeks after installation and then post a rating or review and that's making this service undetectable by Google Play bots. All installs come from different IPs and accounts so it is safe and effective.

Why do you need reviews?

- Your app's reputation is important. Your app will attract more attention if there is a lot of positive feedback.
- You can highlight main features, benefits and give users an impulse to try your app.
- If you have your keywords in place, you should see an increase in your app ranking for your keywords and get more traffic that is organic, relevant and free.

STEP 3

Reviews are not enough; when reviews come live, you need to wait a few days and response to these reviews.

In Google Play you have feature to reply to user review. Reply with 150-200 characters and include your keywords in your answer but DO NOT SPAM! Make it read genuine!

This is not only for google bot, most of users read reviews before installing an app. Be creative, put some work and effort, don't blame me if you break TOS and Google slaps you. I have not a single issue with Google so far. All services listed are tested a number of time with no issues. I have not a single app removed so far.

STEP 4

Thanks for previous steps; your app will be indexed for some keywords so order keyword installs.

Now you need keyword installs that will not harm your application. Keyapp.top is fine service, but you need to be careful with them. I suggest you AppRanky again as their ratings and reviews stuck on Google play and all keyword installs are high retention and this helps, according to my results.

Start it slow and monitor your ranking with AppRadar, SensorTower, MobileAction or any other tool you like. Just be aware no tool is 100% accurate and you need to know how your ranking improves. Google is getting smarter day by day so you should play it smart as well.

Start with say 10 / day / each keyword installations and increase slowly when necessary as more keywords can harm your ranking. Start with a list of 6-7 keywords.

You can (and should) change keywords according to your results. Just be aware rank change is not instant. It takes time and persistence. Less is much here. Play it smart.

STEP 5

Analyse, Adapt and Improve.

If your app is new, use the Tier 3 countries to get cheap app installs and analyse users behaviour with Firebase. Take notes and try to improve your app. After that go for Tier 1 and 2 countries like the US, Germany, France, UK, Canada, etc. to earn money.

Stats like ARPU (Average Revenue Per User) are very important to make the app profitable. Firebase and Unity Analytics is giving you all of that information. Update your apps, check the ARPU, update again, optimize it, update again, etc. what you want is to maximize revenue and to get the most of the money out of your users, while not showing the ads too aggressively otherwise they will uninstall your app right away. You have to find the perfect balance and firebase is helping you to find it.

Also, unitize the Remote Config to personalize the app for each user to optimize for an objective. Personalizing a parameter is like performing an automatic, individualized, continuously-improving, A/B test. firebase.google.com/docs/remote-config/personalization?authuser=0

Another thing: Depending on your app, you should DEFINITELY download similar apps from your competitors list you built with AppTweak and analyse their monetization strategy. Check where and when they place ads, do they have IAP, what type of offers they run.

You can download any APK with apkpure.com and use sisik.eu/apk-tool to guess what ad networks they are using.

Most importantly, you need to analyse how they make users come back on next coming days, as retention is important. Most of users wont buy instantly and they need to use the app for a while.

And good news for you: These companies spent a shit ton of money to figure out how to maximize revenue and guess what? You can see the outcome right there...learn from them.

Chapter 8: THE PLAN

This strategy works with any FREE app as long as it FOLLOWS the Google Policy!

I have only one Google Play Developer Account for all my apps. I don't know how to manage several accounts and can't help you if you choose the 'wrong' path.

Let me recap the strategy in short:

- Market research. Keyword research. Competition analysis. Publish app. ASO + CRO.
- For new apps, start Google Ads in India for 10-15 days, 100-300 installs per day to reach 1k-5k Indian installs. For established apps, you don't need this.
- Along with this from day 1 buy reviews and installs from the USA. You write reviews because you know your app better than anybody does and you embed your keywords.
- When reviews are published start to replay to them with your keywords.
- After reviews comes, you should appear in keyword top 100 so you are ready to continue.
- Then buy keywords installs say 10 per keyword. If you want it for 10 keywords, you should buy $10 \times 10 / \text{day}$ for 30 days = 3000 in total for a month. Monitor your keywords rank and change from long tail to major one and to your main keywords. Keep it max 10-15 per keyword per day. Example for a bubble shooter:
 - your app name or brand name or a mix of both e.g. BRAND: bubble shooter
 - bubble shooter game
 - bubble shooter game free
 - bubble shooter games
 - bubble shooter free games
- Run it for 3 days, each keyword maximum 20 installs/day. After 3 days, you are checking if you increased positions and appear on more major keyword: for example "bubble shooter"
- Then you are switching your campaign to major keyword. Last step should be single word: bubble and shooter. It's like jumping on new level: first you promote many long tail keywords with keyword installs, then switching to major keywords.
- For Google Ads – run Universal App Campaign text ads with 5 titles, 5 descriptions. No images, no video, no HTML as campaign will be more expensive, no worth it. Keep descriptions short, max 80 to have your ads on all screen sizes. You need to create 5-10 ad groups with 5 ads variants to make your campaign learn faster.

Please note: numbers vary per app and depend on your app type – game or application, the category and competition. For less competitive markets, you need less volume.

Check out the Chapter 10 with my case study for more information.

Chapter 9: General Advice

- You should add AppsFlyer to your apps. It is free and enables you to check KPIs per country, traffic source, campaigns, ad level, etc. Here is the instruction for integration <https://support.appsflyer.com/hc/en-us/categories/201114756-SDK-integration>
- All fonts are intellectual property. If unlicensed fonts are used the publisher and developers may face financial penalties from copyright holders. You may use <https://fonts.google.com/> It's a library of fonts with free licenses for use in your digital products for Android, iOS, and web.
- You should integrate Facebook SDK as soon as possible to let FB pixel collect data. This can help you when you run UA campaign for your app. Although Facebook Analytics is no longer available, you still need to integrate Facebook SDK and set up App Events because without them ad campaigns won't work. You need Key Hashes setup. With Key Hashes Facebook understands that traffic comes from a real app, without them UA campaigns won't work correctly.
- UA creatives' quality is essential to lower your CPI. Find your competitors FB pages and check their Ad Library or find a publisher with many apps and check their ads. For example [facebook.com/rollic](https://www.facebook.com/rollic) or [facebook.com/AZURGAMESofficial](https://www.facebook.com/AZURGAMESofficial) - Go to Page transparency and then Ad Library and see all of their ads. Don't copy their work but use it as an inspiration for your creatives.
- In general, FB video ads works well and should be in the following format:
 - Vertical games: 1080x1080 (square), 1080x1350 (4x5), 1080x1920 (9x16)
 - Horizontal games: 1080x1080 (square), 1080x1350 (4x5), 1080x1920 (9x16), 1920x1080 (16x9)
 - Video length: 15-30 seconds
 - 4-5 videos will be enough.
 - What is called a fail ad outperforms other ad types e.g. "You can't do it", approach.
- If your app is a hyper casual game you can run free CTR tests with playducky.com so you can test your ads for free (and get some installs for free). If your game is good and they like it, they can run CPI test as well. This is free for you and if metrics are good you can sign a contract so they handle marketing and you split the profit. If they reject your creatives you should better don't use them and create new. You can check out [kwalee.com](https://www.kwalee.com) as well.
- If you monetize with ads you should try different ad networks and compare your results as some see good results with AdMob while others are happy with Unity Ads alone. I get a positive feedback for Applovin MAX and you can learn more about them at <https://dash.applovin.com/documentation/mediation>. Setup is complicated but it pays out because in short they can deliver ads from many sources e.g. AdMob, Facebook, Unity, Ironsource, Fyber, Mintegral etc and thus increase eCPM for your app.

- You should regularly update your apps. This will not only help you improve your apps, fix bugs, add more features to make users happy and increase your revenue, but is also good for your ranking as both Google and Apple wants to provide fresh content to their users.
- Google Ads. First, create conversion event for your app in Google ads. Go to Tools, Conversions (Under Measurement) and give it a click. If your app is not in the list of the conversion actions click on the blue plus button and fill up the data requested on the next step – name, app, don't use a value for this conversion action and click Continue.




Start tracking conversions

Conversion tracking is critical to successful online marketing. It lets you see what people do - the conversion actions they take - after seeing your ad. You set up one conversion action at a time, but you can track multiple conversion actions at once. [Learn more](#)


Select the kind of conversions you want to track. ⓘ

Website




Track actions on your website

App




Track actions on your app

Phone calls



Track calls from your ads or website

Import



Import data from Google Analytics or another source

Select how to track your app conversions:

Google Analytics 4 properties (Firebase) ⓘ

Google Play

Installs

In-app purchases

Third-party app analytics

This option lets you track Android app installs, without adding code to your app. When someone downloads your app from Google Play after interacting with your ad, it will count as a conversion.

[Learn more](#)

CONTINUE
CANCEL

Conversion name 0 / 100 Example: "June newsletter sign-ups", "Manager job applications", or "Big cookie sales"

Mobile app

Value Measure your ad performance by setting a value for each conversion

Don't use a value for this conversion action
Each time a download conversion happens, no value is recorded. Recommended for measuring return on ad spend (ROAS) when valuable conversions occur in-app.

Use a value for each conversion action

Select this option if you don't want to track a value for your app installs. [Learn more](#)

Conversion windows: Select how long after a user interacts with your ad to count app installs as conversions

Click-through conversion window	30 days	▼
Engaged-view conversion window	2 days	▼
View-through conversion window	1 day	▼

Now go to Campaigns and create a new campaign

Select a campaign type **App**
Drive app promotion across Google's networks

Select a campaign subtype

App installs
Get new people to install your app

App engagement
Get existing users to take actions in your app

App pre-registration (Android only)
Get new users to pre-register for your app before launch

Select your mobile app's platform

Android

iOS

Look up your app

CONTINUE CANCEL

Select your app and give the campaign a meaningful name. I find it most marketers (not only newbies) have a difficult time to name their campaign so let me share my template

Let say your app is called Shadow Fight 2. I would name the campaign

SF2 // Android Installs // India

Simple as that. The name of the app + main objective + GEO.

For Location, select India. Set daily budget, Install volume for Bidding, select your conversion event you already setup, all users, and enter your target CPI. Save and continue. On the next step give the ad group a name and fill in your 5 titles and descriptions. No images, no videos, no HTML.

I am not sure how detailed should be here, hope you got it and please refer to google ads online help or ask them on live chat if you have questions as going into more details here is beyond of the scope of this guide.

Chapter 10: Closing Words and Case Study

Hope you enjoyed my e-book and learned a lot from it. Now it's time to take action.

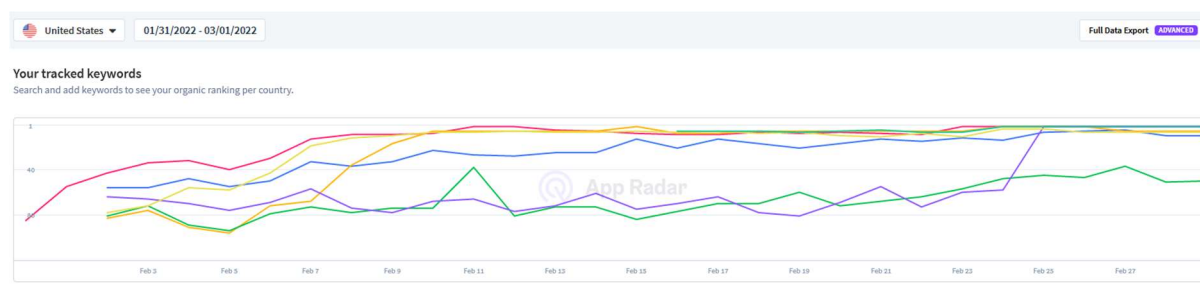
If I could do it, so should you but beware results are no instant.

You should put a great deal of time and effort, be persistent and play it smart.

And no, I'm not a developer or a designer.

For the purpose of this guide, I did a case study and ranked a new card game in top 10 for 5 keywords, medium search volume (orange in AppRadar).

Here are my result for a brand new app – a card game I published 3 months ago.



You see, rank by relevant keywords increases to drive targeted users looking for a game like mine.

This is what I did:

- Market research. Keyword research. Competition analysis.
- Prepared stunning visuals and great app icon.
- At the end of Nov. 2021 published new app with main keyword in the title, great ASO with my keywords in place, 2000 words long app description. Added tags relevant to the app.
- During the first 2 months, I published several releases so Google can see this is a live app I am working on and improving.
- Initial boost with Google Ads app installs campaign in India, CPI \$0.15, 10 days. 1k+ installs.
- 20 Dec - 10 Feb: 2000 installs, 20 reviews with keywords and 150 ratings, drip feed with daily increasing. Started with 50/day to reach 200 installs per day for 8 keywords.
- Responded to all 20 reviews with keywords. App indexed and appeared in AppRadar TOP 10.
- 10 Feb - 4500 keyword installs, 450 ratings and 30 reviews, 200 per day for 6 keywords.
- Respond to reviews every 3-4 days or so.
- Monitor and optimize the keyword campaign and update the app from time to time.

Your results may vary.

I make no promises to you.

Take my personal success story and this e-book as an inspiration of what is possible and do your due diligence.

You and you alone, are solely responsible for any results and income you make or fail to make.

There is no assurance that any prior successes or past results as to results, earnings or income will apply in your situation, nor can any prior successes be used, as an indication of your future success or results from any of the information, content, or strategies contained herein this eBook.

Bonus Content: Rank iOS APPs & Mobile Games

For the last 5+ months, I've been trying to rank my test mobile games on App Store and I do believe I cracked the code. I reverse engineering more than 50 apps and games, talked to several industry experts, and here is what I learned.

About 80% of this guide applies to both Play Store and App Store. You can use the same tools and techniques listed above for market, keyword and competition research, ASO and Visuals. AppTweak can work well for both stores. You just need to take into consideration the differences...

App Store vs. Play Store

When optimizing for iOS and Android, you should take into consideration the difference of their algorithms and ranking factors - Apple has a keyword list, while Google uses the long description; Google looks at (keyword) installs, uninstalls, and crashes while Apple looks at recent ratings.

Let me explain:

When you publish your app with App Store Connect, you can see there is a keywords field and this is what Apple says about it:

Include one or more keywords that describe your app. Keywords make App Store search results more accurate.

Being an iOS fan for years I know a thing – you should definitely pay attention to what Apple says (as opposite to what MS and Google say, LOL). Therefore, this field is here for a reason – it is a ranking factor, we must use wisely.

The other key difference between App Store and Play Store is the option to:

Reset iOS Summary Rating

You can reset your app's summary rating for all countries or regions when you release this version. Keep in mind that once this version is released, you won't be able to restore the rating. Your app's existing customer reviews will still appear on the App Store. [View Ratings and Reviews](#)

- Keep existing rating
- Reset rating when this version is released

This is important!

With App Store Connect as opposite to Google Play, we can keep or reset the app's ratings!

Imagine your app got low ratings. With Google Play, you cannot do anything, while Apple allows us to correct (reset) this by publishing a new build.

Cool, right?

The thing is that this comes with a (hidden) cost.

Ratings runs the show and new ratings is a HUGE ranking factor on App Store.

Having said that, we have (at least) two major difference between App Store and Play Store:

- Keywords field
- Keep or reset existing ratings

App Store ASO – Do's and Don'ts with Examples:

The most important mistake that hurts badly your ASO is not using or over using the right keywords in the name, subtitle, keywords and description.

While with Google Play we should focus on keyword density in the long description and reviews, with Apple we should not repeat a keyword in metadata.

If you are not using keywords the right way, you are preventing the search algorithms to do the job.

You want to optimize for keywords that:

- Are relevant to your app and get traffic
- Top results have similar number of ratings.

If your app is new with low or no rating, you should start with low competitive keywords and grow.

Optimizing the name and subtitle:

When it comes to ASO, the app's name is the most important area to pay attention to because it's one of the first places Apple and Google look at to determine where to rank your app and how high.

You might be tempted to choose a cool name for your app or game but please don't do it.

Use your main keyword in the name and add something that will make users want to click on it!

With Apple you have 30+30 characters – a quite enough for your main and secondary keywords.

When you write app name and subtitle do not repeat keywords! Use the most important (and popular) single keyword in the name and use words that extend those in the name and subtitle.

You can use - + : & to append more keywords.

For example, a good name and subtitle is:

Learn & Speak Spanish Language

Vocabulary, Verbs, and Grammar

- Learn Spanish – main keyword.
- Speak Spanish, Spanish language, learn to speak Spanish, Spanish vocabulary, Spanish verbs, Spanish grammar, learn Spanish verbs, learn Spanish grammar, etc... see the opportunities?

The order matters, keep this in mind!

Just remember, app name is what users see first, it should grab their attention and make them click!

Optimizing the keywords list:

According to my research, Apple gives a lot of weight to keywords from the list, so not taking advantage of this opportunity means you are throwing away downloads.

The keyword list is limited to 100 characters, so use only single non-plural words and don't use spaces and stop words.

Here is the list of English stops words you should not use in the keyword list:

a, about, above, after, again, against, all, am, an, and, any, app, are, aren't, as, at, be, because, been, before, being, below, between, both, but, by, can't, cannot, could, couldn't, did, didn't, do, does, doesn't, doing, don't, down, during, each, few, for, from, further, had, hadn't, has, hasn't, have, haven't, having, he, he'd, he'll, he's, her, here, here's, hers, herself, him, himself, his, how, how's, i, i'd, i'll, i'm, i've, if, in, into, is, isn't, it, it's, its, itself, let's, me, more, most, mustn't, my, myself, no, nor, not, of, off, on, once, only, or, other, ought, our, ours, ourselves, out, over, own, same, shan't, she, she'd, she'll, she's, should, shouldn't, so, some, such, than, that, that's, the, their, theirs, them, themselves, then, there, there's, these, they, they'd, they'll, they're, they've, this, those, through, to, too, under, until, up, very, was, wasn't, we, we'd, we'll, we're, we've, were, weren't, what, what's, when, when's, where, where's, which, while, who, who's, whom, why, why's, with, won't, would, wouldn't, you, you'd, you'll, you're, you've, your, yours, yourself, yourselves

Apple ignores stop words so including any of these above in your keyword list would be a waste of characters, so make sure you take them out.

Apple is smart and combine your words provided so if you want to add “buy iphone”, “buy ipad”, “buy ipod”, “buy macbook”, “cheap iphone accessories” your optimized keyword list should be:

buy,cheap,iphone,ipad,ipod,macbook,accessories

and let the engine create all possible combinations of search terms from your keyword list.

The order is important again, so start with your best keywords. Also, don't add irrelevant keywords! They won't help you and are more likely to mislead the search engine, rank your app for non-relevant keywords leading to less installs or low ratings.

Optimizing the promotional text and description:

According to Apple, the promotional text and description aren't used by the algorithm for ranking, and in my experience that's accurate, so they're safe to re-use keywords in. Write then for users, highlight best app's features, give them a reason to install it.

[How to Rank Apps and Mobile Games on App Store?](#)

At this point, your app should be ASO optimized and now it is time to boost it. There is very limited information available on how to boost an app on App Store, so it is a tough subject but, thanks to my reverse engineering skill I can confirm, new ratings are very, very important.

With all things equal, the app that receives the most new ratings ranks better on App Store.

Your app must have great ASO + high volume and consistent or growing volume of new positive ratings. Ideally, you want to get only 4 and 5 star ratings with a score of 4.5+

There are two way to do it:

- Build a great app, get a lot of users and wait for ratings to come.
- Build a great app, get users, let them rate, and buy non-delectable, non-drop ratings.

I am confident to say ratings are important ranking signal on App Store as I saw a significant increase in ranking of my test apps when I implemented the iOS native rating system:

<https://developer.apple.com/design/human-interface-guidelines/ios/system-capabilities/ratings-and-reviews/>

The good news – it is easy to implement and works, the bad news - the system limits how often rating prompts occur and automatically limits the display of the prompt to three occurrences per app within a 365-day period. Weird!

Can you Incentivize Users to rate your app?

If you read both Apple and Google TOS, you cannot do it and they can remove your app from the store. So do not say something like, "Give me a 5-star rating, and I'll give you 500 coins".

That is a no-no. Please do not do that.

There is a way to do it right.

Give the user a few coins *without* asking for anything in return. Then, prompt the user to rate. Alternatively, let them achieve something significant, something they are proud of and ask for rating. It is all about the flow and the right moment to ask for rating.

When is the best time to ask for rating?

- After successful task completion, they are proud of.
- After getting something, they want or like.
- After a certain level of usage. If they use it - they like it.

Or buy ratings...

I'm still looking for a reliable provider of non-delectable, non-drop iOS ratings, and I'll keep you posted when I find one. In the meantime, please do your proper keyword research, apply what you've learned so far, and let me know your results.

How to Optimize and Boost Your APPs for App Store in 5 steps?

- Add your main keyword in the name. Name is the most important part on both stores.
- Add your secondary keywords in the Subtitle – the second most important part.
- Add your additional, *relevant* keywords in the keywords field.
- Do not repeat keywords. Do not use plural form. Do not use the Category name in metadata.
- Get as much as possible genuine or non-drop new five star ratings.

Remember, optimization is an iterative process. You need to monitor your app rank and watch competitors, try different things, and always A/B test. If you are not sure about your keywords or strategy, try something for a month, change it and see the difference.

Learn from the best performing apps and games, compete with mid-range apps and beat the others.

Your competitors are your source for keywords, metadata, visuals and monetization strategy.

Finally yet importantly, do not focus on the most competitive keywords right from the start.

You need to grow slow so optimize for the keywords where your app's current downloads, ranks, and ratings meet (or beat) the minimum, and preferably get close to the average.

Bonus 2: Why users uninstall your app?

Rumours say the volume of uninstalls impact app rank badly. I cannot confirm this but one thing is true – we make money when users use our apps, right? The less uninstalls the more money for us.

Here is a list of the most common reasons for users to uninstall an app:

- Bad or wrong audience

We want more users, but what we want more is targeted users. Make sure only the right people find and install your apps as angry users and louder than the happy ones and are more likely to not only uninstall the app but also leave a negative review. Don't target too broad, don't use irrelevant keywords, don't mislead with ads and visuals.

- Bad onboarding

We know how to use our app, but do new users know? Make sure you welcome new users with as simple as possible flow and focus on the highlights, not every feature. The better they know the app, the more they will like it and use it.

- Bugs, lags, crashes, etc... nobody likes them, so make sure your app works on all devices.

- Overpriced IAP

You might want to sell expensive units, but isn't it better to increase the volume instead of the price? Do you funnel your IAP? I allow users to use the app for a while until they like it, and then I make them an irresistible offer. If they buy - offer them more to buy, if they don't - offer them a better deal. Segment users and get the most out of them.

Bonus 3: Things I noticed but can't confirm (yet)

When I analyse the iOS App Store I notice things that I think are important but I need more data to confirm so take this with a grain of salt.

These tips might not help you improve your app rank, but it will not hurt it for sure.

- While I am sure, new ratings are important ranking factor, I think installs / ratings ratio is important as well. It is not the same if your app gets say 0.1% of users rating it or say 2.5%. Don't be aggressive, remember incentivize ratings must be done right.
- The keywords you use in metadata are important, but did you know that the direction in which one follows the other also matters? "Time travel" is not the same as "travel time"; "podcast payer" is not the same as "player podcast" when search engine combines keywords we provide. If you want to rank for "podcast player" make sure "podcast" is before "player" in the metadata.
- There are common words with several meanings, so it is better not to use them as keywords.