

INSIGHT

one-on-one with

Robert Gary, Vice President & General Manager, Mobile Care, Nuance



Why 95% of Mobile Apps are Abandoned— and Tips to Keep Your Apps from Becoming Part of that Statistic

Here's the good news: It's clear that the mobile channel has become one of the most powerful ways for companies to interact with consumers. With over 250,000 apps in the Android Marketplace and over 500,000 in the iTunes App Store are a key driver of those interactions. Now for the bad news: Getting your mobile app discovered and used by customers is a challenge. Despite the fact that every day over 50 million mobile apps are downloaded, 95 percent are abandoned within a month. In this interview, Robert Gary, Vice President and General Manager, Mobile Care at Nuance, talks about how to ensure that your customers are finding and using your app... more than just once.

QUESTION: Can you answer the big question: Why are apps abandoned so quickly?

ROBERT GARY: I think the answer is really two-fold. You have to look at why apps aren't being discovered by consumers before you can answer the question about why they aren't actually being used. While smartphones and mobile apps are exciting and new, the data shows that they haven't yet become incorporated into consumers' daily lives. Take a customer care scenario (I'll focus

are the exception to the rule. That process starts by recognizing the two main reasons why consumers love mobile devices: convenience and immediacy. For example, consumers frequently view smartphones and tablets as a faster, easier way to get information than using a PC. The ideal mobile app must meet those expectations in order for it to be an effective way for merchants and other companies to interact with consumers. So the main reason that apps aren't used? It's because an app isn't designed to meet that very basic customer desire – getting an immediate outcome to their problem or need.

A Mobile App innovator talks about how to get your Mobile Apps used consistently.

on that because that's where Nuance's expertise lies), customers have been trained to call customer service as a first point of contact. Companies can take advantage of that behavior by recognizing that a smartphone user is dialing customer service and offer a reminder that the mobile app is available. Such an approach addresses the issue of: app 'discoverability'.

Now, understanding why the vast majority of apps are quickly abandoned is key for developing ones that

Q: Are there certain types of apps that are more likely to be abandoned than others?

RG: Yes, the most quickly abandoned apps are the free ones. Less than five percent of smartphone owners are still using free apps 30 days after downloading them. Put bluntly, the vast majority of tablet and smartphone owners don't see enough benefit from free apps to continue using them. Or, they simply forget what they have on their phone. Customer service-related apps, coincidentally, are usually free. From an ROI perspective that can be really scary for an Enterprise because although the apps are free for users, companies spend **between \$20,000 and \$150,000 to develop an app.**

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Q: Are there things we can do to ensure that an app gets used frequently?

RG: So, once customers remember or “discover” that an app is available to use, the next challenge is to get them to keep using it. There are so many creative ways to engage users in cool interactions – for example gaming approaches that make apps addictive and social. However, not all apps - especially customer service apps – are going to engage users with entertaining gimmicks. In the vast majority of cases, the app must simply be easy to use and avoid frustrating customers. Check your app store reviews. What are customers complaining about?

A top complaint: many users don't enjoy typing on their smart-phone's or tablets virtual keyboard – it takes too long and it's prone to mistakes. By providing users with a speech input option to fill out a form, speak a product name or search for a local restaurant, companies can engage more users and improve the effectiveness of their app. Check out apps like Price Check by Amazon, Siri the personal assistant and Dragon Go!. They all engage users in a natural interaction and offer them options to speak inputs that would be difficult to type. In the end, in order to stay relevant to the consumer and offer them the flexibility they crave, mobile apps need to offer natural interactions that account for speech, tap and touch inputs.

Q: What about integrating your apps with other channels? How important is that?

RG: No matter how great your mobile app is, if it's like the majority of apps, it's a siloed experience for the mobile consumer – especially customer service apps. An app is accessed to accomplish a very specific task that has been pre-identified and designed. However, we will soon be at a point where the smartphone will be the primary communication tool for consumers. As more customers rely on their smartphones to ask questions, get answers and get things done, apps will need to evolve accordingly.

Mobile apps have the power to be a gateway – connecting consumers beyond the app to other touchpoints that may meet their specific need. Companies should consider creative and user-friendly approaches to provide information that is not built into the app. The results can have tremendous return on investment, driven by increased self-service on the device and shortening the length of calls that still need to be handled in the contact center.

Q: Can a mobile app really have an impact on the bottom line?

RG: Yes, definitely. Regardless of whether the app is designed for sales or customer support or just plain fun, the bottom line is that an engaging experience increases the likelihood that long after 30 days, they'll still be using that app for information and interaction which can drive customer loyalty and retention. Additionally, there's the potential to increase on-device self-service, and the more customers use the mobile app to meet their needs, the less calls will come into your call center.

Would you like to learn more about how to improve app discoverability and usage? Contact your Nuance account representative or email us at mobileadvantage@nuance.com