Marketing Guidance for Developers

Marketing in a Box is an initiative by Nokia to help developers better market their applications, in order to increase downloads and make more revenue. Marketing in a Box has two sections: *marketing guidance* and *Digital marketing toolkit*. This article talks about marketing guidance.

Note: This is a community entry in the Series 40 Webinars - Contribute and Win Competition 2013Q1 with Marketing in a Box competition.

Introduction

The marketing guidance consists of set of guidelines on what to do to make sure that your app is a success. There are various techniques and strategies that can be done in various stages of an application in order to bring success. This article provides a summary of the official Nokia Marketing Guide and extra inputs based on my personal experience that could be incorporated into the main guide.

Note: This is a summary of the official marketing guide.Each section is covered in more detail, in the official guide.

Owned Media Presentations

It is important to be clear cut while developing an app. Find out about how your app differs from your competitors. Figure out your the app's potential audience and the channels used by them. Create a clear cut message that you wish to deliver to your audience. Work your way to deliver the product with the right talk at the right place and at the right time.

Website Creation and Updates

For any developer, it is very important to have a proper webpage for the app that they are making. This helps them in showcasing their apps and also for customer support. The content should be proper so that it can assist the user in all possible ways with respect to an application. It is essential to keep the website alive by constantly posting fresh or updated content to keep the users engaged .

SEO

Keywords play a vital role in the discoverability of an application. The marketing guide covers Search engine optimisation extensively.

Social Media Asset Creation & In-app Sharing

Social presence is crucial to achieve and expand the success of any application. While the need for a social presence is well known to most developers, the ways to achieve them may not be very clear. A facebook page,a twitter profile and a youtube profile, could very well make the difference between success and failure. In-app sharing with social networking sites helps in reaching a large audience.

Beta-Testers and Video-creation

Make sure you test your app extensively before launch. As they say,"First impression is the best impression". Using videos can also greatly assist you in getting a good first impression.

In-app Business Models

In-app purchase (Purchasing within your application) and In-app Advertising (Ads within your app) are the two ways to make money from within your app.

Bought and earned Media

You can improve the reach of your applications using paid advertising. These method include

1. Mobile Advertising
2. Social Media Advertising
3. Search Engine Marketing

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Present your app to app news and review websites. It can boost your traffic. If the right kind of people talk about your app,you receive valuable promotion. Prepare a press release to make your app well known. Start blogging about your app as well. Use your social media communities that you have built, to your maximum advantage.

Launch Preparation

When you are launching,it is important to have an outstanding launch window to attract users. Use the features provided in the app store to your advantage. Make sure you time your launch so that it reaches customers at the best possible time. Use your previously earned success to your advantage. Participate in contests so that your app attains fame.

Maintenance

Listen carefully to your user's comments and consider updating your apps according to those comments.Keep your users posted about any new releases.

Monitoring

Monitor your ad campaigns, website, app, social networking pages to gain interesting insights.

Additional Marketing Tips

I have added additional marketing tips based on my personal experience, which could be added to the official Nokia Marketing Guide after review. I want to stress upon,to the readers, the importance of Brand value, Icons, App name and Screenshot.

Brand Value :

Your brand is what represents you and your company. It doesn't matter if your business is in the financial or gaming sector, branding is equally important. The app,its quality and usability determines your brand value. The brand that you develop transfers to other mediums as well. It will pervade through all your new apps that you may develop later or a new website, or a tangible product and so forth. Your brand is how your clients will recognize you and connect with you. The initial impression your potential users will get of your app and brand is on your app’s download page, your screenshots, brand identity and app description; this is what will convert possible users into downloads.

If you have apps that are of comparatively poor quality than a new app that you have made, your potential users will automatically judge your new app to be of lesser standard as well, which is not the case!Hence it is important to have a good first impression to have a positive brand outlook.

Universal Design :

It is better to have a universal design in all your twitter, facebook and webpages and within your application itself. This allows your audience to feel at home while they are using any of your user engagement pages. Depict graphically,the process of using your app. This allows your app users to understand your application better.

Icon:

The first thing which attracts a user is the app icon, followed by the app name. Sometimes it is vice versa. Only after that do they proceed to read the description. Hence spend *as much time* working on the icon, as you do on coding it. Having a designer also helps.

App name:

A very good name for the app is essential to stand apart in the crowd. It is important to have app names that are easy to remember so that users can find your app again quickly and can talk about it to others.

UX:

A good user experience not only makes your app easy to use, but it also helps in boosting your sales indirectly. Good UX results in a great app. A great app generates happy customers. Happy customers can give you "word-of-mouth" marketing. Hence pay close attention to small details, review your design iteratively. A small change can make the difference between a frustrated customer and a happy customer.

Screenshots :

Making your customer to click on your app in the app store is only half of a battle won. You will have to convince the user to download the app. This involves clever descriptions and innovative screenshots. Take screenshots of your app in such a way that your app looks fairly simple to use. Showing all the complex features of the app in one screenshot is not going to win your users

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heart. Remember, ease of use is always given first preference by users. Take individual screenshots for features that distinguishes your app from your competitors. Add overlays on your screenshot to make users understand a new feature. At the same time, do not overcrowd a single screenshot with overlays. Highlight only new or important features with them.

QR codes :

QR codes are catching on really fast. They are just about everywhere.You can make use of them strategically for marketing your applications. You can generate a QR code from here

Give link for your app in the QR code and create a simple QR code that can be used anywhere. Design a poster along with the QR code and you have a powerful marketing asset in your hand. Generating the poster is simple,thanks to the Digital Marketing Toolkit. Use the banners provided by the toolkit and place the QR code underneath it. Create clever posters to attract the user interest.Remember,user's wont scan a QR code unless they are really intrigued by it. You can paste the poster in places like parties, gatherings, etc .. You can also consider paid marketing. Publish your QR code in your websites and facebook pages as well.

This article provides good tips on how to use a QR code for effective marketing.

Entertain!! :

One big challenge for any mobile application developer is to retain the customer. The customer has to constantly feel engaged in order to continue using an app. Keeping users happy can feel like a ticking time bomb, if not dealt with properly. Consider the following strategies for an app, which is not a game :

Gamify!!

You can gamify parts of your application(which are not games) in order to make them more interesting and engaging. For example, consider a task scheduling app. Each time the user completes a scheduled task, he wins, say 200 points. Based on the number of points the user gets, he or she is awarded a title. This simple step could go a long way in keeping your users engaged.

Complement your users

Whenever possible, complement your users for a job well done. This adds a personal touch to your apps. A simple "Congratulations" may actually generate a smile in your user's face. For example, consider the same task scheduling app. If the user completes a task, you can indicate it with " Congrats on a job well done" or something similar.

Warning: It is essential that a balance is maintained between gamification and professionalism. Too much of gamification can make the user discard the application as "silly" or "childish" or "irritating"

Social marketing :

There are a large number of social networks available. You can check a huge number of them here. It is impossible to target all of them. Use your app category and determine which social networks along with the usual ones can be used to promote your application.

Twitter Marketing

Create and own a profile which has the exact same name as the application. This way, it will be visible for people who search it within Twitter and even in Google. Target App reviewers and big news sites and start following them, mentioning them in your tweets and re-tweets. You can use Twitter to share great content, your app news, or even for support. Try tweeting with the promo video to various bloggers. You may gain some attention. Thank people for their comments and shares.

Google Plus Marketing

While it is true that most of your app users are using Facebook or Twitter rather than Google+, but existing in the Google's social network is very important. Show Google that your App is real, and furthermore – that your App's website is real by connecting all of your properties to the Google+ profile. Join as many relevant circles as possible, and +1 your own site's content with it.

Tell the Story :

If your app has a story behind it, do not hesitate to reveal it. You may gain interesting traffic because of it.Blog about it, put your story in the promo video. Let your users experience the app as it happened.

Offers:

For in-app-purchase or paid-app business model, you can try giving discounts or promotional activities for specific periods of time. That will help increase your customer base. You can use this increase in customer base to your advantage for your next application.

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Maintenance and support:

Use the website and your facebook page to offer support services. Listen to your user's feedback. Reply to any user's query as soon as possible. Value each query highly. It is important for the customer to feel that you care about the user's concerns and queries regarding the app and wish to deliver the best possible experience. A single customer lost can result in a cascading loss of potential customers.

Summary

There is no universal **Best Marketing Strategy** for an app. Lot of factors like timing, location, events etc influence it. Developing a great app is just the starting point; constantly tweaking your app and your app marketing is the key to long-term success.

The article presents a summary of the Official Nokia Marketing Guide along with extra tips to market an app.

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