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WHAT IS NEEDED FOR TOP POSITIONS IN THE APP STORES?

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A brief introduction

Distimo was created because the founders were frustrated by the lack of insights into the performance of their apps, and the manual work needed to track the most important metrics.

Today, Distimo provides the #1 free app store analytics tool, tracking over 3 billion downloads / quarter for major developers worldwide. Distimo ApplQ is the most accurate source of app data that helps developers and financial services companies to make well informed strategic decisions in the global app market.

We offer three core services:

- **App Analytics**
track your apps across all major app stores and ad networks.
- **ApplQ**
get access to the most accurate and daily download and revenue estimations for any app.
- **Conversion Tracking**
measure your full app sales funnel from discovery to app launch.

Founded in 2009, Distimo is a privately held company based in The Netherlands. Follow us on [Twitter](#), read our [blog](#) or learn more at www.distimo.com.

New and noteworthy

How many downloads do you need to enter the top charts in the major app stores, and how much revenue is required in order to obtain a top spot in the top grossing ranks? At Distimo, these questions are among the questions we receive most often from our App Analytics users.

Knowing what to expect in terms of downloads and revenues when you reach a certain rank allows you to make better-informed investment decisions. You can also plan marketing campaigns much more efficiently when you have greater insight into the app store rankings. This is because, when a high rank is reached, you can rely on the 'ranking effect' in the app stores. Your app is more visible, and therefore will continue to generate more downloads. In turn, the app will retain its position in the charts (perhaps with the help of a smaller marketing campaign).

In this month's report, we take an extensive look at the download volumes that a developer needs to generate in order to reach the top positions in the major app stores. We analyze the estimated downloads generated by applications in specific top positions in order to understand the number of downloads required for these applications to reach those positions for that day. We look at average downloads needed for various top spots, but also at the differences on a daily basis. Furthermore, we offer insight into the differences in various countries. Most of the analyses are based on the Apple App Store for iPhone, but a comparison between this and other stores (Apple App Store for iPad, Google Play and Amazon Appstore) is presented as well. All data is extracted directly from Distimo AppIQ, which provides developers with insights into the estimated downloads and revenues of all apps in the most important app stores on a daily basis. All of the data contained in this report covers May 2013, unless otherwise specified.

The major findings are:

An app that ranked number 10 in the top overall free charts in the Apple App Store for iPhone in the U.S. generated 72K downloads per day on average during May 2013. An app in the paid charts that ranked number 10 generated 4K downloads on average.

An app that ranked number 50 in the top grossing charts in the Apple App Store for iPhone in the U.S. generated \$12K on average per day during May 2013, while on iPad this number was \$10.2K. The revenue was significantly lower in Google Play at \$6.6K.

The number of downloads required to ensure a top position can vary on a daily basis. Compared to the downloads that were required for rank 10 in the top overall free on an average Monday in May 2013, only 94% of these downloads were required on Thursdays for this position in the Apple App Store for iPhone in the U.S. In order to obtain this position on a Sunday, an app needed 11% more downloads than on the average Monday.

The differences in the size of app markets across the world makes a difference in terms of the number of downloads an app has to generate to reach top chart positions. In order to obtain rank 25 free in The Apple App Store for iPhone, most downloads are required in the United States. In Japan, an average app that ranked 25 in the free charts generated 38% of the downloads of an average app with that position in the U.S. in May 2013. One of the fastest growing app markets, Russia, now requires more downloads to reach rank 25 in the free charts than in Germany.

The Amazon Appstore requires approximately nine times fewer downloads than the Apple App Store for iPhone in the U.S. in order to reach rank 50 free. The number of downloads needed in the Amazon Appstore for paid apps to reach a top 50 position was 2.8 times lower than in the Apple App Store for iPhone in May 2013.

A close look at iPhone rankings

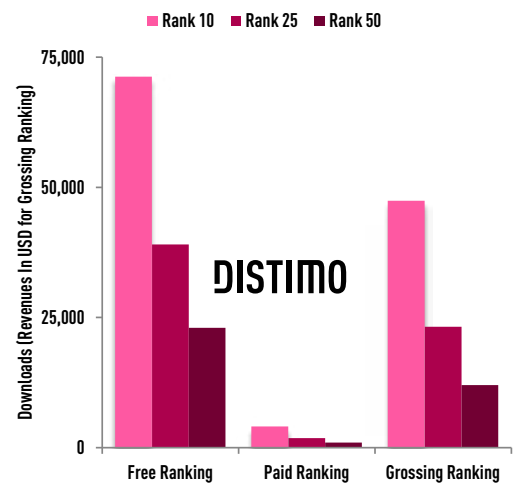
The graph below shows the average daily downloads needed to reach a top position in the top overall in the Apple App Store for iPhone in the United States in May 2013. The Apple App Store ranking algorithm takes the number of downloads generated in the past couple of days into account. The figures shown in the graph are the average daily downloads (or revenues in the case of grossing charts) of apps that were ranked 50, 25 or 10 in the charts in the Apple App Store for iPhone in the U.S. during May 2013.

An app needed 23K free downloads per day to reach rank 50 of the top free charts. For paid apps, the average number of downloads needed for this position was about 25 times lower at 950 downloads. An app needs to generate a daily revenue of \$12K in order to reach rank 50 of the grossing charts. Note that for iPhone rankings, only downloads or revenues generated on iPhones are taken into account. This means that a download of a universal app on an iPad does not influence the ranking of the app on the Apple App Store for iPhone and vice versa.

A top 50 ranking position already gives visibility to a developer's app, however a top ten position is obviously even better, as these are the first apps that app store visitors will see. A free app needed to achieve more than 70K downloads in order to reach a top ten free position on average in May, while a paid app needed more than 4K downloads in order to reach a top 10 paid position. On average, \$47K was needed for an app to reach rank 10 in the grossing charts in May 2013.

Downloads/Revenue Generated By Applications With Top Ranks

Apple App Store for iPhone U.S., Top Overall, May 2013, Daily Average

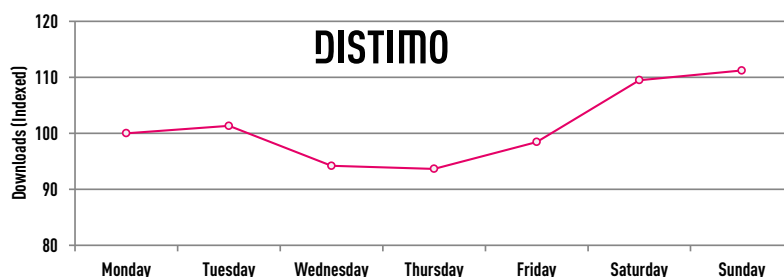


Daily differences

The figures above show the monthly average for May 2013. However, on a day-to-day basis there are differences in the needed downloads to reach or maintain a top position. In the following graph, the average downloads per weekday required for rank 10 in the free charts are shown as an index. The average of the Mondays in May 2013 are set to 100. The graph shows that during the week (Monday through Friday), significantly less downloads are needed for an app to reach a top position. On Saturdays, nine percent more downloads are needed on average for an app to reach a top 10 free position than on Mondays, and on Sundays, this is 11 percent higher. The least amount of downloads is necessary for an app to reach a top position on Thursdays. We found similar results for paid and top grossing rankings: during the weekend, more downloads or revenues are needed for a top position.

Downloads Generated By Applications With Rank 10

Apple App Store for iPhone U.S., Top Overall Free, May 2013, Average Per Weekday (Indexed, Monday = 100)

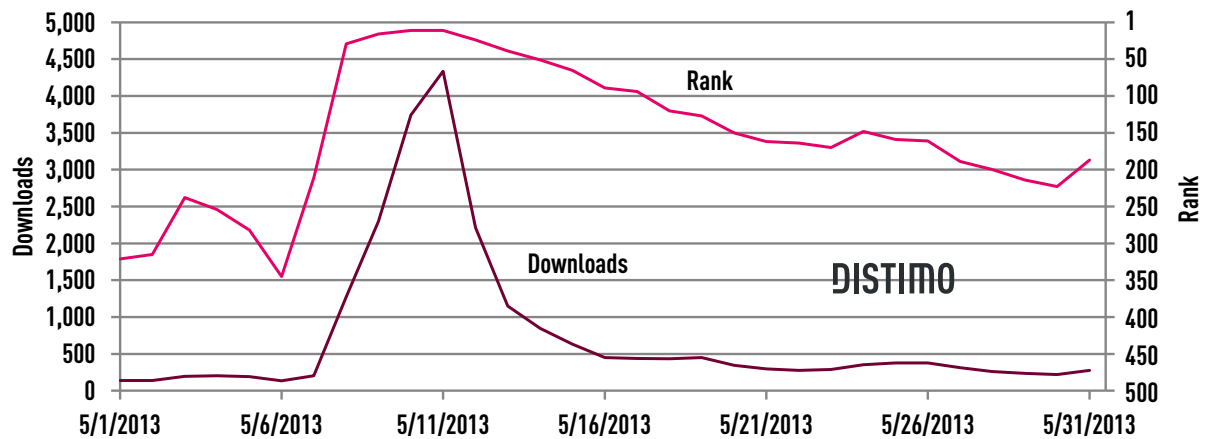


Case study: Songify By Khush Inc.

We took an example from Distimo ApplQ in order to illustrate how rankings and downloads correspond. The graph below shows both the daily estimated downloads and the daily ranks of this app in one graph. We used the app Songify in this example, as this app showed an interesting development of its Top Overall ranks during May 2013 in the U.S. The upper line presents the rank of the app (right axis) on that day. The lower line presents the estimated downloads (left axis) the application generated on the same day. Songify was ranked below 200 during the first days of the month in the Top Overall paid rankings. This implied that it generated around 200 downloads or less per day. The app increased in rank when the app started generating more downloads. The top position was reached on May 10 and 11 (ranking 11 on both days), when the app reached 3.7K and 4.3K downloads, respectively. After these days, Songify's downloads started to decline, and on May 14, it dropped out of the top 50 again (ranking 51 on that day), with 846 generated downloads.

Daily Ranks And Downloads Of Songify By Khush Inc.

Apple App Store for iPhone U.S., Top Overall Paid, May 2013

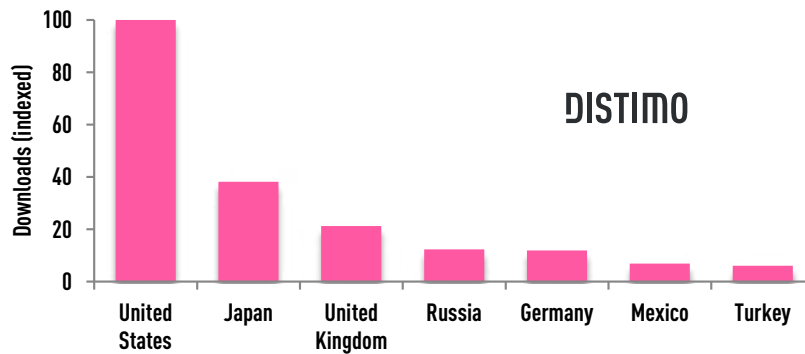


United States vs. the rest of the world

Until now, the analysis covered the required downloads and revenues in the U.S. However, the downloads needed for a top position is largely dependent on the country. The downloads generated by apps with rank 25 in the free charts for iPhone for several countries around the world are displayed relative to those of the U.S. in the graph below. We looked at a sample of countries taken from the top 15 countries in terms of monthly generated free downloads. In Japan, an app needs less than 40% of the downloads that an app needs to obtain a top 25 position in the U.S. This is only 21% in the U.K. In upcoming markets like Russia, Mexico and Turkey (covered in our June 2012 report), the downloads required to obtain a top 25 free position are still well below the amount of downloads required to reach the same position in the U.S. However, in Russia more downloads are required now for a top 25 position than in Germany on average. This happened for the first time ever in May 2013.

Downloads Generated By Applications With Rank 25

Apple App Store for iPhone, Top Overall Free, May 2013, Daily Average (Indexed, US = 100)



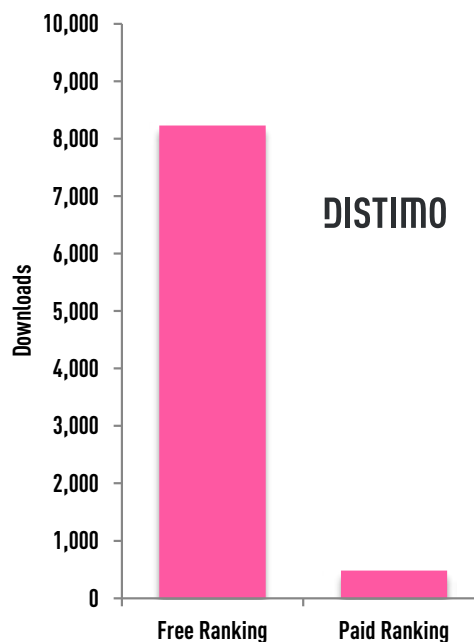
Apple Appstore for iPhone compared to other app stores

We would like to conclude this analysis with a comparison to the other stores. Each of the stores has its own ranking algorithm, which makes a direct comparison complicated. However, it is still possible to show what is needed to obtain a top spot in other stores. In this section we look at the average downloads (or revenues for top grossing) that were needed to obtain a top 50 spot in the U.S. in May 2013.

First, we look at the Apple App Store for iPad. As mentioned before, the Apple App Store for iPhone and the Apple App Store for iPad are treated as two different stores by Apple. Therefore, the downloads needed for a top position are also different. To break into the top 50 free in the Apple App Store for iPad at least 8.2K downloads per day were needed. This is about 2.8 times less than in the Apple App Store for iPhone.

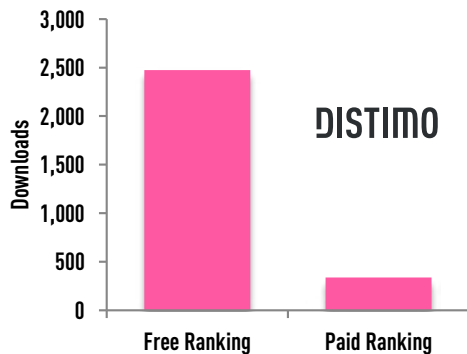
Downloads Generated By Applications With Rank 50

Apple App Store for iPad U.S., Top Overall Free/Paid, May 2013, Daily Average



Downloads Generated By Applications With Rank 50

Amazon Appstore, U.S. Top Overall Free/Paid, May 2013, Daily Average



A graph similar to the previous one in this publication is presented on the left for the Amazon Appstore in the U.S. There are 2.5K free downloads needed per day to reach rank 50 in the Amazon Appstore. This is about nine times less than in the Apple App Store for iPhone. The downloads needed in the Amazon Appstore to obtain a top 50 spot for paid apps was 2.8 times lower than in the Apple App Store for iPhone in May 2013.

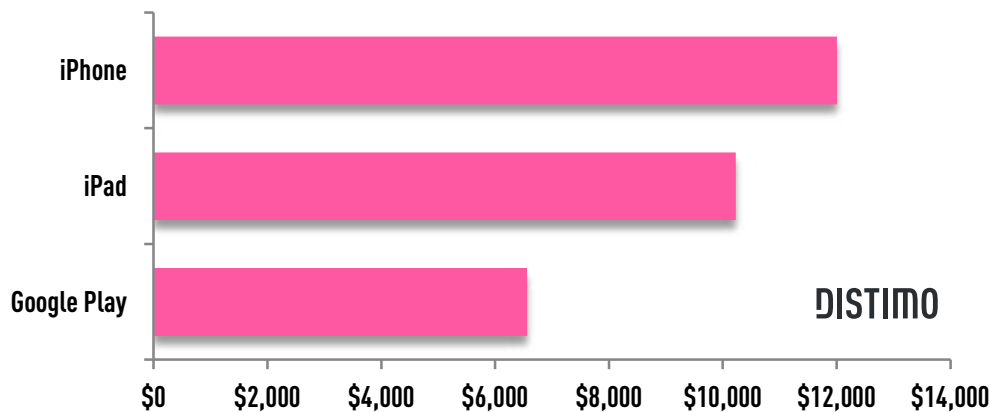
The final graph shows a comparison between the Apple App Store for iPhone, Apple App Store for iPad, and Google Play for the top grossing rankings. The graph shows the average daily revenue required to achieve a top 50 grossing position.

When looking at the revenue needed for rank 50 in the top grossing charts on iPad, we find that this is much closer to the iPhone than when looking at top positions in the download charts. The revenue required on iPhone was \$12.0K vs. \$10.2K on iPad.

The graph also points out that the necessary revenue for rank 50 in the top grossing charts is much lower in the Google Play store than it is in either the Apple App Store for iPhone or the Apple App Store for iPad. However, an important difference is that an app needs to generate this daily average for a longer period in Google Play than in the Apple App Store to obtain this top position.

Revenue Generated By Applications With Rank 50

United States, Top Overall Grossing, May 2013, Daily Average



Recap

The research from this publication gives insights into the necessary downloads for a top chart position. It is important to keep the findings from this report in mind in order to effectively plan a marketing campaign. It shows that there are significant differences in required downloads for each day of the week. Additionally, the needed downloads or revenues are largely dependent on country, store, and rank type (free, paid or grossing).

Our leaderboards with estimated downloads and revenues provide more insights into the required downloads and revenues for every rank and in any country of choice. The leaderboards are also available for every single category in the app stores, while the above analyses focuses on the top overall.

Track daily downloads and revenues of any app with Distimo ApplQ



Distimo ApplQ allows users to:

- Track and compare app downloads and competitor app downloads: Analyze an app's market share and compare download figures versus a competitor's in one chart. The chart shows the daily downloads and can also be aggregated per week or month. Events such as price changes, featured listings and version updates are also included, and allow the user to analyze the influence of each event on downloads.
- Analyze competing app revenues including those from in-app purchases: View daily revenues from competing apps side-by-side with the their own app and get extensive insight into the revenue generation of different business models, revenue per country, and platform.
- Identify the most popular and upcoming new apps: The Leaderboard provides the daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly rankings of all applications, and can be viewed by app store, country, category, device, and free/paid/gross. All of the major app stores are supported, and for iOS and Android, the daily volumes per individual app are also provided. ApplQ users see the daily downloads and revenue from in-app purchases and one-off fees. Developers can also use the Leaderboard to see how many downloads are needed to achieve a certain ranking on any given day.

Learn more about ApplQ at www.distimo.com/appiq

Contact us

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