

DISTIMO

The Impact of App Translations

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Apple App Store for iPad



Apple App Store for iPhone

Distimo was founded to solve the challenges created by a widely fragmented app store marketplace filled with equally fragmented information and statistics.

Distimo was launched shortly after the introduction of the first app store. App stores have clearly shown since that time that they are the way forward for content distribution. The app store model offers an enormous opportunity for developers to get their content out and dramatically improves content discovery by consumers. However, the mobile market has long been characterized by fragmentation, which is also displayed in the wide range of mobile application stores that were launched from 2009 on.

Distimo is a privately held company based in Utrecht, The Netherlands. Learn more: www.distimo.com

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY

The major app stores operate in many countries, however it is up to a developer to decide which languages are supported by their applications. Some popular applications support only one language, while others offer their app in a variety of languages. Developers that seek to target a specific country obviously publish an application that supports the native language of that country. However, is there any evidence for this proposition? And which languages boost an application's downloads the most? This month's report focuses on the localization of applications by languages, and offers insights about the most popular languages in August 2012, the distribution of languages per country, and the impact of adding the native language to the supported languages of an app. This report focuses on the Apple App Store for iPhone and iPad and covers the 12 largest countries: United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Russia, Italy, Japan, South Korea, China, Brazil and Australia.

Alongside this publication, we organize a webinar on the impact of translations on Monday the 8th of October at 05.00PM CET (08.00 PST). Please register [here](#).

The major findings are:

- English is the most important language in terms of free downloads and revenue. More than 90 percent of the free downloads and revenue generated by applications in the Apple App Store in the top 200 for iPhone and iPad in the 12 largest countries support English.
- Developers have noticed the importance of apps that support multiple languages, and as such, the proportion of free downloads and revenue globally generated by all non-English languages has grown over the past few months. The introduction of the native language to an app boosts its download volumes and revenue. This effect is larger, however, for iPhone applications than for iPad applications.
- China is the only country where English does not dominate the top 200 most downloaded free applications in August 2012. In this country, 79 percent of all free downloads in the top 200 are gathered by applications that support the Chinese language. The percentage for applications that support English in China is 69 percent.
- The largest share of total revenue is gained by native language applications in Asia (Japan, China and South Korea), while applications with English content gain the most revenue in the other countries.
- Apart from the Apple App Store in the English-speaking countries, the Apple App Store for iPhone and iPad in China, Japan and South Korea have the highest proportions of free downloads and revenue generated by native language-only applications in terms of free download and revenue.
- Publishing an app in a native language(s) appears to have more impact on downloads than it does on revenues on the iPhone. The impact is most significant in China, Japan and South Korea, which indicates that consumers in these countries are more eager to pay for applications that support their native language.

This month's publication provides an in-depth analysis on the importance of localization of applications by language.

All of the major app stores operate in many countries and the app ecosystem is a truly global market. Consumers in more than 120 countries have access to a localized Google Play, the Apple App Store has 136 country specific stores, the Amazon App Store recently opened its store in five more countries, and Microsoft announced that the Windows Phone 8 Marketplace will soon be available in 180 countries. This makes it easier for developers to target new markets by publishing their applications all over the world. Therefore, popular apps can reach global adoption much faster, and the dispersion of popular applications (e.g. Facebook and Angry Birds) across countries is high.

Despite the global characteristics of the app ecosystem, content in each store differs from country to country. The localization of apps could explain these differences. Apps could be localized with local promotional campaigns, local relevant in-app purchases and local content such as news. Languages seem to be another good way to localize an application. Most popular applications offer their app in multiple languages like WhatsApp and Twitter. Other popular applications are only available in one language, e.g. local news apps. This begs the questions: what is the importance of translation for apps, and what are the most popular languages for developers? And, perhaps even more interesting: what is the impact of languages on download volumes and revenue? Is publishing an app in multiple languages beneficial?

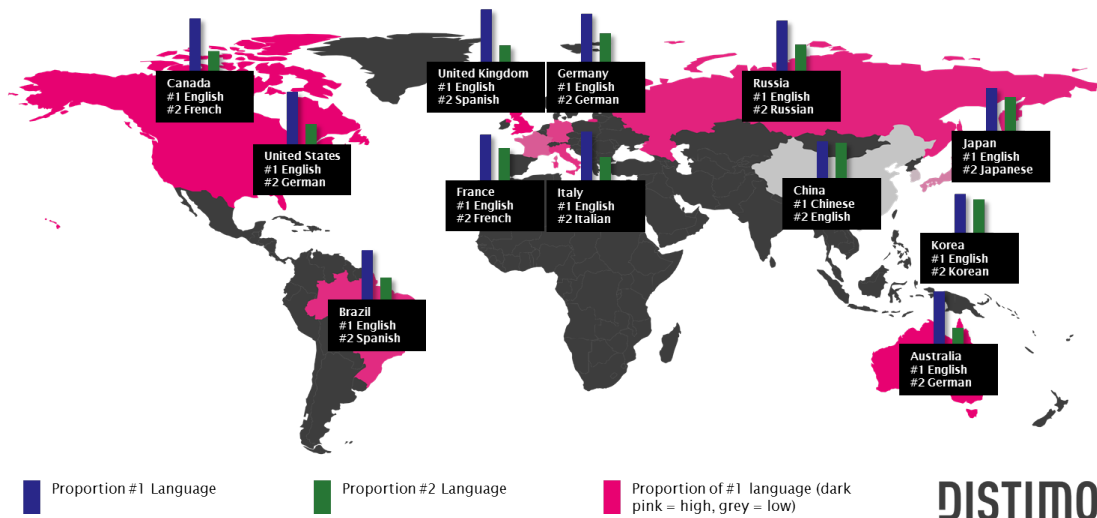
All findings in this month's report are based on a sample group that includes the twelve largest countries in terms of downloads and revenues: United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Russia, Italy, Japan, Korea, China, Brazil and Australia.

TOP LANGUAGES PER COUNTRY FOR IPHONE

Applications that support English have had the largest share of free downloads and revenue on both the iPhone and iPad since January 2012. The proportion of free downloads of applications with an English version is relatively stable over time at 90 percent. However, the domination of English ended in August. In that month the proportion of free downloads by applications that support Chinese surpasses the apps that support English in China. Applications with Chinese as a language in the top 200 were responsible for the largest share of the free downloads in China at 73 percent. English was responsible for only 69 percent of the free downloads among the top 200 in China. Additionally, all other non-English languages, have gained ground in terms of free downloads on both devices since the beginning of 2012. Because all non-English languages increased their share of the total over time, we can draw the conclusion that applications with multiple languages increased their download volumes, and/or developers have translated their popular content into multiple languages. Both explanations support the notion that developers advocate the importance of apps in multiple languages. However, the rise of apps with multiple languages stagnated on the iPhone in August 2012 for nearly all languages, with only Japanese showing a small

MOST POPULAR LANGUAGES IN THE TOP 200 PER COUNTRY

Proportion of Free Downloads by Language for iPhone

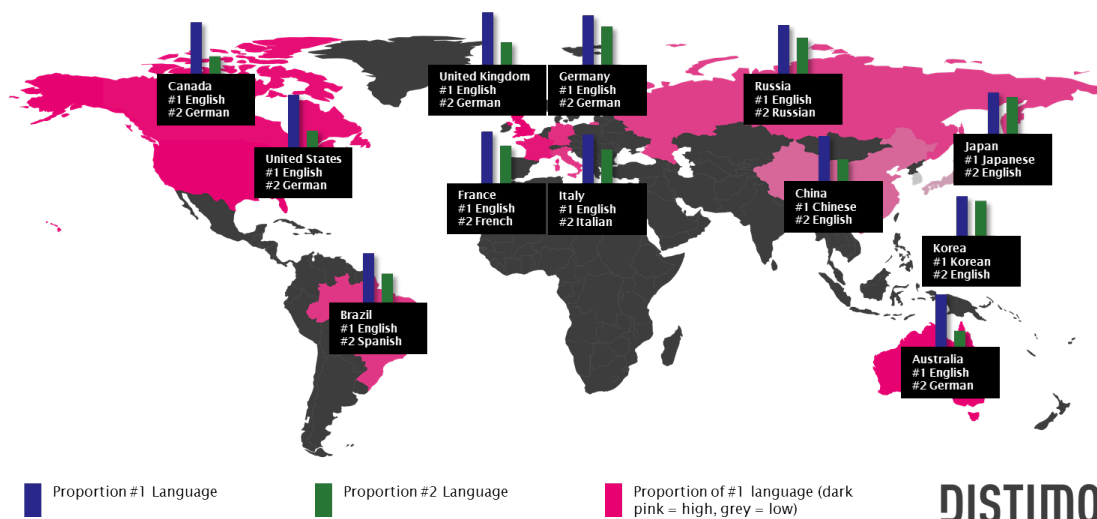


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Brazil was the only country where apps that support the native languages (in this case, Portuguese), were not the second largest contributor to the download volume in that country. Only 40 percent of downloads among the top 200 applications in Brazil had Portuguese content. Spanish was the second most popular language in Brazil with 44 percent. This suggests that the top 200 applications in Brazil contain many applications with multiple languages, and that developers do not specifically target Brazil with local content. In the other non-English countries, the native languages consistently rank second in terms of free downloads during the month of August 2012.

MOST POPULAR LANGUAGES IN THE TOP 200 PER COUNTRY

Proportion of Revenue by Language for iPhone



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Looking at the amount of revenue gained by the top 200 applications by native language, we see that China is no longer the only country with its native language as the most gaining revenue language. Popular apps that support the home language in the other two Asian countries (Japan and South Korea), generated the most revenue of all languages in these countries as well.

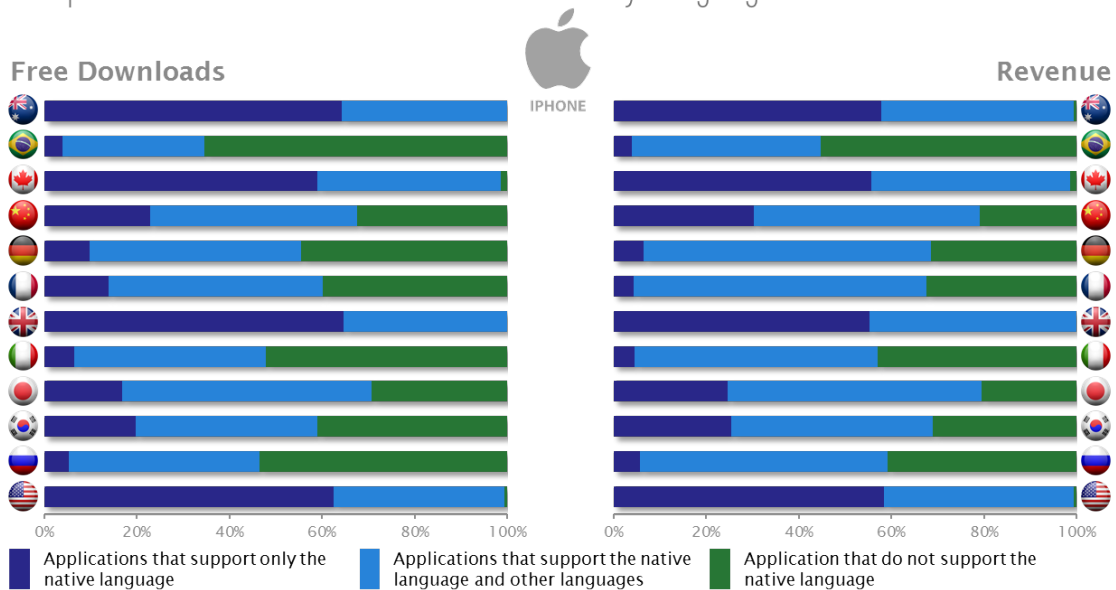
Canada has two influential languages, English and French. One might expect that this is reflected in the popular applications and that applications with those two languages gain the most revenue and are downloaded more frequently than apps with other languages. However, this is not the case. English is indeed the top language in terms of free downloads and revenue among the top 200 applications on iPhone, however, French ranks second for free downloads only: applications in German generate more revenue and paid downloads than applications in French in this country.

PROPORTION OF DOWNLOADS AND REVENUE BY APPS WITH THE NATIVE LANGUAGE

The left bars below present the proportion of free downloads by applications supporting the native languages (light blue), apps that are only available in the native languages (dark blue), and apps that do not have content in the native language for all ranked apps in the Apple App Store for iPhone (green). The proportion of total revenue for all apps that earn some money in Apple’s App Store for iPhone is depicted on the right.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIVE LANGUAGES

Proportion of Free Downloads and Revenue by Language for iPhone



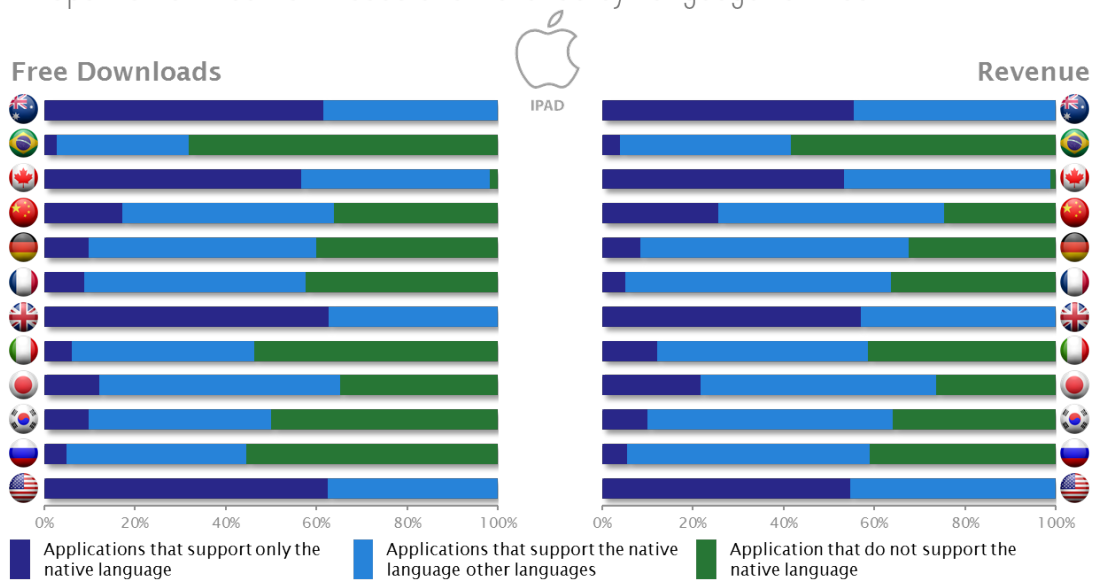
Not surprisingly, English applications have the highest download volumes and generate the most revenue in the countries where English is the primary language. The other countries have much larger proportions of applications that have no version in the main language (green). The main share of these applications comes from apps with versions only in English.

The difference between the Asian countries and the other non-English countries in terms of free download is remarkable. Applications with only the native languages in Asia generate a higher proportion of free downloads in the whole store compared to Brazil and the European countries. One of the reasons for this is that Korean, Chinese and Japanese are languages based on characters, and each country has different characters. Western languages, however, have the same letters that are based on the Latin alphabet. Hence, it could be deduced that Chinese, Japanese and South Koreans find it harder to read other languages because they use different character sets than their own.

The proportion of revenue on the iPhone (right) shows similar patterns compared to the distribution of free downloads (left). Applications published in the main language generate more revenue in the Asian countries than they do in non-English western countries. When we compare free downloads and revenue on the iPhone, you see that applications with the native language have larger pieces of the pie in terms of revenue (right) than for free downloads (left). This suggests that publishing your app in the main languages has a greater impact on revenue than on free downloads. The largest differences in terms of percentage points is currently in China and Germany, which suggests that consumers in these countries are more eager to pay for content in their own native language.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIVE LANGUAGES

Proportion of Free Downloads and Revenue by Language for iPad



The free download and revenue distributions for iPad by home language are depicted above. Comparing the iPad numbers with those for the iPhone, we noticed that the patterns are similar with those for the iPhone. However, the proportion of native language only applications is smaller for iPad than for iPhone. The reason for this could be that on iPhone more applications with only the native language are present than on iPad. Or, developers value localization as less important on the iPad than on iPhone. Germany is the exception to this rule, however, where applications that are German-only have a higher proportion free downloads and revenue for iPad than they do for the iPhone.

THE EFFECT OF INTRODUCING THE NATIVE LANGUAGE

The question remains, is it beneficial to translate an app in the native language? In order to answer this question, we looked at a sample of around 200 apps that introduced the native language in August 2012. These applications also had to be ranked around the date on which these apps introduced the native language. Among those apps are well-known apps like Matching With Friends by Zynga, and Angry Birds HD Free by Rovio Entertainment Ltd., which both added translated versions of their apps into multiple languages.

On average, the applications increased their download volumes on the iPhone by more than 128 percent during the next week that followed after introducing the native language app compared to the same period before the introduction of the home language. This percentage was lower for the increase in revenue, which was around 26 percent. Applications in China and Japan experienced the highest improvement in terms of total downloads. In terms of revenue, China is still one of the top countries, together with South Korea. This suggests that consumers in China, Japan and South Korea value applications in their own language the most. Whether the increase of downloads and revenue is caused by the introduction of the native languages only is hard to tell. In general, most applications experience an increase in downloads and revenue after an

THE IMPACT OF ADDING THE NATIVE LANGUAGE

Effect Of Adding Native Language After A Week for iPhone



IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN THE IMPACT OF TRANSLATION ON INDIVIDUAL APPS, CONTACT REMCO@DISTIMO.COM FOR OUR NEW OFFER ON DOWNLOAD AND REVENUE ESTIMATIONS.

THE IMPACT OF ADDING THE NATIVE LANGUAGE

Effect Of Adding Native Language After A Week for iPad



The introduction of the native languages has had a very small impact on download volumes or revenue on the iPad. These applications saw no significant growth in downloads during one week after the introduction. Furthermore, the native language boosted revenue with only five percent in this period for iPad applications. Here, Japan showed the largest improvement in downloads and applications in the French Apple App Store for iPad gained the most revenue after adding the home languages.

RECAP

In this month's publication, we analyzed the impact of localization on application downloads and revenues. Overall, applications that support multiple languages have increased their share of global free downloads and revenue since January 2012. English is by far the most important language. The importance of the other languages can be divided geographically. The Asian languages (Chinese, Japanese and Korean) have increased their share of global free downloads and revenue in both the Apple App Store for iPhone and iPad over the last eight months. The Asian languages even surpass English in the Asian countries in terms proportion of free downloads (China) and revenue (China, Japan and South Korea). The proportions of free downloads and revenue generated by other non-English languages, on the other hand, increased less over time. Moreover, translating an app to the native language has again more impact in Asian countries than it does in the non-English countries.

The native languages in Asia have more impact on an application's performance than the other non-English languages do. This impact of languages is larger for applications on the iPhone than it is on the iPad.

VISIT OUR WEBINAR ON LANGUAGES ON
MONDAY THE 8th OF OCTOBER

@ 05.00PM CET (08.00AM PST)

REGISTER HERE



DISTIMO'S PAID FEATURED REPORTS: GAIN DEEP INSIGHTS INTO ALL MAJOR APPLICATION STORES. STARTING AT €399

The reports are available for July 2012 and an annual 2011 report is available for North America, Europe and Asia. In addition to the the major trends in the app stores:

- The **July 2012** report covers month over month pricing trends and provides more insights into the daily download volumes in the major app stores including Google Play. Moreover, it shows the most popular applications per region.
- The **annual 2011 report** covers all major trends, in growth and in pricing among others, in the app stores covering the period January 2011 - November 2011.

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DISTIMO CUSTOM REPORTS

Aside from this free monthly publication, Distimo produces custom reports capable of providing specific mobile application store analytics that are relevant to your company. Custom reports are currently available for any country worldwide for the Amazon Appstore, Apple App Store for iPhone, Apple App Store for iPad, Apple Mac App Store, BlackBerry App World, GetJar, Google Android Market, Nokia Ovi Store, Palm App Catalog, Windows Phone 7 Marketplace. Additional application stores will be available in the coming months. To get a better idea of the type of data and metrics that Distimo can provide, please visit our Report product page.

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ABOUT DISTIMO

Distimo is the innovative app store analytics company built to solve the challenges created by a widely fragmented app store marketplace filled with equally fragmented information and statistics.

Distimo Report provides in-depth customized reports for carriers and operators and offers valuable insight into important trends happening within different application stores around the world. Custom reports are currently available for the Apple App Store for iPhone, Apple App Store for iPad, Apple Mac App Store, Amazon Appstore, BlackBerry App World, GetJar, Google Android Market, Nokia Ovi Store, Palm App Catalog, and Windows Phone 7 Marketplace.

Distimo Monitor is a free, cross-platform, app monitoring tool for developers that enables them to monitor their own and competitive applications across all app stores, without any adjustments needed to their application's code. **AppLink** is a first-of-its-kind, easy-to-use, cross-platform app distribution service within Distimo Monitor that provides developers with detailed insight into their app distribution analytics and their app sales funnel.

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

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