

PUBLISHING YOUR APP

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE

BY

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Carter Thomas

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Carter

- Raised in New York and Maine, USA
- First app released October 19 ,2011
- Built and sold over 900 apps since then
- Consultant to some of the biggest apps and app companies in the world



Overview

In this ebook you're going to learn how to push your app into the app ecosystem. You'll learn how to get your app *"live"* in store. Here's I'll outline everything you need to do in order to get it done **AND** how to be successful.

Publishing is one of the best ways to keep costs low and have enormous upside. It involves learning lots of pieces, then putting them together in a cohesive way. The reason is because publishing is closely tied to marketing with apps. You get to choose how your app is presented to public and what search keywords it displays for. It is a growing field and can be very effective.

Important: Realize that this ebook is all about "putting pieces together" – it's less about learning new processes that may be confusing, rather it's a full guide to being able to systematically give apps their best possible chances of success.

Also, this is one of the most easily outsourced parts of the business. You learn it once, like you will in this ebook, then apply the hiring principles from the previous ebook (link) to hire a virtual assistant (instead of an app developer). If you don't know what that is, no worries. Basically it's just a very inexpensive way to get someone to do everything you don't want to do :)

By the end of this ebook, you will know how to:

- Setup your accounts with Apple and iTunes Connect the **RIGHT** way
- Populate your app entries with all the information you need
- Choose titles, keywords, icons, and screenshots that will put you in the best possible position for maximum download volume
- Leverage pricing strategies to bring in more revenue
- Dominate each app store based on specific algorithm preferences
- Select the proper categories
- Repeat this process and teach someone else how to do it while you sleep

And everything in between. I will break everything down into easy to understand chunks because I know how it feels to walk into this phase of the process. Remember - my job is to do the hard work (learning from scratch) and then show you the best practices in the simplest way possible.

Let's rock this.

“My job is to do the hard work and then show you the best practices in the simplest way possible.”



GETTING STARTED



Your First Steps

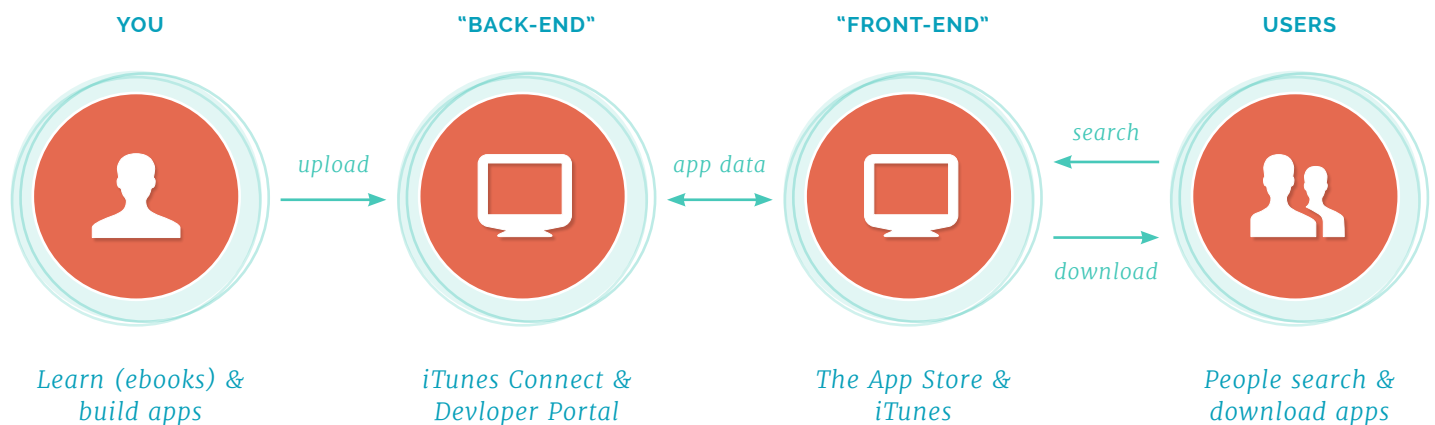
This is typically what the situation would look like when someone gets to this point in the app journey:

- Taken an idea or business model and crystallized it
- Hired someone to make it a reality
- Have final project delivered, tested, and approved
- Staring at a computer screen going *"Umm.where does this code go?"*

Or some version of that. Even if you know where it goes, you probably have some questions.

Totally cool.

The first step is going to be understanding the general mechanics of how this whole thing works. This is best done with a picture...so I whipped one up. See below:



This represents the process of:

- Taking your finished app (left)
- Uploading to iTunes Connect
- This entry being approved by Apple (or whoever else)
- Being available for download in the app store

We're going to focus mostly on the App -> iTunes Connect area, but will touch on some of the others as well.

Become an Apple Developer

There's no pressure to sign up now, but it makes a huge difference if you can join the program and follow along. Funny how things tend to sink in a lot better once you're invested. It becomes real...and that's why it's so awesome!

Good? Good.

Do I choose individual developer or company developer account?

I get asked this all the time. The short answer is that you usually want to start with an individual if you're just getting going and learning a lot. If you're ready to jump in and have a company ready to go, by all means setup the company account. Here's a quick overview of the benefits of each:

Personal:

- Much faster to setup and get approved
- No Tax ID needed, just a SSN (in USA) and personal ID for other countries
- You can always *"upgrade"* to a company at no charge and no change to your portfolio

Company:

- More professional for brand and corporate structure reasons (liability)
- Easier to sell
- Choose the name you want

EXERCISE

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“ If you haven’t already, you need to sign up for a developer account. You can choose Apple, Google, or Amazon. It’s usually best to start with Apple since that is what most of this ebook will talk about.”

Initial Setup – Read This First

When I first signed up as an app developer, I was so excited. I remember distinctly getting the Welcome email from Apple and diving in head first! Filling out company names, billing info, bank accounts, and everything else as fast as my keyboard would let me.

But I wish I had been given some advice before I did all that.

It's not that I did anything wrong, per say, but I could have set things up in a way that would have been much more effective down the road.

What I mean by this is that I never thought about:

- Corporate structure and balance sheets
- Ease of transfer or sale
- Branding

All I thought about was getting it up and loading it with apps. My thought process started and ended with **RIGHT NOW.**

While excitement is great, planning is what builds great long term successes.



⚙️ PRO TIP

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*“A little planning
can go a long
way in saving
you time, energy,
and money later
on.”*



I'm telling you all of this because instead of showing you the how-to's of filling out Apple's information in your account, I'm going to show you **WHAT** you should be filling out and **WHY**.

In other words, I'm not going to explain where to put your banking information. I'm going to tell you which bank account information to put in there.

This will provide you with much more value than a basic tutorial would. Plus, you can get most of that stuff on Apple's developer portal once you sign up.

Make sense?



SETTING UP YOUR ACCOUNTS



The best way to approach this is to break it down into small parts, then I will explain the best practices for each piece. This will make it easily digestible and highly actionable for you.

As I mentioned, the literal How-To's of pasting in your Tax ID is better left to Apple. This is much more important.

To begin, I want to run through what I meant with the list above as top level, macro questions you should be thinking about before you move forward.

I also need to remind you that I am not a lawyer, financial advisor, or accountant and any advice I give you is purely based on my own experience. If you want final answers on any of these questions, I urge you to consult a licensed professional.

Corporate Structure and Balance Sheets

I'm not going to bore with you a long explanation of corporate law, but it is important to know the basics. Corporate structure refers to how your business is setup. A lot of times this is for tax reasons, sometimes for accounting reasons and many others. For our purposes, it just means *"how is money coming in and how is it being accounted for."*

Balance sheets are used by your accountant to illustrate what parts of a business generate which revenues. For example, let's say you own 5 dry cleaning companies. 3 of them, located downtown, generate \$100,000 a year while the two located in the suburbs only generate \$60,000 a year.

Your parent company that owns all 5 dry cleaning companies might boast a \$420,000/year income (\$100K+\$100K+\$100K+\$60K+\$60K) and want to sell their company based on that number. As a buyer, however, I would look at that and say *"Well, I actually only want the 3 that are making \$100K."*

Where do I find this information? The balance sheet. It breaks out all revenue streams.



"Balance sheets are used by your accountant to illustrate what parts of a business generate which revenues."

Now you may be wondering why the heck I am explaining all of this in an ebook about publishing. The reason is because many of you will eventually create more than one developer account. It's true. Even if you don't think you will right now, down the road, it may be an option.

New developer account = new company.

Three new developer accounts = three new companies.

See how this ties together? Even though you may create new developer accounts one after another so that you can get apps in the store, you **MUST** remember that you're creating entire new companies each time you do that. This can get very, very complicated down the road.

Luckily, I'm here to help you avoid all that and set up your accounts with a few easy steps:

1. When you set up your developer account, also set up a bank account exclusively for your app revenue from this account. Let's call this company PhotoHype LLC.
2. Use this bank account for all your iTunes Connect banking information.
3. When you set up your advertising networks (if you're using them) use this banking information as well.
4. Get a specific debit card and/or credit card that you can use for expenses (developers, source code, etc) that are used on this business.
5. Pay for all PhotoHype LLC related expenses with those cards.
6. **FAST FORWARD - you're opening a second account**
7. Do the same process for your new company.

PRO TIP

...

“1-1-1”

- A new developer account
- A new company
- A new bank account



Now as you grow and expand, you can get more creative with this, but that's for another ebook. You get the picture - each business is treated as a separate entity with revenue and expenses that can be easily tracked to each company.

NOTE: This will also help you down the road when you're analyzing your own business performance.

Ease of Transfer or Sale

In early 2013, I was fortunate enough to sell about 110 of my apps for \$200,000. **WOW** was it a cool experience. I made some money, but more importantly, I received the education of a lifetime. I learned how businesses were bought and sold, how deals were crafted, and how valuations were decided upon.

While it was a great education, I realized that I was an **IDIOT**. Haha I'm serious - I probably left \$50,000 on the table just because my companies were such a disaster "*on the books*" - meaning the buyers couldn't look at my financials for about a week because I was staying up all night trying to make spreadsheets with reconciled data.

NOT FUN.

And completely unnecessary.

If I had just taken a little time when I setup my developer accounts, I would have talked to my accountant about where the money would come in from and where it would go. We could have created a fully automated system that could have submitted my financial reports to the buyers in a matter of minutes in a beautiful, clean report.

Planning and structuring your business correctly now will save you headaches and put more coin in your pocket down the road.

But, as a young ambitious entrepreneur, I was awake at 3am copy/pasting ad revenue.

Don't be like me :)

And it's super easy to do. Here's how:

1. Because you were much smarter than I was, you already set up your balance sheet and have your company separated by income/expense. Awesome.
2. Now, each month, you want to reconcile everything that happened. In other words:

Income - Expenses = Balance in Bank Account

3. There are loads of ways to automate this, the easiest of which is to get something like Quickbooks which you will input information once and then it integrates with your bank, Apple, everything.
4. Hire someone on Elance, locally, or even through a as-needed service like Bench to help you get setup and manage your books every month.
5. At the end of every month, you sync all your accounts easily and you get a nice set of reports!

This is 10000% easier to do at the beginning than after you have lots of income and expenses, so definitely think about this!

EXERCISE

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Go to Quickbooks and read about their services. They are the biggest name in the book keeping business and will have a lot of information you can use to learn more about this.



Branding

This is more of an intangible and definitely harder to pin down at the early stages. Branding your developer account mostly deals with:

- The name
- The apps

Of course there are tons of other pieces that go into a brand like social media and websites (which I talk extensively about the marketing ebook) but for your publishing efforts, let's talk about the name and apps.

When you're building your developer account, what kind of impression do you want to make? Now, before you say *"I want people to see great, well built apps that I am proud of"* I want to give you a few suggestions (though I am **PUMPED** if you have that reaction to what kind of brand you want to build!)

Here are a few example about branding and what they mean:

- **The Weird Name.** Examples of this are Zynga, Glu Mobile, Storm8, Apalon. Some are gaming companies, are are Utility apps. The names are completely out of left field, giving the brand a very unique position.

The downside is that people who **DON'T** know the brand wonder what that company is all about. That's why you typically don't see a lot of small companies with random word names - the goal is to be a marketing machine and build *"brand value."*

The upside is that you get huge flexibility in terms of what kind of apps you build. You also can get loyal customers that will download anything your brand puts out.

THE WEIRD NAME

- Zynga
- Glu Mobile
- Storm8
- Apalon

- **The Keyword Name.** Examples include Top Free Racing Games, Photo Booth Apps LLC, Best Fun Cool Games Inc.

Back in the early days of the app store, this actually provided a lift in the search rankings since keywords were indexed. There's no real proof that it has a lot of merit anymore, but a lot of people still do this.

The upside is that you can easily attract new customers because they know exactly what kind of apps you'll build. When you release new ones, you can bet that you have a good target demographic in your network.

The downside is that this can be a little cheesy or unprofessional. It's really hard to build a billion dollar company called Best Photo Kids Apps Inc, even if your revenue backs it up. Then again, most of us would be happy with a million, so it could still be good :)

THE KEYWORD NAME

- Top Free Racing Games
- Photo Booth Apps LLC
- Best Fun Cool Games Inc.
- Best Photo Kids App Inc.

- **Your Own Company Name.** Examples include Raw Apps Inc, Powers Trust LLC, SGR Partners Inc. Basically anything that's already a company and someone doesn't want to change their name.

This is probably the least attractive of the options, but **SO** many people still do this. Your Tax ID company name does not have to match your publisher name (you get to choose), so you might as well take advantage of that. If you have questions about this, you can read more on Apple's developer portal.

When you're starting up, ask yourself these questions:

1. Do I want to build tons of apps that capitalize on specific keywords?
2. Do I want to build fewer, high quality apps that will be in the same category?
3. Do I want to build assets outside of the appstore (website, Facebook) that I work on?
4. Do I want to be able to write the name of my company very quickly?

These will all help you decide how you should brand your company before onboarding.

YOUR OWN NAME

- Raw Apps Inc.
- Power Trust LLC
- SGR Partners Inc.



But Carter, I've already set up an account!!!

Am I screwed?

Not at all. In fact, you may actually be better off because you know what you want. Everything I mentioned above can easily be applied to an existing company, it just might take more work to get things buttoned up.

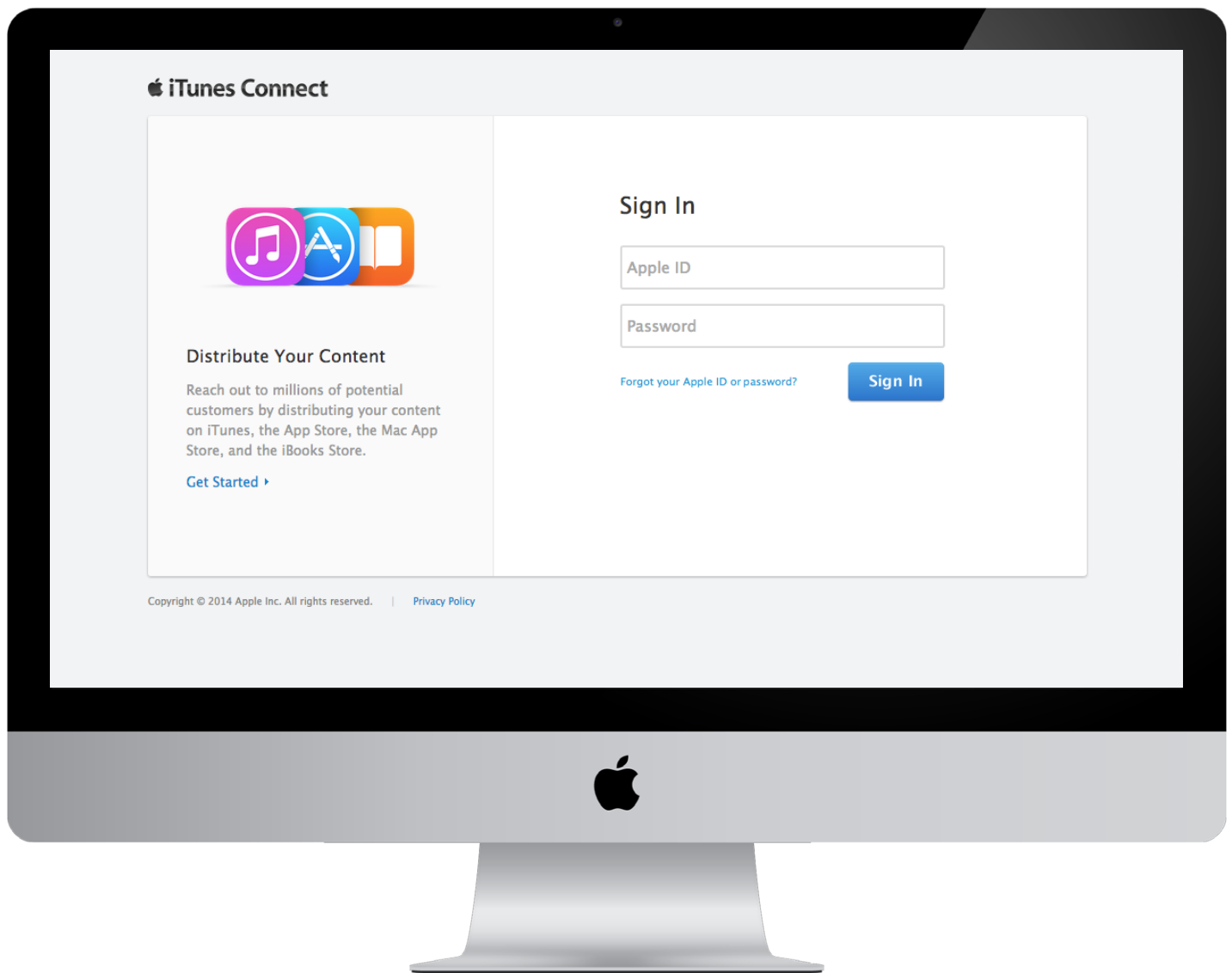
That's why I recommend this early on - the less information you have, the less work you'll have. You can build systems and brands that expand as your company grows.

You certainly can do this anytime you want to, even if you're well into the app business already.

But enough about that. Let's get into the actual account and talk about what you should do to maximize your chances of success.



THE ITUNES CONNECTION



Making Things Happen

iTunes Connect is where you'll spend a lot of your time when publishing apps with Apple. For Google, it's called the Developer Console, but it's all the same thing.

iTunes Connect gives you the ability to do a lot of management. The places you can dive into and explanations are listed below:

- **Sales & Trends.** Shows you how many downloads (paid and free) and in-app purchases your account received. This is updated daily.
- **Contracts, Tax & Banking.** Where you can update your banking and contact information. Your Tax information will have to be edited by Apple's team through mail.
- **Payment & Financial Reports.** This will show you how much revenue you made in the past month through Apple. It gives you a breakdown by country and accounts for Apple's 30% cut. Ouch.

⚙️ PRO TIP

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Most people use a third party service to look at their data because it's so much easier.

- Check out [App Annie](#) for a free account.

- **Manage Users.** If you want to have different people (like developers) access different parts of your account, you grant them different permissions here.
- **Manage Your Apps.** This is the bread and butter - where your apps live. The rest of the ebook is all about this.
- **Grow Your Business With iAd.** This is the iAd (advertising) network for Apple. It allows you to both check how your ads are doing (if you are a publisher) and also check your performance if you are advertising on this network.
- **Catalog Reports.** This is if you ever want to do a deep dive on what your customers are buying. You can get virtually any information you want about who purchased what in order to figure out your best moves.
- **Support.** Contact Apple with questions or concerns.

☼ PRO TIP

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*You can also setup
“Test Users” for
testing out in-
app purchases
without being
charged for them.*

For all of these, you'll spend 95% of your time in the Manage Your Apps section (especially if you use another service to check your stats). We're here to learn how to publish like a pro so I'm not going to spend time on anything other than what will be highly valuable to you.

If you're interested in the other parts of iTunes Connect, the Apple **developer resources** are great, or you can just poke around when you have a minute.

Now it's time to talk about putting these pieces together.

EXERCISE

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Sign up for a free App Annie account

- Go to [App Annie](#) and load in your iTunes Connect credentials.

RESOURCES

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Take a minute and bookmark Apple Developer

- [Apple Developer](#)



App Entries - Maximizing Your App Exposure

It's time to get into the fun stuff. In this section, I'm going to teach you how to create an entry in iTunes Connect for your app in a way that will give you the best chances of success.

First and foremost, let's talk about basic operations. Some of you may use a developer for this, others may do it yourself. It really doesn't matter, but it's important that you understand how the process works. This will save you lots of time and money (not to mention headaches).

When you create a new app, you'll be asked to fill out a few fields. The title you can definitely edit later, others you cannot. No big deal, but let me explain what these are and what to do.

- **Default Language.** Usually English. If you're building a Chinese app and focusing on the Chinese store, do Chinese. You can always add another language.
- **App Name.** We'll talk more about this, but start by creating a name that you'll remember easily when coming back to edit. Something like Paper Route 4000 - Deliver Happiness! or StockTradez. You'll come back later - this is just for your reference.

You also might get flagged by Apple if you use words that they think are inappropriate or copyrighted. You'll see a little popup to alert you. Usually a good idea to change them early on.

- **SKU Number.** This can be anything you want, really. I usually do a random set of numbers like 849873948. This is more for organization than anything else.

NOTE: APP NAME

...

You may run into a name that's already taken. Something like Photo App is not going to be available, so you need to get creative

- **Bundle ID.** Remember what I mentioned in the free ebook about Provisioning profiles and "*Permission Slips*" for Apple? That's what this is. When you create those permission slips, Apple will issue you a Bundle ID.

Each app has it's own Bundle ID. It's kind of like a First/Middle/Last name for an app. You'll set this up in the Developer Portal (or your developer will do so). Once it's setup, you'll select the ID you want from the dropdown.

If you want to learn more about this, check out Apple's **tutorial** on it.

Once you have all these selected, you'll click "*Continue*" and move to the next screen.

Q EXAMPLE

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If you created 5 bundle IDs in the developer account, when you're setting up the Paper Route 4000 game, you'd select the bundle ID associated with it. Should look something like:

- *com.mydeveloper
account.paper4000*

Availability Screen

Rather than walk through each part, I'm going to focus on **HOW** you should set this up. You're smart, so I'll just stick to the strategic side of it for now.

- **Availability Date.** OK - here's something that a lot of people don't think about and they definitely should. The Availability date is the moment that your app will go live on the store.

But, remember that we're all in different time zones! That might seem like an unimportant detail, but it can make a big swing in your release. You want to make sure it goes live in all countries as close together as possible.

The way Apple built their iTunes Connect platform, if you simply let the app release as soon as it's approved, it will slowly roll out to all countries once they hit the **"refresh"** moment at, let's say, 6am their time. This means you're going to get a slow release that trickles out over the course of a day.

What you **WANT** to be doing is setting this date for something like two years in the future. **THEN**, when you're ready to let it release (after Apple has approved it, etc), you switch the date for two or three days in the future.

What this does is push out all at the same time, not just at the **"release time"** for each country slowly. By doing this, you have a better chance at getting compounding effects of the app store and getting into the **"What's New"** section.

Will this be a huge game changer for you? Probably not, but it can give you a small boost that adds up over the lifetime of your app.

And it's easy, so why not?

NOTE

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Some people often ask me what day of the week to release on. Honestly, it's not that important. I tend to release it on a Thursday so that I get the weekend traffic, others release on Mondays because there is less competition. There's no solid answer, just testing.

- **Price Tier.** If your decision is Free or Paid, then it's pretty straightforward.

But if you're choosing Paid, there is a bit more to take into account here. You can choose "**Tiers**" which usually equate to ascending US prices. Most people assume that Paid apps are \$0.99 and Free apps are free.

Wrong. Paid apps can **DEFINITELY** be \$1.99 or even \$2.99 without break in download volume. In fact, most apps I see that change their prices from \$0.99 to \$1.99 double their revenue. \$2.99 works well too if you have a quality app.

It's only at the \$3.99 level that you run into some resistance and that's because of psychology, economics, and a whole lot of stuff we're not going to get into here.

I'm telling you this because you should always price your paid apps higher than you think. If it's a killer app, \$2.99. If it's a paid version of your free app, do \$1.99. You can always drop your price, but it's a lot harder to raise the price.

- **Discount for Education Institutions.** Keep it checked, you never know! But yeah, this really doesn't matter for you.
- **Custom B2B App.** Keep unchecked. Same as above.
- **Continue!**



"It's only at the \$3.99 level that you run into some resistance..."

NOTE

...

Remember that most of the information you put into iTunes Connect is editable up until the app is live. You can always go back and update everything.

AWWW Yeah!!! Now we're getting to the good stuff. In this next section I'm going to show you all the pieces you've heard so much about - keywords, screenshots, and everything in between.

BUT - once the app goes into the store, you can only update select parts of the app (description, copyright, support URL, pricing). So it's a good idea to think this stuff through. On platforms like Google and Amazon you have a bit more flexibility after you release an app, but it's important to start with your best foot forward.

Let's talk about each piece of the iTunes Connect page so you can learn what to do and what **NOT** to do.



VERSION INFORMATION

This area refers to the app as it stands from a categorization standpoint. In other words, how does this app fit into the app store? When Apple indexes your app, where is it placed?

There are a few parts to this process:

1. **Version Number.** When you're first launching an app, just put 1.0. This is the first version. As you release updates, this number will go up.

A lot of larger apps and studios will release *"smaller"* updates (bug fixes, small tweaks) as a three-part nomenclature. For example, they might do something like 1.0.4 - version 1.0, but the 4th small update.

Similarly, with a *"medium"* update, they'll do something like 1.1.0.

Then the *"large"* updates, it's something like 2.0.0.

This is all very much subjective and only really matters for your developer if you're planning on having tons of updates. I usually just release with 1.0, then each update is 1.1, 1.2, etc. Pretty simple.

2. **Copyright.** You can put whatever you'd like in here. There's no algorithm benefit for keywords on this one, so it's mostly about brand. If you have a company, you can put that name. Otherwise, you can put your name if you'd like.

This is a pretty small detail, but is good for legal reasons.

? ASK YOURSELF

...

"How does this app fit into the app store?"



Choosing Categories

This is also a hot topic of discussion in the app community. Which category do I put my app in? Lifestyle or Entertainment? Photo or Social Networking? **HELP**.

Here's the thing about choosing categories:

volume = competition.

The better, more popular a category, the more people are trying to get into it. Most of the time, you want to put your app in the appropriate place - don't put a Cocktail app in the News section, that's just a waste of your time.

EXERCISE

...

“Sign up for updates from [App Annie’s blog](#). They often release data on which categories are fast growing, least competitive, and most lucrative. This can help you decide which category to choose.”

But, remember one of the best rules in marketing:

It's better to be #1 in a low volume space than #100 in a high volume space.

That means if you can swing it, try putting your app in new categories to see how it performs. This is not necessarily an exact science, but I've had apps that did **REALLY** well in categories that were kind of a stretch.

For example, one of my best apps was a Gangnam Style Runner game. When I first released it, I thought it would be a good for Arcade and Kids app. But when I did my research, I realized that those were both really competitive, so I decided to put it in the Racing and Music categories.

When the app went live, not only did it get a lot of volume (80,000 downloads a day), it was #1 in the music charts. Even though that's a relatively small game category, its **WAY** better than if I was lost in the arcade category.

Downloads aside, you also want to think about users browsing through a category. That's always the rule of thumb - if the user will say *"yeah, ok, this makes sense"* then you're good to go. Gangnam Style is a popular dance music video so it worked in that category even though other music apps are guitar chords and karaoke machines.

Also note that each time you update your app, you can change your category. Often people don't change their categories when they update because they don't think it will make a difference in downloads.

I can tell you that I released a few reskins of a similar Instagram style app in the Photo category, Utility category, and Social networking category. They all had **HUGE** differences in downloads, even with similar keyword sets.

Keep testing, try something new.

NOTE

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Just in case you didn't pick that up, Games allow you to choose TWO sub categories whereas most apps only allow one.

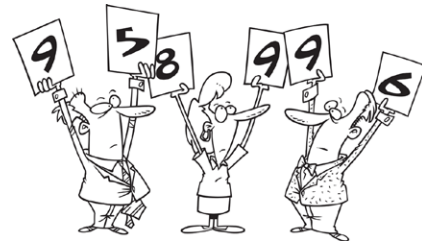
Rating

There's no real strategy here other than be honest. Apple **WILL** come back and say *"you need to change your rating on ABC category based on your app"* before they approve it, so just follow the rules.

A lot of this is done for legal protection so that the app stores don't get sued by upset parents when their child downloads a slot machine app and spends \$3,000, so as long as you comply with their guidelines, this should be no problem.

That covers all the version information you need to know. Pretty straightforward stuff - the categories are really the only part of the process that can help your publishing efforts expand.

The next section deals with Metadata, which can have a huge impact. Yes.



"No getting around it... just be honest"



METADATA & HOW TO LEVERAGE IT



What is Metadata?

Metadata refers to the information that the store *"processes"* as a representation of your app. It's very top level information - think of this analogy:

A book has hundreds of pages in it, full of words and content. But, when you go into the library, you need be to able to find the book you want. The library certainly can't index all those pages in a way that's easy to organize. So, you check the title, the category, and maybe the author name. You search for words that you know you want in a book. Maybe even a new release!

The information that is used to categorize the book in the library is called metadata. The title, the author, everything. It's built into the architecture of the book itself.

The same is true for apps. We're going to talk about all the different pieces of metadata and how you can use it to *"categorize"* yourself in the app store effectively. Usually this means that you will see an increase in downloads.

There are a few main pieces of metadata that we will talk about as they relate to Publishing your app.

Specifically:

- **Description**
- **Keywords**
- **Screenshots**
- **Title**

There are other pieces that we'll touch on like the icon and support URLs, but they're more straightforward as you'll see. The goal of this section is to show you how to put in great content that gets you a great result.

The first piece of metadata we'll start with is the Description.

“How to put in content that gets you a great result.”



DESCRIPTIONS



Writing Descriptions Like A Champion

The description is actually **NOT** indexed very deeply by any of the algorithms. Google has been known to use some of the copy you write in the description field for search results, but is slowly tapering that down.

What the description **DOES** do is increase your conversion rate. This is measured by the percentage of people that see your iTunes page and then decide to download your app.

Let's say your conversion rate is 10%. If 100 people see your iTunes page, that means that 10% of them will actually download the app.

Unfortunately we don't know these exact metrics, but we can make educated guesses. By writing a great description, you can increase your conversion rate dramatically.

For publishing, you'll enter your description into the field provided in iTunes Connect. There is a 4000 character limit, but I don't think I've ever seen anyone reach that.

Your goal in the description is to:

- Introduce the USP (unique selling proposition of the app). If you're not aware of what this is, you should definitely read the marketing ebooks - [click here](#) to get the free version.
- Show social proof of the app (other people love it)
- Explain to user what benefits they'll receive by downloading
- Make it a risk free situation so they have no reason to say no

This follows basic marketing guidelines for writing sales copy...because that's pretty much what you're doing.

EXERCISE

...

“Spend some time in the app store looking at descriptions – are they compelling – why or why not?”

So how do you structure this? Let me walk you through an example, along with a template you can use to easily create a description for your own app.

- **Opening statement.** You want this to be catchy. It can be shock value, a question, or even using lots of punctuation. Just something that gets someone's attention.

Examples:

"Prepare to have your mind blown."

"Ever wished you could capture a moment in super slow mo? Now you can."

"A casino game designed for men who prefer tuxedos."

STRUCTURE

...

- Opening Statement
- Explanation
- Reviews or Testimonials
- Benefits
- Support Info

- **Simple, explanation sentence or two.** Now that you have their attention, you want to pull them in with a well thought out sentence that clearly explains what you have to offer.

Examples:

"Introducing the latest way to send live walkie talkie messages to your friends with the click of a button."

"Download SloMoPro and take advantage of the most exciting technology to hit the iPhone since Instagram."

"We took out all the stops to polish up the most elegant new casino experience, complete with 18 bonus slot machines, straight to your pocket."

STRUCTURE

...

- Opening Statement
- Explanation
- Reviews or Testimonials
- Benefits
- Support Info

- **Put in some reviews or testimonials.** This is optional, but can make a difference if you have something good to include. If you have a new app, you can ask your friends or family for a quote.

Examples:

"WOW, I never realized how much I wanted a walkie talkie. I can chat with my friends no matter where I am instantly!" - Jenny, Colorado

"I actually doubled the likes I get on my instagram account once I started posting these SloMo pics. Sold." - Mikael, Istanbul

"The details are stupendous. The payouts are generous. I'll never play another casino game...no need!" - Richie, Las Vegas

STRUCTURE

...

- Opening Statement
- Explanation
- Reviews or Testimonials
- Benefits
- Support Info

- **List Features by Listing Benefits.** This is an important one. A lot of people just list off every feature an app has and forgets that the user just wants to know why it's important to **THEM**. Most people don't really care what features your app has, they just want to know if it makes their life better in some way.

Example (you'll write these as bullet list):

- Real time communication with your closest friends
- Never lose touch after your best weekend
- Easy to use the first time

Compared to:

- Real time networking with anyone
- 5 buttons you can press to talk to people
- 4 ways to share this app with others you want to communicate with

See the difference?

STRUCTURE

...

- Opening Statement
- Explanation
- Reviews or Testimonials
- Benefits
- Support Info

- **Add support information.** This is particularly important for paid apps - include a place for people to contact you if they have questions or comments.

An easy way to do this is to setup a Facebook Page and put the URL in your description. Ask people to Like your page and then message you.

That about covers it! By writing a description like this, you're going to have a page that increases conversions more so than if you just wing it.

STRUCTURE

...

- Opening Statement
- Explanation
- Reviews or Testimonials
- Benefits
- Support Info

Here's the template you can use:

*Ever wished you had an app that **[write the solution your app provides]**?*

*Introducing **[app name]**, the latest way to **[include best feature]**. By downloading this app, you'll never have to think about **[explain problem this is solving]** again! How nice would that be?*

We spent hundreds of hours perfecting every part of this project in order to bring you the best quality possible because we're passionate users as well!

But don't just take our word for it:

[Testimonial #1]

[Testimonial #2]

Once you download, you'll be able to:

- **[Benefit #1]**
- **[Benefit #2]**
- **[Benefit #3]**
- **[Benefit #4]**
- **[list as many as you'd like]**

Please stay in touch so that you receive all updates directly to your device. If you have any questions or comments, please Like us on Facebook and send us your feedback. We'd love to hear from you!

*Thank you for downloading **[app name]**!*

And that's how you write a winning app description.



KEYWORDS



Picking Keywords

Keywords are often seen as a golden ticket in app publishing. Through the growth of the new industry called App Store Optimization (ASO), services promise massive increase in downloads based on the keywords you choose. While you can absolutely have big spikes by researching and choosing keywords wisely, it's important to think about this section as a *"best practice"* section instead of a *"silver bullet"* section - I'm going to show you how you can choose good keywords in a way that you can expand upon.

The keywords represent search terms that your app can show up for when users search in the app store. This is not a new concept - Google built their internet search engine on keywords in the early stages, so have almost all other major search services.

For example, if your keywords are *"siren"* *"alarm"* and *"joke"* you would be likely to show up when someone searches *"best fake siren alarm app"* or *"joke alarm"* in the app store.

Of course, there are lots and lots of other factors that go into how you will rank for search terms, but that's more in the ASO field than app publishing. The goal of this section is to teach you how you can populate this keyword field in a way that is effective and repeatable.

Let's start with the basics.



The Fundamentals

Here are a few rules that you must follow when picking keywords in iTunes Connect.

1. You're allowed 100 characters total. This includes spaces, commas, and anything else. Keep that in mind when you're deciding how to choose your keywords (we will talk about this more later)
2. Stay away from trademarks, copyrights, and popular names. Back in the day this worked, but now Apple frowns upon this. They'll even delete those keywords from you app entry without telling you. So, better to just stick to generic words.
3. Broad keywords are high volume, high competition. Specific keywords are low volume, low competition. Good to have a mix of both. It's better to rank high for low volume terms.
4. Broad keywords are things like *"car"* *"best"* *"photo"* etc. Specific keywords are things like *"4x4"* *"kettlebell"* *"ukulele"*
5. The algorithm will use keywords in a combination of ways. This means you can include *"coin"* *"carnival"* and *"summer"* and rank for searches like *"coin carnival games"* *"summer carnival"* or *"coin games"* - no matter what the combination.
6. Your Title acts as a keyword area, so no need to repeat keywords in the keyword field. If you title your app *"101 Smooth Recipes for the Paleo Diet"* you don't need to include those words in your keyword field.

Apple's documentation has a full list of rules, but this covers most everything you need to know about it for app publishing.

SUMMARY

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- 100 characters
- No trademarks, copyrights or popular names
- Mix of broad/specific keywords
- Don't worry about order
- Don't repeat title

Doing Your Research

Like I said, if you really want to dive deep into this side of the business, you'll want to learn a lot more about ASO. For now, what I'll do is tell you about some resources where you can go research keywords to find out estimated search volume and give you ideas on how to select keywords. Sometimes you'll be able to see what your competitors are using so that you can capitalize on it.

You can use these services (some paid, some free) in order to find information about keywords and opportunities.

RESOURCES

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- Sensor Tower
- Google Keyword Planner
- AppCodes
- SearchMan

Strategies and Execution

The obvious next part to this is finding out exactly how to pick keywords that you can use. I'm going to give you my process so that you can select keywords easily (without all the headache and confusion).

The best way to do this is by using an example. Let's use a finance app that allows people to watch stock tickers and measure their gains/losses in the stock market.

Here are the steps involved:

1. Identify the app's unique function. As we'll talk about in the marketing ebook, the unique features are what you'll focus on. The same goes for your keyword selection.

Let's say that our app's unique feature is that it automatically sends push notifications/alerts when the stock price changes more than 2% in one day.

We'd create a list of some keywords that have to do with that: alert, real time, notification, stock, portfolio.

Make this list as long as you'd like.

PICKING KEYWORDS

...

- What's unique to your app
- Search the app store
- Research apps for other broad/specific keywords
- Compile a master list
- Refine to 60/40 split
- Check character count

2. Type in some keywords into the app store based on your list above. You'll see results come up like this:



Now you have a bunch of apps that you can use to get ideas.

3. Click on these apps and individually write down their titles in a spreadsheet.
4. Read through the descriptions and find any other keywords that you haven't thought of yet
5. Create a master list of keywords by combining your original list and your new *"competitor"* list.
6. Go to one or multiple of the sites listed above for new ideas and also research on the volume of each keyword (NOTE: I am not going into too much depth here because it would require an entire ebook. **BUT**, even without all the in-depth research, this step by step process will get you results in terms of app publishing).
7. Take your list and create a 60/40 split of *"specific"* keywords/ *"broad"* keywords. This means 60% of your characters (60 out of 100) will be devoted to specific keywords, while 40% of your characters (40 out of 100) will be for broad keywords.

This is not exactly, more of a guideline.

Examples for our app would be:

Specific: nasdaq, dow, jones, S&P, realtime, ipo, management, options

Broad: stock, ticker, alert, push, portfolio, market

8. Use a tool like the Javascript character count to make sure you only have 100 characters including commas and no spaces.
9. Paste this list into your keyword field in iTunes Connect
10. That's it!

RESOURCES

...

- Javascript character count

Because Apple doesn't provide us analytics on this sort of thing (other than download increases), you really won't know which keywords are driving downloads unless you systematically change your keywords with each update.

And that is an important piece - you have the option to update your keywords every time you update your app. It can be very beneficial to do this, especially if you are not happy with your current download volume. I've had apps where after the 4th or 5th keyword update, it really starts to take off!



“..you have the option to update your keywords everytime you update your app.”

Quick Note about Google & Amazon Keywords

As mentioned, we're focusing mostly on Apple with these ebooks, though most of the information is easily transferrable to any platform. With keywords, however, there's a little bit of a difference.

The reason I'm calling this out specifically is because keywords get a lot of attention in the app world, especially for independent developers and people just getting started.

For Amazon, keywords act relatively similar to how they do in Apple in terms of search terms and having a place to put them in your app entry page. If you do the keyword research for Apple, you can easily paste them into your Amazon app page.

For Google, there is no *"keyword"* area where you'll paste your words into. It's just a description area where you'll describe the app. Google's search algorithm will pick up the rest.

Some prefer this, others do not. My point is to let you know that keywords are an evolving part of the discovery process and are one of the few differences between each app store. When you get to the point where you want to load up your Google Play apps, don't be surprised when you don't have this available.

"For Google, there are no 'keyword' area.."



SCREENSHOTS



Creating Epic Screenshots

Screenshots are located in the iTunes page of your app next to the description. You've probably seen them - it's the visual representation of what your app has to offer.

The difference between great screenshots and decent screenshots can make or break an app. Invest millions into an app and have terrible screenshots and you could easily miss out on half your download volume. Screenshots dictate the value of your app along with delivering the most powerful (and effective) introduction to your audience.

While the literally translation would be an actual screenshot, you'll rarely do that. You can upload fully designed artwork for your screenshots, not just a capture of the graphics.

When someone comes to your iTunes app page, they'll be introduced to your app through the screenshots. Remember that - this is how you convince them that they **NEED** to have this app. Not just show them what you have to offer. That's a very important difference and will dictate what I'm about to explain.

There are three key parts to great screenshots:

1. Selling the benefits
2. Creating a flow/story
3. Curating a premium experience



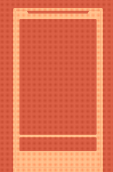
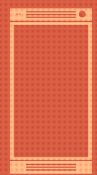
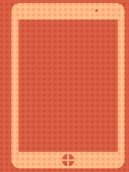
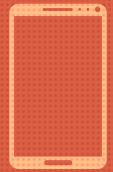
I want to walk you through each part. But first, lets talk about how you're going to actually get these screenshots into the iTunes Connect platform.

Here is an overview of how it will happen:

- **You will upload the screenshots for all required sized.** This means iPhone 4, iPhone 5, iPhone 6, iPad, and everything in between. Apple will provide you with exact dimensions.

This may require a little more work if you want them to be perfectly sized, but just realize that you'll be creating a few different sizes.

Same with Google and Amazon - they'll have different sizes. Luckily most of these sizes are pretty close, so it's not too hard to alter.



- **You'll need to use software like Photoshop to create these screenshots.** If you don't have that software or don't know how to use it, no problem!

The best thing you can do is hire a designer on Elance (see ebook #2) or check out a service like Fiverr to help out. You can visit **Fiverr**.

This way you'll be able to custom design your screenshots as opposed to just taking a screenshot and uploading from your devices.

If you absolutely cannot get a designer, you can always upload native screenshots of the app. Just know that you're missing out on potential downloads because your screenshots don't look as good as others.



- You can get a free trial of Adobe Photoshop

⚙️ PRO TIP

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- **You can only update screenshots when you update the app.** Make sure you check for typos and have everything proofed so that you don't have to re-upload your app in order to change them.
- **Focus on the first 1-2 screenshots.** On mobile devices, you only see the first one or two screenshots. These make a **HUGE** difference. Remember that when deciding what to put where.
- **You're allowed to put up to 5 screenshots.** Usually you want to put up all 5, but if you only have 3, that's ok. Just make sure they get your point across.

Ask a friend to take a look at your screenshots – they should get a good sense about your app without reading the description.

Now, let's talk about those three key parts of the screenshots and how to nail them.

1. **Selling the benefits.** I talked about this a lot in the description area and the screenshots are no different - you want to show people how this is going to solve a problem for them. How will it make their life better? That's what you should focus on.

For example - in photography apps, I see a lot of people who just show how many filters are available. That's great, but people don't necessarily want filters, they want the feeling that filtered photos give. They want the number of Instagram likes they'll get.

Instead of listing off functions and how to use to the app, illustrate how this app is going to clearly make their life 1000x more amazing :)

SUMMARY

...

Key part to great screenshots

- Selling the benefits
- Creating a flow/story
- Curating a premium experience

2. **Creating a Flow/Story.** This is a little harder to get perfect, but it's really important to keep in mind. Think of your screenshots as if they are slides in a presentation - you're leading someone down a path to explain a big idea.

When you see really well designed screenshots, you naturally want to see what else the app does. Each slide makes you wonder what else you can do with it.

It's very powerful. Here's an example:

Let's say you make a cooking app that's all about BBQ. Yum. Your opening slide is a big rack of ribs that says *"Become the neighborhood grill master"* in text. Someone who reads that would think *"Heck yeah, but how's it going to do that?"*

They scroll to the next slide which has a bunch of vegetable kabobs and text that says *"Start with the fine art of perfectly grilled vegetables"* - Instant increase of interest. Slide.

Screenshot 3 says *"Learn over 80 tricks that will make your guests say WOW"* with a picture of a perfectly cooked steak.

Screenshot 4 says *"Take your spices (and the rest of your night) to the next level"* with a picture of a bottle of red wine and an attractive person standing behind the person grilling.

Screenshot 5 says *"Never second guess your abilities again."* With a picture of the griller drinking a beer with five friends standing around looking as if he just said a great joke.

THAT is a great story to tell. Notice we never once mentioned anything that has to do with what's inside the app, just explained that by using this, you'll become the person you want to be. That's done over 5 slides, a story.

SUMMARY

...

Key part to great screenshots

- Selling the benefits
- Creating a flow/story
- Curating a premium experience

3. **Curating a premium experience.** This refers to what you choose to put inside your screenshots and how it is represented. Whatever you do, when you upload your screenshots, you want them to reflect the absolute best experience someone could have in the app.

If it's a photo app, find the most awesome photo ever (not some photo that you pulled off your Camera Roll).

If it's a messaging app, find incredible copy to use as opposed to something that you come up with on a whim.

If it's a game, show the most exciting part of the game, not the regular downtimes.

By doing this, you're helping the user imagine themselves using your app. They will realize that they too could have an amazing experience.

Boom - downloaded.

As your app evolves, so too will your screenshots. Keep them fresh, especially if you add new functionality to your app.

SUMMARY

...

Key part to great screenshots

- Selling the benefits
- Creating a flow/story
- Curating a premium experience



TITLE



Writing a Powerhouse Title

The final piece of the metadata equation is the title. In a lot of ways, the title holds the most *"influence"* for search results and search algorithms. In other words, your title is a powerful tool for getting downloads.

The title is exactly what it sounds like - what your app will be called in the app store. The difference, however, is that a title has just as much to do with keywords as it does with naming the app. That's because of the search engine factor - you want to include keywords to pick up search driven downloads.

There are less rules when creating a title for your app. Typically, you don't want to push it too much or else Apple will push back just as much. *"Pushing it"* means that you add more keywords than would naturally be in the title.

Examples of this would be: Grail - Read and Share the News

Versus: Grail - Read and Share the News With the Most Awesome, Best, Buzzworthy, Highest Ranking, Alert Driven, Top, Viral and Social Networks Available

That's a little extreme, but you see what I mean.

There are a few best practices you can follow to create a great title.

1. **Break the title into two parts.** Think of the title as (Title) + (tagline/explanation). This allows you to include more words without sounding ridiculous.

I typically keep this to 6-8 words total. Some people push this higher, some do less. It's really all a balance that you should try with your apps.

2. **Use your keyword research.** You can leverage all the work you do for your keywords here. Remember - you don't need to repeat words here. You can also use a lot of competitors to get ideas for ways to title your apps using keywords.
3. **Stay below 40-60 characters (usually).** This is merely a guideline. You'll see some apps that have 100+ character titles, some that are 5 characters.

Note that Google only allows 30 character titles.

4. **If you're building a brand, keep it classy.** It's really hard to take a brand seriously when they try to capitalize on keywords. While it can definitely help with downloads, it can also attract different types of customers. That's why I don't advocate using crazy titles - there is a marketing tradeoff over the long term for users and how they feel about your brand.

And that's about it for titles. It's pretty straightforward for the app publishing side of the process, but is a powerful one. You can always change the title with an update if needed.

EXAMPLES

...

- Vegas Slot Machine - Spin the Wheel Of Fortune!
- WeatherMap Pro - Real-time Doppler Effect Tracker
- Magic Navigator - Southern California Traffic Patterns



WRAPPING UP

THANKS



Goodness that was a lot! Thanks for sticking around. Like I said early on, publishing your app is mostly about putting pieces together. As you can see from this ebook, there are a lot of moving parts...but none are overly complicated and can be templated easily.

And that's an important point - this is the part in the app process that is most often outsourced to a virtual assistant. Because there are so many parts that can be systematized, it is straightforward to train someone on. As you ramp up your efforts, keep that in mind. App publishing is not only the easiest to train someone on, it can also be the biggest bottleneck if you're trying to produce a lot of apps. Funny how that works.

At this point you have learned how to:

- Approach the Apple developer process
- Setup your accounts the **RIGHT** way
- Navigate iTunes Connect successfully
- Choose a category for maximum exposure
- Select high download volume keywords that no one else has
- Writing an engaging description that converts
- Design beautiful, awesome screenshots that tell a story
- Title your app the right way



This is a **PROCESS** and not a one time event. Each time you go through this, you'll get better at it. Sometimes you're going to nail all the parts, sometimes you may only hit a few of them. Just keep moving forward - before you know it, you'll be able to do this stuff in your sleep :)

Thanks again for taking the time to read this! See you in the marketing ebook!"

A handwritten signature in red ink, consisting of the letters 'CmTH' in a stylized, cursive font.