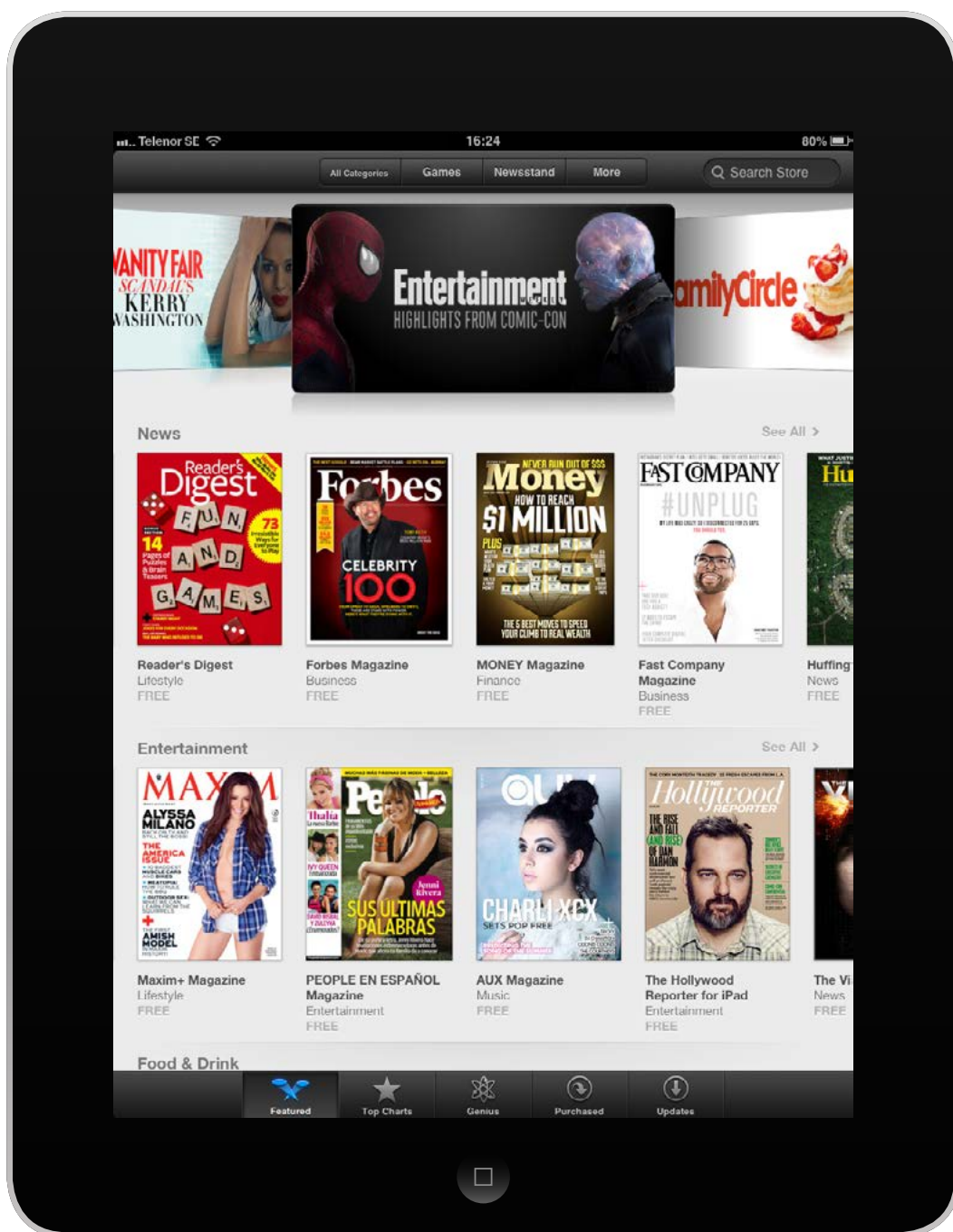


App marketing tips

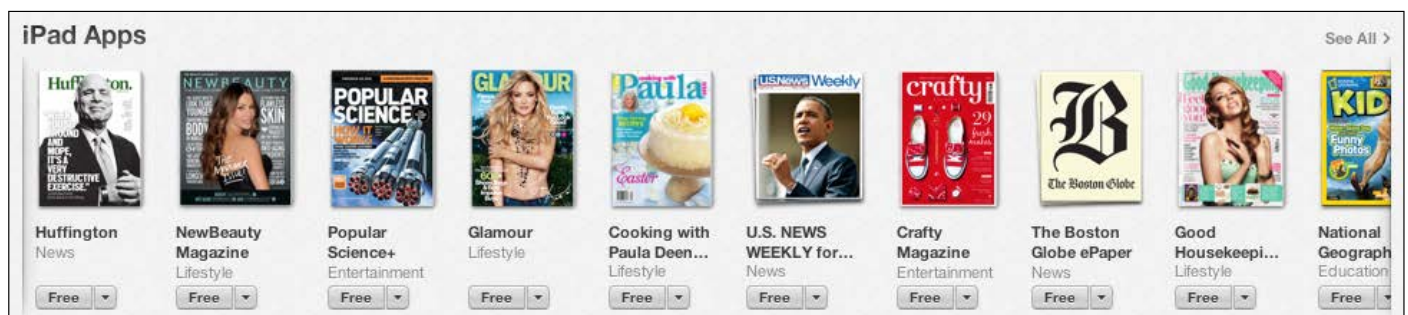
Increase the visibility of your app in the AppStore



Increase the visibility of your app

Preparing your app for the AppStore.

When setting up your app for the AppStore there are several things you as a Publisher should think of in order to make it more visible for people. In a series of blog posts we asked our very own Mag+ Product Expert, Anders Odevik, to share his theories on how the App Store works and how one can go about optimizing the visibility of their app in the App Store. The App Store ranking system is more or less unknown, but Anders have had quite a bit of experience configuring apps, both for himself and for our clients. Though there are many ways to be tactical in selecting your app category, he believes he achieved a good sense of how it works. We have collected all four blog posts in this document. Enjoy!



Naming your App in the App Store

In this post Anders discusses naming and describing your app in the App Store. Every app creator must select a name and write a description for their app when setting up their iOS app for the App Store. Here are five tips to consider when doing so.

The App Name

The name is the first thing the end-user will see alongside the logo. It is most important that the name is descriptive of the functions of the app. It is preferable to include a common search term that you think your target audience will use to search for your kind of app. You will be able to set keywords for your app but the name of the app carries a 'heavier' weight than any keyword you choose.

Keep it Short

If the app name is too long the last part won't be shown. It will be replaced by "...". To avoid this, keep the name short. The length of the name shown in the App Store depends if you are on an iPad or iPhone. On the iPad, ~20 character will be shown if it is in a top list, if it shows up in a search result ~40 characters will be shown. On the iPhone, ~11 characters will be shown if it is listed in a top list and in a search result ~22 characters will be shown. This is only in the current version of the App Store so before deciding on the name, check the App Store on how the names are displayed, sometimes less characters will be shown depending on spaces etc.

Get to the Point

When you write the description of the app it is important to make the first sentence compelling. Only the first part of the description is shown in the App Store, for the customer to view the rest of the description he/she must tap "more". Tapping "more" could serve as an additional barrier to entry for your app. So, get to the point quickly.

Localize

When setting the name and description of your app you must set a default language, but you will also be able to add more languages. Localized apps usually have a higher download rate. This gives you the possibility to add more keywords because the name of the app is recognized as a keyword.

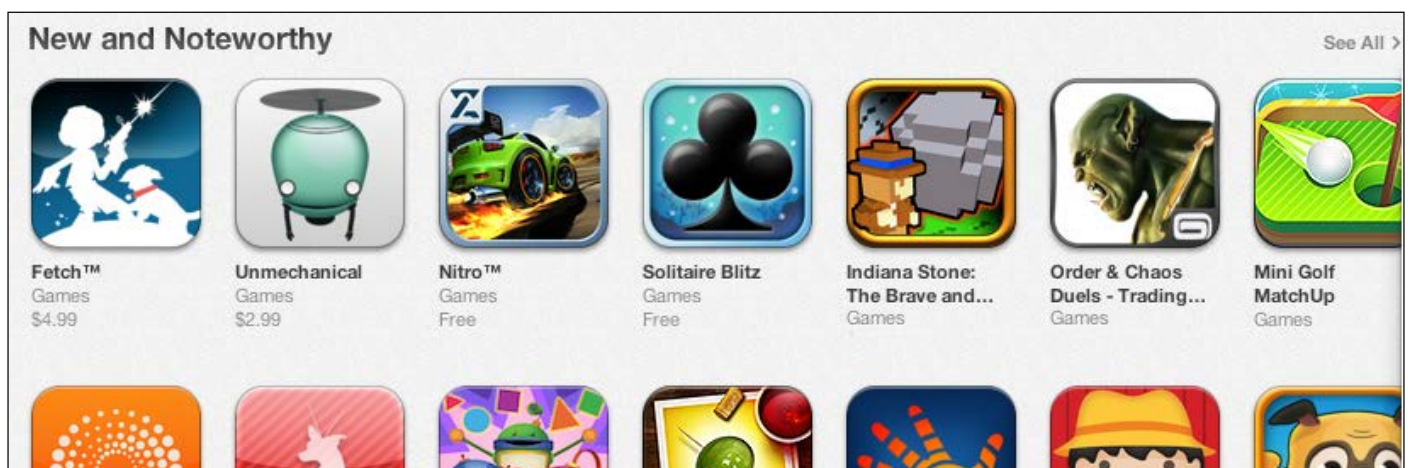
Be Fast

Once you've decided on the name of your app, make sure to grab it quickly. You can name the app without submitting it, but don't wait too long before submitting your app. If you haven't submitted your app to the App Store within 180 days the App will be deleted from your account and you won't be able to use this name again on the same account. This is to prevent "squatting" on names.

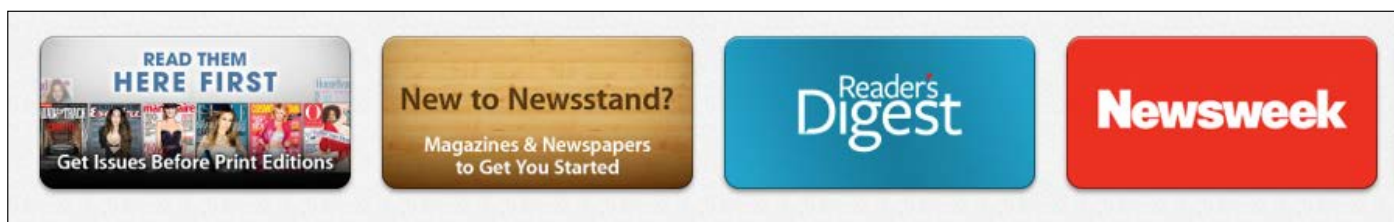
Selecting the Correct Category

How the App Store is categorized.

The App Store is divided into several categories. When preparing your app for the App Store you will be able to select two categories, one primary and one secondary. Some categories are bigger than others and have sub-categories. An example that probably everyone can relate to is the "Games" category, which is clearly divided into several sub-categories. Another section with sub-categories is "Newsstand". Categories help browsing users to find apps that are suitable for them.



In the App Store there is also a "featured" section that covers the whole store. This is where the most popular and well-known apps are shown. The goal for all distributors is to get their app into this section and increase visibility. This can be hard to do if you don't have an extremely popular app. Luckily; all categories have a "featured" section showing new and popular apps, which helps those of us that don't have a recognizable brand. In the featured section of category and sub-category there are three top lists – "Top paid apps", "Top free apps" and "Top grossing apps". These top lists seem to be based on downloads per day.



Why it is important to choose the correct category for your app

If you don't have a recognizable brand that people will be searching for in the App Store, the category selection improves your visibility to the browsing users in the App Store. To choose your category simply decide which part of the App Store you want to be seen in. If your app is a "magazine-app" my recommendation is to make the app a Newsstand app.

The difference between choosing a category for the Newsstand and the App Store

When selecting the category you will be able to choose two – a primary and a secondary. If your app is a Newsstand app your secondary category will automatically be set to "Newsstand". You will then choose a sub-category for your publication.

5 tips for choosing a category for your app

- 1. Check your surroundings:** What other apps do you want your app to be seen with? Go into the App Store and view the apps that are listed in the category where you are planning to place your app. Are there similar apps like your app in this category? Is this the category where your target audience is going to go look for your type of app?
- 2. International visibility:** The top lists in the App Store are based on each country. This means that they will look different depending on which part of the world you are in. If your target audience is in Germany, for example, make sure to check the category in the German App Store before deciding. This will ensure that you end up in a category with similar apps. To do this, just open iTunes on your computer and go to the iTunes Store. Scroll to the bottom of the page and you will see the flag for your country in the right corner. Click on the flag to change the country.
- 3. Primary is more important than secondary:** Make sure you get your primary category right. From experience, I've learned that your app can be in the top ten for your primary category but not even listed in the secondary category.
- 4. Choose wisely:** Choose the correct category the first time. In order to change your category you must submit an update of the app to Apple, and you don't want to annoy your users with constant updates. If you must change your category, the good news is that it doesn't seem like that will reset your download count.
- 5. Don't try to fool the system:** When checking the category you intend to put your app in, you will see your competition. Some might say that you should look for a different category if there is tough competition within your first choice category. To me this is not a good idea. If the category is the correct one for your app and your target audience will go there to look for it, stay in that category. You will get even fewer downloads in a category that is not relevant to your app. It is better to be three taps away in the correct category than two taps away in the wrong one.

Finally, here is a little bit of encouragement. As I mentioned, in each category there is a top list. This is the first thing users will see when entering the category. If your app is within the top ten apps of the category you have vastly increased your visibility. From my own experience I can say that when your app enters the top ten within the category, downloads will increase very quickly.

Using Keywords

In this post Anders discusses using keywords when publishing to the AppStore. Properly using your keywords is the most important part of setting your app up in the App Store. The process can be fairly technical, but if you do this right, a relevant audience will be able to easily find your app in the App Store. You only get 100 characters for your keywords, so it is important to choose wisely.

Don't Repeat Your App or Developer Name

None of the words in the description of the app are automatically included as keywords. However, the app name and the name of the developer are included as keywords. Be sure you don't waste valuable space repeating these two search terms, because they will already been seen as keywords.

Be Relevant

When selecting the keywords you should try to be as relevant as possible. Try to view it through the perspective of your end user. If you were searching for an app with your content, what would you search for? What do you think most people will search for? Be careful not to be too general though. Selecting a keyword like “fun” or “news” won’t make your app stand out and you will only be part of an endless list of apps.

Localize

Localizing is always good, as mentioned in the post that discusses choosing your App Name. When adding another language for your app you will set a name for the app in that language. In addition to the name, the App Store allows you to add new keywords in that language. Be aware – Apple does review keywords to ensure that you are not using a competitor’s app name as a keyword. This practice will lead to app rejection. Another practice that will lead to app rejected is to miss-use the localizing function to add more keywords and not localize, for example, setting English keywords for the German localization.

Check Your Competition

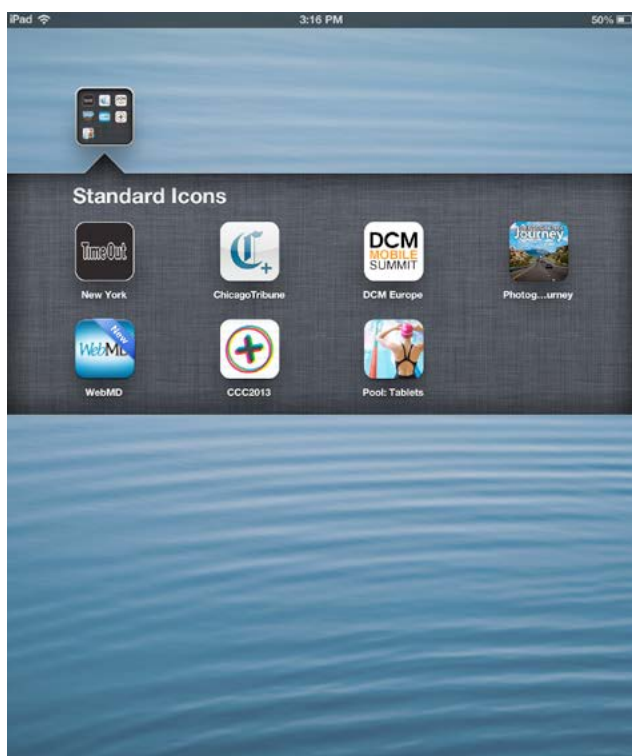
Do a search using your planned keywords and check to see if your competition appears. Perhaps there are too many apps showing up on a specific search term? Is there another word or phrase that is less relevant but will make your app stand out?

Only Change Keywords When Updating

You are only allowed to change keywords when you do an app update, so be sure to choose wisely from the beginning. It may be a while before you can change them again.

“... when your app enters the top ten within the category, downloads will increase very quickly.”

Designing App and App Store Icons



In this last post Anders discusses the importance of, and best practices for designing your icon. These tips and tricks will prove useful for anyone making a digital magazine.

The icon of your app is the first visual message that you send to users browsing in the App Store. It is therefore, extremely important. If your app is a Newsstand app you will have a magazine cover as your icon in the App Store. If you have a standard app (non-newsstand app) you will use the square icon with the rounded corners (screen shot on the left).

Standard App Icon

There are several things to think about when creating the icon for your standard app. In Mag+ Publish, the web interface where you upload the assets when building your app, you will be able to upload two versions of your icon, one for iPhone (114x114px) and one for iPad (144x144px). These icons are going to be used for the app on the desktop of the iPhone/iPad. The general rule here is to avoid using text and detailed graphics, because of the small size of the icon. You should also avoid using a logo that includes the name of your publication, as the icon will be displayed with the name of the app underneath (no need to repeat the name).

My recommendation here is to use a graphical element from your logo or publication. The screenshot of the Chicago Tribune icon (above) is a perfect example of using a graphical element associated with the brand in the icon. Keep it simple while trying to catch the graphic identity of your publication. It's not the easiest thing to do on just a few pixels.

Once your icon is ready for the app itself we can start looking at the icon that is going to show in the App Store. This icon needs to be 1024x1024px in size. Try to use the same design as the app icon you created before. This icon will be downsized and shown in many different sizes. Be sure that it has the correct resolution so that it looks good when used in its full size. Remember that this icon can only be changed when submitting an update of the app.

The Newsstand Image

For Newsstand apps it is the Newsstand image that is used. The Newsstand image must be at least 1024px in width or height and the max ratio is 1:2 to 2:1. Your cover should fit perfectly here, but there are still some things to consider when creating your cover art.

When building the Newsstand app in Mag+ Publish, you will upload a default Newsstand image for your app. This image is going to be used when the user has installed the app on their iPad but has not downloaded anything yet. As the default newsstand image is included in the binary it can only be changed by submitting an update of the app. Because of this, we recommend to use a very general version of your cover here, like a cover-sized image with your publication's logo on it. This image, unlike the standard app icon, will not be shown together with the name of your app.

When setting up the app for the App Store you can upload the Newsstand image that you want displayed in the App Store. This Newsstand image can be changed at any time, preferably when publishing a new issue. This way, the cover image shown in the App Store will always be the latest issue. Either you change the newsstand image manually in iTunes Connect yourself, or you let Mag+ Publish do it for you by using the atom-feed function.

The main reason for uploading your Newsstand image in Mag+ Publish (besides being used by the atom-feed) is to show it in the in-app library and store of the app. It will also replace the default Newsstand image for the app when the user downloads that issue. Another benefit of uploading your Newsstand image in Mag+ Publish is for your subscribers. New issues will be automatically downloaded to a subscriber's iPad or iPhone. The Newsstand image uploaded in Mag+ Publish will be shown in the Newsstand app on the iPad or iPhone when it has been downloaded along with the blue "New" banner generated by Apple.

Check out the example of British Journal of Photography or United Hemispheres in the screen shot below.

Remember to keep it simple and know that the image will be downsized and displayed in very small sizes.

Best of luck getting to the top ten!

