

Marketing for Apps & Mobile Products — Workbook

This workbook turns the course into a working growth plan for your app. You will build a keyword and conversion-creative plan for the App Store and Google Play, set up attribution and your SKAdNetwork conversion value, plan and budget paid user-acquisition campaigns against a payback target, and design an activation funnel plus a push and in-app lifecycle program. Work one section per module and finish with an optimized listing, tracked UA campaigns, and a retention engine you can run.

App Store Optimization: Ranking and Conversion

Build a keyword list from real demand and a conversion-creative plan, then set up A/B tests so the listing improves over time.

Worksheet: ASO Keyword Plan

Build a prioritized keyword list scored on relevance, volume, and difficulty, then assign each term to the right field per store. Pull volume from the Apple Search Ads popularity score or an ASO tool, and never repeat a word across iOS title, subtitle, and keyword field.

App category and the one-sentence job your app does for the user

Head terms (high volume, aspirational) with volume and difficulty noted

Long-tail terms (winnable now) with volume and difficulty noted

iOS title keyword (within 30 characters)

iOS subtitle keywords (distinct from title)

iOS 100-character keyword field (single words, comma-separated, no spaces, no plurals, no 'app')

Google Play short and long description keywords (used naturally, not stuffed)

Exercise: Competitor Listing Teardown

Pick your top three competitors for a head term. Open each store listing and study what they target and how they convert, then write down what you will copy and what you will do differently.

- What keywords do their title, subtitle, and (on Android) description appear to target?

- What does the first screenshot lead with, and does it state a benefit in one glance?

- What is their average rating and review volume, and how does yours compare?

- Name one keyword gap you can win and one conversion idea you will steal.

Worksheet: Conversion Creative Brief

Plan the icon, first three screenshots, preview video, and front-loaded copy as a three-frame pitch, not a feature gallery. Design the first screenshots to be legible as a search-result thumbnail. Single biggest reason to install (one sentence) that frame 1 must convey

Screenshot 1 concept and 3-5 word caption (lead with core benefit, not a login screen)

Screenshot 2 and 3 concepts and captions

Icon direction (simple, recognizable at small size, distinct from competitors)

Preview video opening 3 seconds (show the payoff, not a logo intro)

First 2-3 lines of the description (the only lines iOS shows before 'more')

Localization plan (which markets get translated captions and adapted creative)

Checklist: ASO Ready Gate

- Keyword list scored on relevance, volume, and difficulty with a mix of head and long-tail terms
- No keyword repeated across iOS title, subtitle, and keyword field
- Google Play short and long descriptions include priority keywords used naturally
- First screenshot states the core benefit in one glance with a short caption
- Icon is simple and distinct, and the preview video leads with the payoff
- A Product Page Optimization (iOS) or Store Listing Experiment (Android) test is queued
- Review-prompt timing is set to ask happy users at a moment of value

Attribution: Measuring Installs in a Privacy-First World

Stand up an MMP, define your value events, and configure SKAdNetwork and deep links so every paid channel can be measured on one ruler.

Exercise: Choose and Integrate an MMP

Select a mobile measurement partner and define the events it will track before any spend. The MMP is your neutral referee, so set it up first.

- Which MMP did you choose (AppsFlyer, Adjust, Branch, Singular, Airbridge) and why?

- Is the SDK integrated on both iOS and Android, and is a test install attributing correctly?

- Which ad networks (Apple Search Ads, Meta, Google, TikTok) are connected for cost and attribution?

- Did you confirm installs are deduplicated so two networks cannot both claim the same install?

Worksheet: In-App Event and SKAdNetwork Conversion-Value Map

List the events that signal value, then design what your single SKAN conversion value will encode, since it is the highest-leverage decision in iOS measurement. Your MMP provides the configuration tooling. Activation event (the moment a user reaches first value)

Revenue events (purchase, trial start, subscription start, tier)

Which early signal the SKAN conversion value will encode (and why it matters most)

Coarse value tiers (low / medium / high) and what each represents

SKAN measurement window you are configuring

ATT prompt decision (show it or rely on SKAN) and, if showing, the pre-prompt copy and timing

Worksheet: Deep Link and Android Attribution Plan

Plan how attribution and routing work across platforms so paid traffic lands on the right screen and is measured. Expect iOS (SKAN) to be coarser and delayed than Android (install referrer).

Google Play Install Referrer confirmed working via the MMP on Android (Y/N)

Universal Links (iOS) and App Links (Android) configured for your key destinations

Deferred deep-link tool in use (Branch, AppsFlyer OneLink, Adjust) for first-time users

Top 3 ad destinations that need a deep link instead of the generic home screen

Same activation and revenue events instrumented on both iOS and Android (Y/N)

How you will avoid comparing an iOS SKAN install one-to-one with an Android deterministic install

Checklist: Attribution Ready Gate

- MMP SDK live on iOS and Android with a verified test install
- Activation and revenue events instrumented and firing on both platforms
- SKAdNetwork conversion value configured to encode the most important early signal
- ATT prompt decision made, with a contextual pre-prompt if used
- Google Play Install Referrer attributing correctly on Android
- Deferred deep links route paid traffic to the right in-app screen
- All ad networks connected so spend and revenue meet on one ruler

Paid User Acquisition Across the Major Channels

Structure campaigns on Apple Search Ads, Meta, and Google, optimize for deeper events, and judge every channel by payback.

Worksheet: Apple Search Ads Campaign Structure

Plan ASA Advanced campaigns by theme and tie keyword groups to matching Custom Product Pages for message-match. Bid harder on terms that bring paying users, not just installs.

Brand campaign keywords (your own app and brand terms)

Category/Generic campaign head terms

Competitor campaign terms (rivals' brand names)

Discovery campaign setup (broad match + Search Match)

Match-type plan (exact for validated terms; broad + Search Match in Discovery)

Keyword-harvesting rule (move proven Discovery terms to exact; negative them in Discovery)

Custom Product Pages mapped to keyword themes (which page each theme points to)

Exercise: Set Optimization Events on Meta and Google

Move both platforms from optimizing for installs to optimizing for a deeper, value-correlated event once you have enough volume. On iOS this relies on your SKAN conversion-value setup.

- Which deeper event will each platform optimize toward (registration, trial, or purchase)?
 - Does that event fire reliably so the algorithm can learn from it?
 - On Google App campaigns, which bidding goal did you pick (install volume, tCPA, or ROAS) and why?
 - On Meta, are you using Advantage+ App Campaigns with broad targeting, and how many creative variants are live?
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Worksheet: Unit Economics and Scale Decision

Define your targets and the threshold at which you scale or cut each channel. Use early proxies like D7 ROAS and retention since true LTV takes too long to mature. Leave any calculated values blank to fill from your live data.

Target cost per quality action (CPA on your chosen deeper event)

Projected LTV horizon you will use (e.g. 180-day or 365-day)

Acceptable payback period (e.g. within 3 months)

Go/no-go threshold per channel (e.g. minimum D7 ROAS)

LTV-to-CAC target (e.g. roughly 3:1)

Plan for when CPI rises as you scale (what you do when a channel stops paying back)

Checklist: UA Launch Gate

- [] Apple Search Ads split into Brand, Generic, Competitor, and Discovery campaigns
- [] Custom Product Pages tied to keyword themes for message-match
- [] Meta and Google optimizing for a deeper event, not installs alone
- [] Conversion events fire reliably and feed both platforms
- [] Budgets sized to give each campaign enough conversions to exit learning
- [] A go/no-go ROAS or payback threshold set per channel and written down
- [] Channels compared on the same post-install event and window via the MMP

Activation, Retention, and Lifecycle Engagement

Define and measure activation, read retention cohorts to locate churn, and build a triggered push and in-app program that compounds retention.

Exercise: Find Your Activation Event

Use your analytics (Amplitude, Mixpanel, or the MMP) to find the early action that separates retained users from churned ones, then make it the headline of your onboarding funnel.

- What early actions did retained users take that churned users did not?

- Is there an aha-moment threshold (a magic number of an action in the first week) that predicts retention?

- State your chosen activation event in one sentence and confirm it is instrumented.

- Map the funnel (app opened to activation) and name the biggest drop-off step to fix first.

Worksheet: Onboarding Redesign for Time-to-Value

Plan an onboarding that reaches first value fast by removing gates and asking for permissions and signup only after value is felt.

Steps between app open and the activation moment today (list them)

Steps you will cut or defer to reduce time-to-value

Where signup/payment is asked now vs. where it should be asked (after first value)

Permissions (push, location) and the in-context moment you will request each, with pre-permission copy

Progressive-onboarding plan (which features are taught only when relevant)

Exercise: Retention Cohort Diagnosis

Read your D1, D7, and D30 cohort table and locate where the curve breaks. A steep D1-to-D7 drop is an onboarding problem; erosion by D30 is an ongoing-value problem.

- What are your current D1, D7, and D30 retention figures?

- Where does the curve drop sharply, and where (if anywhere) does it plateau?

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- Which retention problem do you have: first-value/onboarding, or ongoing-value/habit?
 - Segmented by source, which acquisition channels bring users who stay, and which churn fast?
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Worksheet: Lifecycle Messaging Plan

Design a behavior-triggered push and in-app program through a platform like Braze, OneSignal, CleverTap, or Iterable. Protect opt-in with relevance, timing, and frequency caps, and measure uninstalls, not just opens. Onboarding nudges (in-app while active, push if they go quiet) toward the activation event

Behavioral triggers (e.g. abandoned cart, unfinished setup) and the message each sends

Win-back trigger (lapse period that fires it and the offer/reason to return)

Push permission approach (contextual prompt with pre-permission; provisional auth on iOS?)

Frequency cap and send-time optimization rule

Metrics per campaign: open rate, downstream action, AND opt-out/uninstall rate

Your Action Plan

1. Build a scored keyword list from real demand and place terms correctly in iOS fields and the Google Play description.
2. Brief and ship conversion creatives that lead with the core benefit, then queue a Product Page Optimization or Store Listing Experiment.
3. Integrate an MMP on both platforms, instrument your activation and revenue events, and verify a test install attributes.
4. Configure your SKAdNetwork conversion value to encode the most important early signal and decide your ATT prompt approach.
5. Set up deferred deep links and confirm the Google Play Install Referrer is attributing on Android.
6. Launch Apple Search Ads split into Brand, Generic, Competitor, and Discovery, tied to Custom Product Pages.
7. Run Meta App Promotion and Google App campaigns optimized for a deeper event, with budgets sized to exit learning.
8. Set a go/no-go payback or D7 ROAS threshold per channel and scale only the channels that clear it.
9. Find your activation event, cut time-to-value in onboarding, and fix the biggest funnel drop-off.
10. Read D1/D7/D30 cohorts weekly and run a behavior-triggered push and in-app program, watching uninstall rate as closely as opens.

