

The Most Popular Google Play Apps of All Time

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Report Highlights

- Four of the top 10 grossing Google Play games of all time were driven almost entirely by store revenue in Japan. Understanding how unique regional preferences can ultimately lead to global success should inform your app localization strategy for games and apps alike.
- Casual-style games dominate with 9 of the 10 top downloaded Google Play apps of all time. By their nature, casual games garner wide appeal among users who do not necessarily classify themselves as gamers. Understanding the top performing games gives publishers a clear picture of what types of gameplay, categories of games, storyline themes and monetization methods have been most successful, as well as identify the markets where they have had the most impact.
- The United States was the #1 download-generating country for 6 of the top 10 downloaded Google Play apps of all time. This is in direct contrast to iOS, where the US was the leader in downloads for all 10 of the top downloaded apps of all time.
- Downloads and revenue don't tell you everything — how your app ranks among recent monthly active users is a key indication of its current health and its future prospects.
- App and game user retention underlies the long-term success of your app. Understanding how your app's day 1, 7, 14 and 30-day retention rates stack up among the top ranking apps in certain markets is key for determining your longevity and planning user acquisition strategies.

For details on the methodology used in this report, please refer to the final slide.

App Annie is #1 for App Store Analytics and Market Data

Games								
Social								
Investors								
Platforms/ Mobile								
Entertainment/ Media								
Other								

Over half of Google Play and iOS revenue combined is generated by App Annie customers.*

The information contained in this report is compiled from [App Annie Intelligence](#), the leading market data solution for the app store economy. To see how our app store download, revenue, demographic and usage estimates can help guide your critical business decisions, [request a demo today](#).

*App Store revenue made by App Annie customers across Google Play and iOS, as of January 2016, per App Annie estimates.

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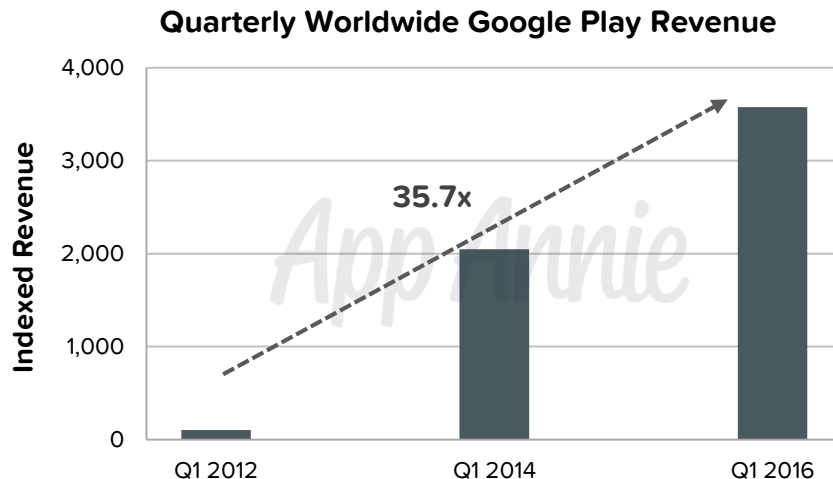
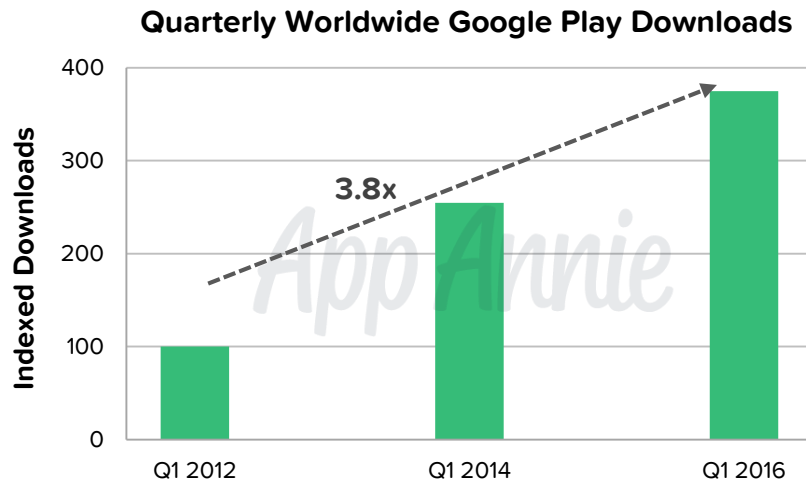


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Overall Google Play Market Growth

Google Play Continues to Climb in Downloads and Revenue

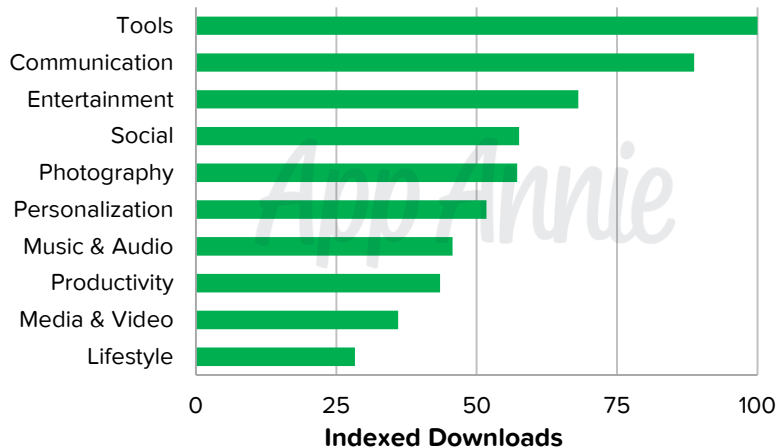


Initially launched as Android Market in 2008, the rebranded Google Play Store has experienced incredible global growth in both downloads and revenue in the past four years. From Q1 2015 to Q1 2016, India, Vietnam and Pakistan had the largest growth in market share for Google Play downloads. Notably, emerging markets have experienced strong download growth as a result of increased Android smartphone penetration and telecommunications infrastructure improvements. However, publishers are still trying to develop new business models to effectively monetize in these regions.

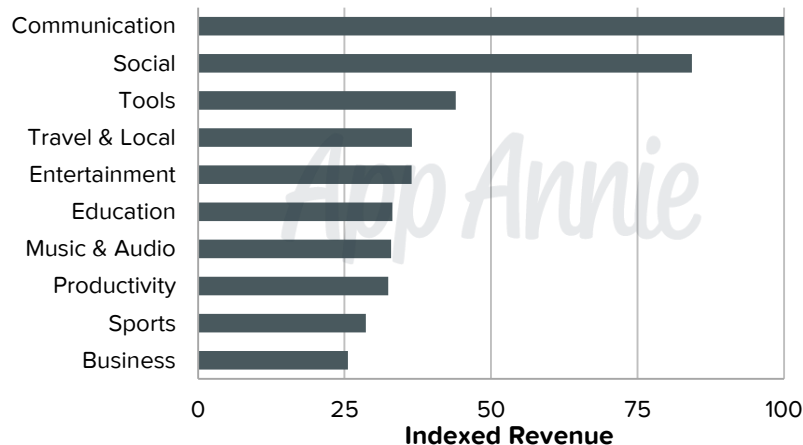
In 2015, Google Play overtook iOS in downloads in the US, which was at the time the largest market for both app stores. While Google Play has historically been popular in markets favoring less expensive Android devices, this indicates a potential growth trend for other mature mobile markets like the US or the United Kingdom.

Top Downloaded and Top Grossing Categories of All Time*

Google Play Downloads by Category, Q1 2012 - Q1 2016
(Excluding Games)



Google Play Revenue by Category, Q1 2012 - Q1 2016
(Excluding Games)

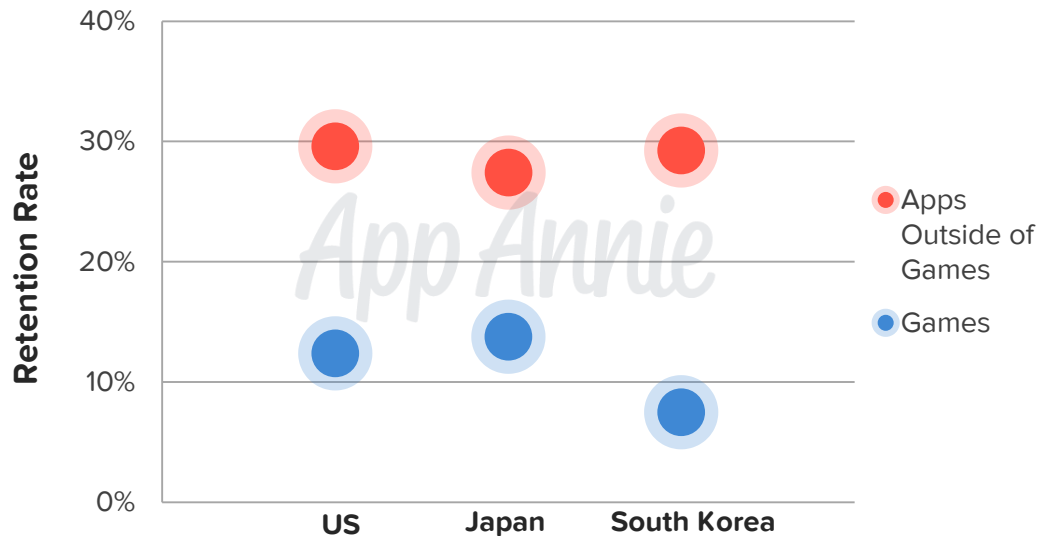


Games is the number one category for downloads and revenue, representing approximately 40% of total all-time downloads and approximately 90% of total all-time revenue.

Outside of Games, Communication and Social apps are high-ranking categories on both charts indicating the all-inclusive nature of messaging and social networking apps and their monetization possibilities on Android devices. Tools' high ranking for both downloads and revenue reflect Android users' preferences for customization and utility apps, like battery savers and VPNs.

Retention Rates Vary Across Top Ranking Games on a Country Basis

Weighted Average 30-Day Retention Rate for Top 10 Downloaded Apps in February 2016 by Country



*Based on the top 10 apps and top 10 games by downloads in each country in February 2016

**Japan's weighted average is based on only 9 of the top 10 games, as retention data was unavailable for 1 game in the top 10

***The retention rate is weighted by downloads on a per app basis

****30-day retention rate is defined as the rate of users who used the app 30 days after the initial install

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In each country, apps had roughly 2x to 4x higher 30-day retention rates than games, as many of the top apps revolved around frequently used communication or messaging-style apps.

Retention rates are higher for apps than games across the board, since most of the top apps are service-oriented and therefore not as likely to be interchanged as much as games.

Japan had 2x higher 30-day retention rate for games than South Korea and was just ahead of the US.

App retention is crucial to long-term success in the app economy. Failing to focus on drawing users back could lead to high marketing costs for app publishers as they combat churn.

The Most Popular Google Play Games of All Time



Top Games by All-Time* Worldwide Downloads

Rank	Game	Google Play Release Date	Company	Country of Headquarters
1	 <i>Subway Surfers</i>	September 2012	Kiloo	Denmark
2	 <i>Candy Crush Saga</i>	November 2012	Activision Blizzard	United States
3	 <i>Pou</i>	August 2012	Zakeh	Lebanon
4	 <i>Temple Run 2</i>	January 2013	Imangi, iDreamSky	United States, China
5	 <i>Hill Climb Racing</i>	September 2012	Fingersoft	Finland
6	 <i>My Talking Tom</i>	November 2013	Outfit7	Cyprus
7	 <i>Despicable Me</i>	June 2013	Gameloft	France
8	 <i>Angry Birds</i>	December 2011	Rovio	Finland
9	 <i>Fruit Ninja</i>	February 2011	Halfbrick	Australia
10	 <i>Clash of Clans</i>	September 2013	Supercell	Finland

*Download and revenue data spans from January 2012 to March 2016
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Casual Games with a Global Appeal Dominate the Top Downloads



- *Subway Surfers* topped the chart with its endless runner gameplay and lasting international appeal. It kept users engaged by refreshing the background of their gameplay to different cities around the world. Launching over three years ago, it was still a [top 10 game in over 72 countries](#) including the US, Mexico, Turkey, Russia and Thailand.
- Seven of the 10 top games were the same as [the most downloaded apps on iOS](#). *Pou*, *Hill Climb Racing*, and *My Talking Tom* were popular on Google Play, but didn't make the iOS top games chart. The features of these games — simple racing, matching gameplay, themes that surpass international boundaries and customizable characters — have broad global appeal.
- Each of the top games achieved global popularity, with most downloads driven by the US and emerging markets. Emerging markets are the next frontier for the app economy and will be integral to Google Play's continued success.
- Nine of the top 10 are casual games, except for one strategy game: *Clash of Clans*.
- Most games were introduced at least three years ago, similar to the top-downloaded iOS apps in our report, [The Most Popular iPhone and iPad Apps of All Time](#). This has given them a long lead time to accumulate downloads, localize their app into new markets and test and update new features.



Top Games by All-Time* Worldwide Revenue

Rank	Game	Google Play Release Date	Company	Country of Headquarters
1	 <i>Puzzle & Dragons</i>	September 2012	GungHo Online	Japan
2	 <i>Clash of Clans</i>	September 2013	Supercell	Finland
3	 <i>Monster Strike</i>	December 2013	Mixi	Japan
4	 <i>Candy Crush Saga</i>	November 2012	Activision Blizzard	United States
5	 <i>Game of War – Fire Age</i>	March 2014	Machine Zone	United States
6	 <i>Everybody's Marble</i>	June 2013	Netmarble , LINE	South Korea, Japan
7	 <i>Disney Tsum Tsum</i>	January 2014	LINE	Japan
8	 <i>Summoners War</i>	April 2014	GAMEVIL	South Korea
9	 <i>Hay Day</i>	November 2013	Supercell	Finland
10	 <i>The World of Mystic Wiz</i>	March 2013	COLOPL , Sony	Japan

*Download and revenue data spans from January 2012 to March 2016
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Regional Interests Drive Concentrated Revenue Growth Among Games



- *Candy Crush Saga* and *Clash of Clans* were the only two games to make both the top all-time Google Play downloads and revenue charts, demonstrating their widespread popularity and effective store monetization methods.
- Four out of 10 games were driven almost entirely by store revenue in Japan, a very important market for gaming, especially on Android devices. Moreover, all four games (*Puzzle & Dragons*, *Monster Strike*, *Disney Tsum Tsum*, and *The World of Mystic Wiz*) were from Japanese publishers.
- While downloads were more widespread across countries from various regions, revenue tended to be more concentrated with Japan, South Korea, and the US being key markets.
- Six of the top 10 games were also in the top 10 iOS games by all-time revenue, with the top 5 being comprised of the same games in a different order. *Monster Strike* and *Puzzle & Dragons* ranked above *Candy Crush Saga* and *Clash of Clans* on Google Play due to their popularity in East Asian countries which have a strong gaming heritage and significant installed base of Android devices.
- While global appeal drove game downloads, store revenue is more driven on a localized level based on cultural interests and both the ability and propensity to spend on gaming.




































Top Games by Monthly Active Users on Android Phone

Comparing the top ranking games by average MAU on Android phones in Q1 2016 to the top downloaded and top grossing games of all time from the previous two tables helps indicate the present-day popularity of historically successful games. Since games tend to have a short life span, it is impressive to still be widely used years after the initial launch. Those that were still in the top 50 games by average MAU in selected countries are indicated in the table below.

Japan stands out with four completely unique games in its top apps by MAU, all created by Japanese publishers. This showcases the importance of strong localization tactics for games created outside of Japan.

Candy Crush Saga and *Clash of Clans* found success in every country identified below — ranking in at least the top 50 by average MAU for each.

Country	Top 10 Games by Q1 2016 Avg MAU*	Top 11–50 Games by Q1 2016 Avg MAU*
US	 	    
South Korea	 	 
Japan	  	   
UK	 	    
India	    	  

*Games in the previous top 10 download and revenue tables were reviewed in the list of the 50 games by average MAU in Q1 2016. Each row represents the games in descending order of their MAU.

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The Most Popular Google Play Apps of All Time



Top Apps by All-Time* Worldwide Downloads

Rank	App	Google Play Release Date	Company	Country of Headquarters
1	 <i>Facebook</i>	December 2011	Facebook	United States
2	 <i>WhatsApp Messenger</i>	January 2012	Facebook	United States
3	 <i>Facebook Messenger</i>	November 2011	Facebook	United States
4	 <i>Instagram</i>	March 2012	Facebook	United States
5	 <i>Clean Master</i>	September 2012	Cheetah Mobile	China
6	 <i>Skype</i>	November 2011	Microsoft	United States
7	 <i>LINE</i>	January 2012	LINE	Japan
8	 <i>Viber</i>	October 2011	Rakuten	Japan
9	 <i>Twitter</i>	November 2011	Twitter	United States
10	 <i>Flashlight by Surpax</i>	January 2012	Surpax	United States

*Download and revenue data spans from January 2012 to March 2016
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Emerging and East Asian Markets Underpin Google Play Messaging and Utility App Downloads



- Facebook owns the top four most downloaded Google Play apps of all time. While Facebook also owned 4 of the [top 10 apps on iOS](#), it did not occupy the top 4 spots as it did in Google Play.



- The US was the leader of downloads for only 6 of the top 10 apps on Google play. This is in stark contrast to iOS where the US led downloads for all of the top 10 apps.



- Six of the 10 apps on Google Play were also the top apps on iOS. The four apps unique to Google Play are *Clean Master*, *LINE*, *Viber* and *Flashlight by Surpax*. This was driven by the proclivity for customization and optimization of Android devices and the large representation of Asian countries, emerging markets and Russia in Android device ownership.



- Most apps belong to the Communication or Social categories with the exception of one Tool app and one Productivity app — indicating the long-term importance of messaging and networking apps.



- All of the apps were launched in late 2011 or in 2012. They have amassed a large global user base, demonstrating the stickiness of Communication and Social apps early to arrive in the market and their ability to localize well across many diverse regions.





Top Apps by All-Time* Worldwide Revenue

Rank	App	Google Play Release Date	Company	Country of Headquarters
1	 <i>LINE</i>	January 2012	LINE	Japan
2	 <i>LINE PLAY</i>	November 2012	LINE	Japan
3	 <i>LINE Manga</i>	April 2013	LINE	Japan
4	 <i>Pandora Radio</i>	January 2012	Pandora	United States
5	 <i>KakaoTalk</i>	January 2012	Daum Kakao	South Korea
6	 <i>GREE</i>	January 2012	GREE	Japan
7	 <i>Pokemini</i>	May 2013	Cocone	Japan
8	 <i>Dragon Quest X Adventurer's Convenient Outing Tool</i>	June 2013	SQUARE ENIX	Japan
9	 <i>LOVOO</i>	December 2011	LOVOO	Germany
10	 <i>Tinder</i>	July 2013	InterActiveCorp (IAC)	United States

*Download and revenue data spans from January 2012 to March 2016
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App Revenue Is Concentrated Among a Handful of Countries



- While Facebook dominated in downloads, LINE owns the three top-grossing apps of all time — fueled primarily by revenue in Japan.



- Revenue was more concentrated in a single country for each app than was the case with downloads. Japan leads in revenue behind 6 of the 10 apps, 4 of which were almost entirely driven by Japan. Other prominent countries driving the majority share of revenue among each app were the US, South Korea and Germany.
- The top-grossing apps showed more category diversity than the top downloaded apps, including three gaming-related apps: *GREE*, *Pokemini* and *Dragon Quest X Adventure's Convenient Outing Tool*.
- Two dating apps made it into the top 10 by revenue. *Tinder* broke into the top 10 for all-time revenue despite only having in-app purchases available since Q1 2015. It is likely that *Tinder* will continue to climb this list given how high it has risen in just over a year of generating app store revenue.
- Only three apps (*LINE*, *LINE PLAY* and *Pandora*) overlap with our top 10 grossing iOS list due to regional preferences that manifest through many Android-dominant markets.








































Top Apps by Monthly Active Users on Android Phone

Comparing the top ranking apps by average MAU on Android phones in Q1 2016 to the top downloaded and top grossing apps of all time from the previous two tables helps indicate the present-day popularity of historically successful apps. It is impressive to still be widely used years after the initial launch. Those that were still in the top 50 apps by average MAU in selected countries are indicated in the table below.

Across the five selected countries, Communication and Social apps have the strongest loyalty with most being actively used today.

There was much overlap in the top 10 apps by MAU across countries; however, *Viber* and *KakaoTalk* showed more regional preferences ranking in the UK and South Korea respectively. Regional preferences showcase users' long-term commitment to popular communication apps and the strength of network effects over global competitors.

Country	Top 10 Apps by Avg Q1 2016 MAU*	Top 11–50 Apps by Avg Q1 2016 MAU*
US	    	   
South Korea	 	   
Japan	  	   
UK	     	  
India	  	   

*Apps in the previous top 10 download and revenue tables were reviewed in the list of the 50 apps by average MAU in Q1 2016. Each row represents the apps in descending order of their MAU.

*MAU rankings exclude apps frequently pre-installed on Android devices, from network carriers and from device manufacturers.

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Category Spotlight: The Most Popular Google Play Music & Audio Apps of All Time



Top Music & Audio Apps by All-Time* Worldwide Downloads

Rank	Music & Audio App	Google Play Release Date	Company	Country of Headquarters
1	 <i>Shazam</i>	January 2012	Shazam Entertainment	United Kingdom
2	 <i>Spotify</i>	May 2014	Spotify	Sweden
3	 <i>Pandora Radio</i>	January 2012	Pandora	United States
4	 <i>SoundCloud</i>	January 2012	SoundCloud	Germany
5	 <i>TuneIn Radio</i>	January 2012	TuneIn	United States
6	 <i>Palco MP3</i>	January 2012	Studio Sol	Brazil
7	 <i>Walk Band</i>	January 2012	Revontulet	China
8	 <i>SoundHound</i>	November 2011	Soundhound	United States
9	 <i>Magic Piano by Smule</i>	June 2012	Smule	United States
10	 <i>Poweramp</i>	December 2011	Max MP	Russia

*Download and revenue data spans from January 2012 to March 2016 using the Music & Audio Google Play category
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On-Demand Preferences Drive Music Downloads Globally



- The top downloaded Music & Audio apps were largely driven by demand for music at our fingertips any time of day. Five of the 10 were music streaming and one additional app was for playing music stored locally on devices. As we saw in our [music streaming report](#), music streaming is truly a global trend with both large global players and localized preferences catering to the demand for music at the ready. Network infrastructure and cloud storage enable music streaming to be possible on a global scale, both of which have increased during this time.
- Other apps included music discovery with *Shazam* topping the chart and *SoundHound* placing at #8. Alongside music streaming, this further indicates the global appetite for on-demand music access, which includes identification.
- Eight of the 10 apps had a strong global presence, although the US was the largest driver of downloads among all 8. Two apps stand out against the widespread base of downloads: *Pandora*, driven almost completely by the US, and *Palco MP3*, driven primarily by Brazil. This is another indication of local preferences manifesting on a global stage.



Top Music & Audio Apps by All-Time* Worldwide Revenue

Rank		Music & Audio App	Google Play Release Date	Company	Country of Headquarters
1		<i>Pandora Radio</i>	January 2012	Pandora	United States
2		<i>Poweramp</i>	December 2011	Max MP	Russia
3		<i>Ultimate Guitar Tabs</i>	January 2012	Ultimate Guitar	Russia
4		<i>Sing! Karaoke</i>	December 2012	Smule	United States
5		<i>Magic Piano by Smule</i>	June 2012	Smule	United States
6		<i>TuneIn Radio</i>	January 2012	TuneIn	United States
7		<i>DoubleTwist Music Player</i>	January 2012	DoubleTwist	United States
8		<i>FL Studio Mobile</i>	April 2013	Image Line	Belgium
9		<i>iSyncr for iTunes</i>	January 2012	JRT Studio	United States
10		<i>LINE MUSIC</i>	May 2015	LINE MUSIC , LINE	Japan

*Download and revenue data spans from January 2012 to March 2016 using the Music & Audio Google Play category
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Paid Downloads and Music Creation Make Their Mark on Revenue



- Unique compared to most other categories, the bulk of the app store revenue for half of the top Music & Audio apps was not driven by in-app purchases or subscriptions. Instead, paid downloads drove the majority of revenue behind these apps. This includes the #2 ranking *Max MP Poweramp* utilizing a free trial monetization technique, but generating revenue through its paid version. One key driver of high paid download revenue representation is the ability of some music subscription services to monetize outside of app stores.
- While music players represent the majority of the top apps, three music creation apps rank in the top five — indicating the propensity for consumers to create as well as consume.
- Apart from *Pandora* and *LINE MUSIC*, most apps had a global revenue base. *Pandora*, the number one top-grossing music app of all time, was almost entirely driven by revenue in the US. *LINE MUSIC* rounds out the top 10, with Japan driving most of the revenue. Curation and local preferences are important for music streaming apps such as these; however, this poses a challenge for expanding globally due to legal music rights and thereby reinforces demand for local apps.
- Even top-grossing Music & Audio apps tend to be strong in at best a handful of regions. High global music consumption offers a large opportunity for future international growth. Coupled with the historical willingness to pay for music-related apps, there is large opportunity for continued growth in both this monetization method as well as testing in-app purchase and subscription models within and alongside paid downloads.















































Top Music & Audio Apps by Monthly Active Users on Android Phone

Comparing the top ranking Music & Audio apps by average MAU on Android Phones in Q1 2016 to the top downloaded and top grossing Music & Audio apps of all time from the previous two tables helps indicate the present day popularity of historically successful Music & Audio apps. It is impressive to still be widely used years after the initial launch. Those that were still in the top 50 apps by average MAU in selected countries are indicated in the table below.

While South Korea had many of the top Music & Audio apps within its top 50 by MAU, none of the top worldwide apps broke into its top 10. This indicates South Korea's regional preference for localized music apps. This trait is also embodied in Japan's two apps in its top 10 by MAU for Q1 2016, *LINE MUSIC* and *Max MP Poweramp*. One is a regional music streaming app and the other is a music player allowing users to play their personal curated music.

The majority of the top 10 Music & Audio apps by MAU among the selected countries were music streaming apps.

Country	Top 10 Music & Audio Apps by Q1 2016 Avg MAU*	Top 11–50 Music & Audio Apps by Q1 2016 Avg MAU*
US	     	     
South Korea		     
Japan	   	  
UK	     	   
Brazil	    	   

*Music & Audio apps in the previous top 10 download and revenue tables were reviewed in the list of the 50 Music & Audio apps by average MAU in Q1 2016. Each row represents the Music & Audio apps in descending order of their MAU.

*MAU rankings exclude Music & Audio apps frequently pre-installed on Android devices, from network carriers and from device manufacturers.

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Key Takeaways

Key Takeaways

- Games and Apps present a strong global download base, driven by both mature and emerging markets. With emerging markets continuing to climb in terms of infrastructure and smartphone penetration, this is a healthy indicator of continued global download and revenue growth for Google Play.
- While Google Play apps outside of games are still led by the US in revenue, it is not nearly as concentrated as was the case on iOS. This bodes well for the future of Google Play revenue as Google Play continues to gain share of downloads in the US and monetization methods reach all corners of the globe.
- While Games is the #1 category for Google Play downloads and revenue globally, far and above other categories, Social and Communication apps continue to drive growth on a widespread scale.
- Japan was a pivotal country in driving revenue for the top games and apps on Google Play. Harnessing regional preferences has a large impact on both the popularity and monetization success of games and apps alike.
- With emerging markets as the next frontier of apps, Google Play downloads are set to continue to grow in the coming years. However, since emerging markets don't typically generate large revenue through the app store, it is important for publishers to uncover unconventional business models to monetize in creative ways that suit these markets.

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See how users behave and understand how they spend time and use data across apps, categories and devices.

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- Millions of apps and thousands of publishers
- Daily, weekly and monthly granularity

- Over 5 years of historical data
- iOS, Google Play and Android



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