Mobile Game Video Ads Analysis

Optimal Video Lengths and End Cards

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Executive Summary

This report analyzes 3.7 billion mobile in-app video ad impressions and resulting installs to determine the relationships between ad length, end card type, and campaign performance. The results show that the audiences for specific mobile game genres differ in their video ad preferences.

Based on the report, the video advertising best practices for the most popular mobile gaming categories are as follows:

- **Social Casino:** Concise ads that are short, sweet, and end in a standard static end card
- **Puzzle:** Relatively short videos with a direct path to download via the app store
- **Strategy:** Mid-length ads that end in an app store end card
- **Hyper-Casual:** Longer ads with more video content to enrich the impression
- **RPG:** Long ads with plenty of story material followed by looping video

Mobile Game Genre	Optimal Video Ad Length	Optimal End Card
Social Casino	10 seconds	Standard End Card
Puzzle	22 seconds	App Store End Card
Strategy	33 seconds	App Store End Card
Hyper-Casual	37 seconds	Video End Card
RPG	46 seconds	Looping Video

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Introduction

The most successful marketing campaigns start with a detailed understanding of their target audience. But in a post-IDFA landscape, mobile game marketers have access to less data about their audience than before. As the total gaming market grows to an overwhelming 2.5 billion players, marketers need to invest in solutions that maximize ad performance but don't rely on user-level targeting.

Mobile marketers can respond to app market changes by refocusing on creative testing and optimization. By building ad creatives that prioritize mass appeal, game marketers can reach the largest possible cross-section of potential users. This will drive stronger campaign performances.

Executing successful campaigns requires knowledge of your audience on many levels.

In addition to great designs, marketers need to know about the types of ad structures and formats that resonate most with their audience. For example, what is the ideal video ad length for hyper-casual players? Are social casino players more likely to engage with interactive or standard end cards? Are playables really the best option for demonstrating puzzle games, or are more outcome-oriented tools like app store end cards a better choice? Knowing the answers to these questions will help advertisers execute successful campaigns.

This report offers actionable insights that help marketers align creatives with audience preferences for better ad performance. We organized our findings by game category. They can be read in full or used by section for category-specific marketing.

Vungle Creative Labs has over a decade of experience developing mobile ad campaigns that drive results for game advertisers. To learn more about how they can drive success for your portfolio, get in touch with our team.

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Methodology

Data Analysis

Vungle analyzed 3.7 billion ad impressions delivered via the Vungle advertising platform. To establish benchmarks for creative performance, Vungle uses a Power Index (PI) to represent the average efficacy of a given format and/or end card type. Each creative element or format pairing scores from 1 to 100, with 100 representing the highest-performing version of that unique element. Impressions that did not have a significant PI score — 0 or lower — were filtered out when combining variables. The content of the creatives was not a variable included as part of this analysis.

Genre Grouping

Campaigns included in this analysis were grouped into 1 of 5 mobile game genres. This is the same categorical taxonomy used by the Vungle advertising platform. The genre definitions are listed to the right:

Genre Definitions

Hyper-Casual	Free-to-play, ad-monetized games that emphasize simple mechanics, minimalist interfaces, and bite-sized gameplay loops
RPG	Story-driven games where players assume the role of unique characters in a fictional setting
Puzzle	A broad genre of games that highlight matching, problem-solving, and pattern recognition skills
Strategy	Games where players apply strategic thinking and careful planning, often in a world-building setting, to achieve a victory condition
Social Casino	Gambling-like games, such as roulette or blackjack, that can be played alone or with friends online using a virtual currency

End Card Types

The term 'end cards' refers to Vungle's unique rich media elements delivered after video ad playback. Each type provides a different user experience.

End Card Definitions

|	
Playable	Recreates a sample of gameplay for players to experience before the install
Looping Video	Continuously replays a video segment
Interactive End Card	Adds a level of engagement using interactive rich media when a video ad is complete
Video End	Includes video footage on the end card
Standard End Card	Features a static image and a call-to-action
App Store End Card	Automatically redirects players to the app store front page
Immersive End Card	Presents video or extended reality features that invite players to engage with the ad instead of interacting passively

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Hyper-Casual

The hyper-casual business model attracts players who want straightforward, easy-to-grasp mechanics, and bite-sized entertainment. Fans of the genre are constantly on the lookout for new and exciting experiences they can enjoy in transit or during short breaks. For these players, video ads highlighting a brief snippet of the larger experience are the most popular creative format.

Full-screen video ads are the best performing creative, especially when paired with a follow-up video end card. To maximize their impact, data suggests that ads should not last longer than 40 seconds.
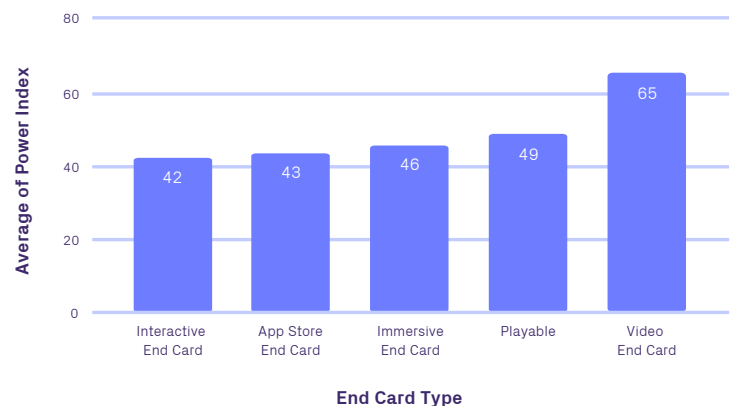
Optimal Video Length	Optimal End Card
37s	**Video End Card**

Hyper-Casual - Video Length vs Performance Score
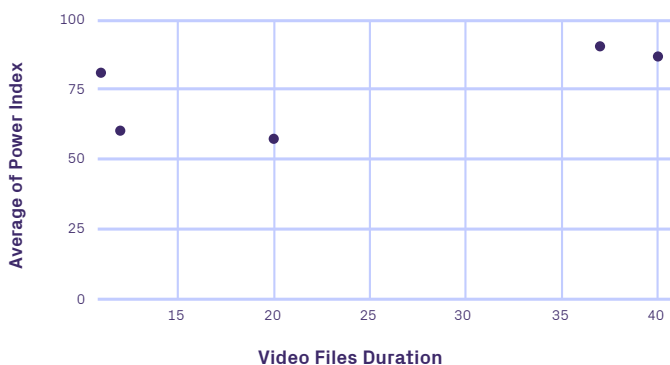
Hyper-Casual - End Card Types by Performance

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RPG

RPGs are an excellent example of how marketers drive value by pairing the right videos with the right audience. Long-form ads that explore specific game mechanics capture the attention of audiences who are eager to dive into detail-rich experiences. Looping video end cards are an ideal way to highlight key aesthetic elements of each game. They also serve as a jumping-off point for players looking to lose themselves in a new, exciting world.

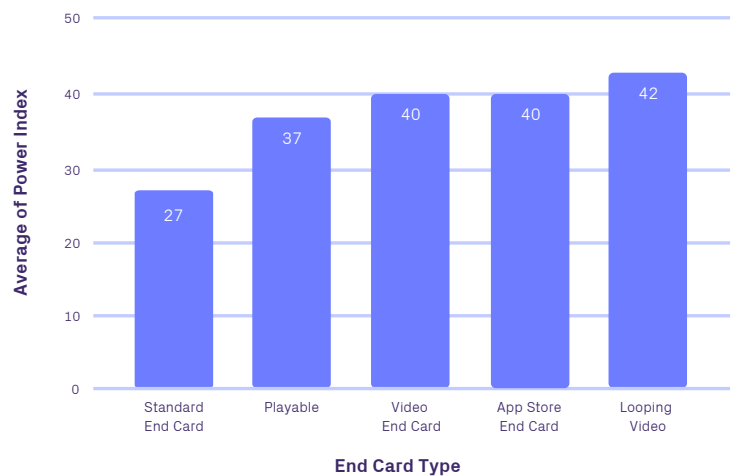## Optimal Video Length

46s

RPG - Video Length vs Performance Score
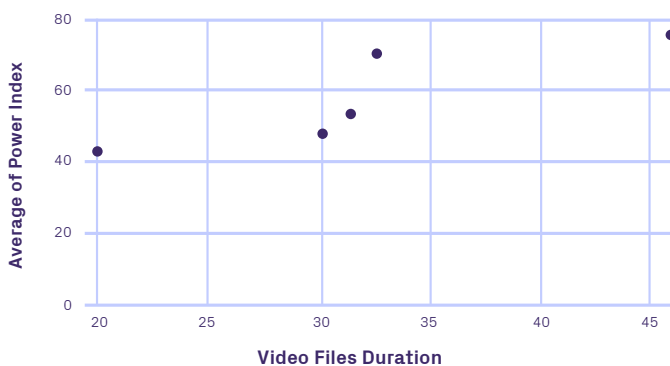
Optimal End Card

Looping Video

RPG - End Card Types by Performance

Mobile Game Video Ads Analysis: Optimal Video Lengths and End Cards

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Strategy

Strategy fans are a highly receptive audience. All end cards within this study scored at least a 75 or higher on Vungle's Power Index. In other words, video ads that play for 20 seconds can perform just as well as those lasting 40 seconds. But the strategy game ads that perform the best appear to be 30-35 second videos that transition to the storefront page.
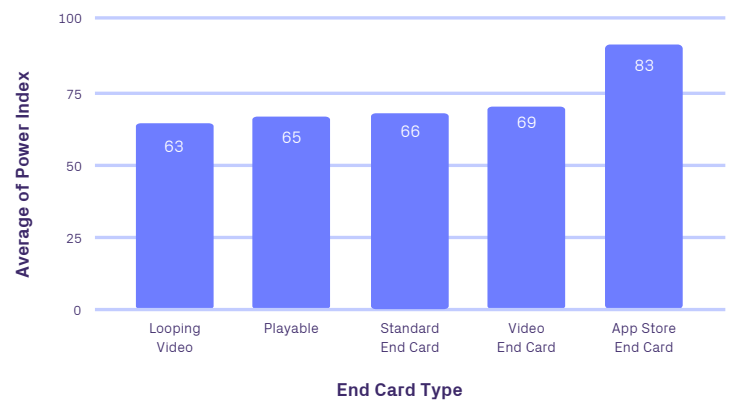
Optimal Video Length

33s

Strategy - Video Length vs Performance Score
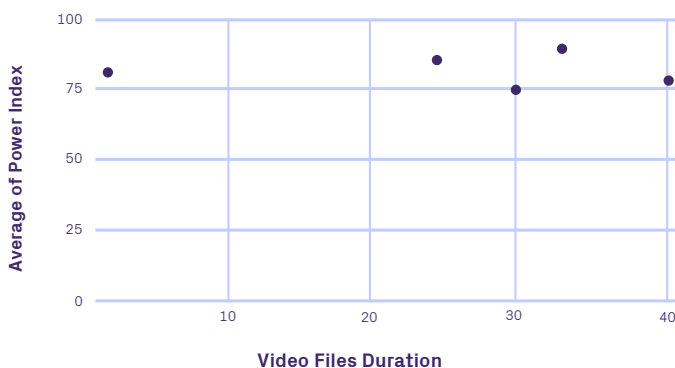
Optimal End Card

App Store End Card

Strategy - End Card Types by Performance
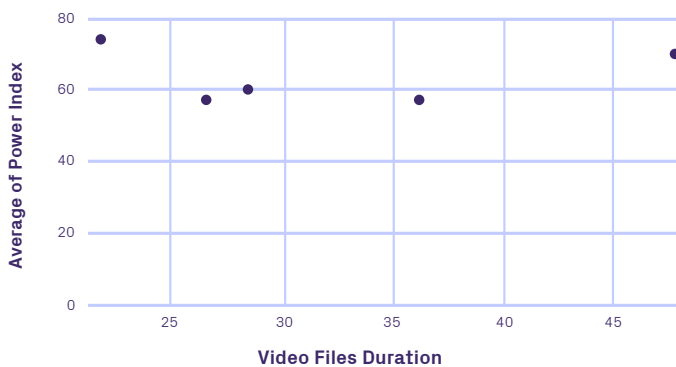
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Puzzle

Puzzle game marketers see success with various end card types and video lengths — this is likely due to the category's mass appeal. Video ads that showcase puzzle mechanics are generally effective. Short videos that transition to app store end cards perform the best. Marketers should note the relatively high delta between end card performance — video formats ranked nearly 20 points lower than app store end cards, suggesting they are not an ideal fit for the genre.

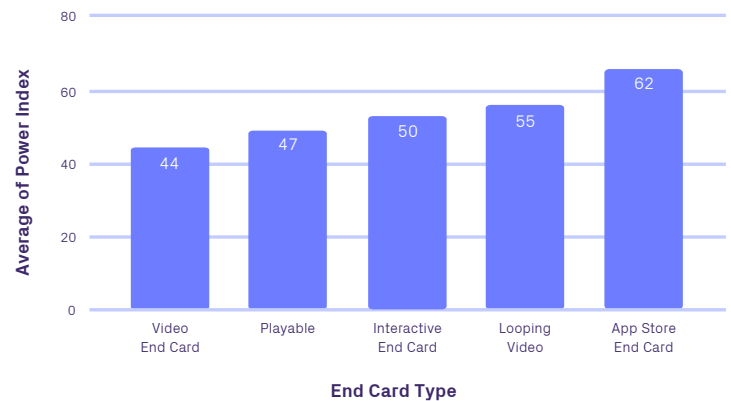| Optimal Video Length	Optimal End Card
22s	**App Store End Card**

Puzzle - Video Length vs Performance Score

Puzzle - End Card Types by Performance

Mobile Game Video Ads Analysis: Optimal Video Lengths and End Cards
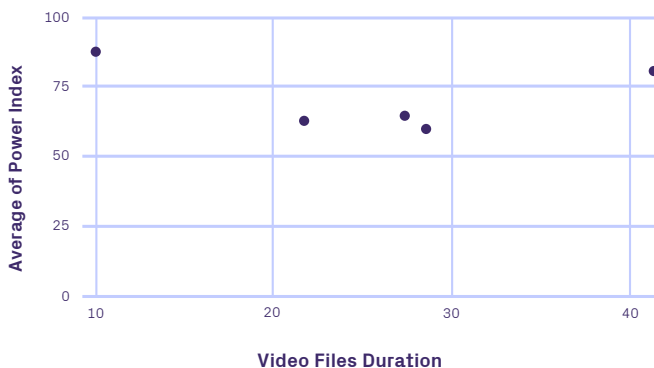
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Social Casino

Social casino players enjoy a compelling, well-designed ad as much as any other player, but what they value most is saving time. This category has the highest ad length to performance ratio of any gaming app category — 10 seconds of footage drives an 87 Power Index score on average. Outside of duration, social casino players tend to overlook interactive end cards and playables. They respond to full-screen videos that showcase gameplay and standard, to-the-point end cards.

Optimal Video Length	Optimal End Card
10s	**Standard End Card**

Social Casino - End Card Types by Performance

Average of Power Index vs. Video Files Duration (scatter plot)

Social Casino - End Card Types by Performance

End Card Type	Average of Power Index
Interactive End Card	39
Looping Video	44
Playable	49
App Store End Card	52
Standard End Card	56

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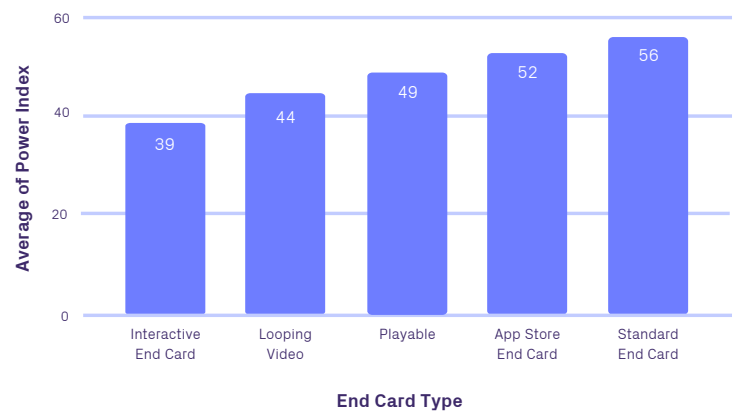
Conclusion

The right creative choices can supercharge campaign performance. For mobile game marketers, the challenge is finding the right balance for your target audience.

These insights are excellent starting points, but executing them effectively requires the right creative partner. Vungle Creative Labs is an award-winning studio with over a decade of experience creating mobile ad campaigns that help world-class game studios connect with their ideal target audience. Our Lab is home to a multidisciplinary team of experts who blend creative, technology, and data insights to produce compelling mobile experiences. To learn more about how Vungle can help you make the most of the discoveries in this report, visit our website and get in touch.

Get in touch!

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ABOUT LIFTOFF

Liftoff is a complete mobile app marketing platform that helps companies acquire and retain high-quality mobile app users at scale. Liftoff uses prediction intelligence and unbiased machine learning to find engaged users at scale for mobile app marketers, creative testing to deliver the most engaging ad experience, and a unique pricing model to optimize for LTV goals. Liftoff is proud to be a long-term partner to leading brand advertisers and app publishers since 2012. Headquartered in Redwood City, Liftoff has a global presence with offices in New York, San Francisco, Seattle, Berlin, London, Paris, Singapore, Seoul, and Tokyo.

ABOUT VUNGLE

Vungle is the trusted guide for growth and engagement, transforming how people discover and experience apps. Mobile app developers partner with Vungle to monetize through innovative in-app ad experiences that are inspired by insight and crafted with creativity.

Advertisers worldwide depend on Vungle to acquire high-value users through premium ad experiences designed by Vungle Creative Labs, the company's multidisciplinary team of creatives, technologists, and data scientists, and programmatically optimized for maximum return on ad spend by AlgoLift's machine learning engine.

Vungle's data-optimized ads run on over 1 billion unique devices to drive engagement and increase returns for publishers and advertisers ranging from indie studios to powerhouse brands, including Rovio, Pandora, and Microsoft. The company is headquartered in San Francisco and has offices around the world in Los Angeles, London, Berlin, Beijing, Tokyo, Seoul, and Singapore.

For more information, visit **www.vungle.com** or follow the company on **LinkedIn**

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