## I. Understanding App Development Costs: A Breakdown

Let’s break down the different stages involved in a mobile app development project. This way we’ll get a good understanding of how app development costs are formed.

**1. Discovery**

This phase is for understanding the purpose of the app: how it’s used for engaging its users, and what are the business needs of the app. It determines the overall direction and features required. The phase can involve tasks like market research and user research. This phase typically costs from 1 000 to 10 000 dollars. ([Business of Apps](https://www.businessofapps.com/app-developers/research/app-development-cost/), [Mobiversal](https://blog.mobiversal.com/app-development-cost-breakdown.html))

**2. App Design (UI and UX)**

User experience (UX) and user interface (UI) design are critical for creating an engaging and intuitive app.

In this phase, specifications and requirements for the app are defined. It includes creating wireframes, mockups, and user flows, as well as finalizing the app's design elements and user experience. Designs from this stage inform the development process and ensure a cohesive vision.

The cost of this stage can vary largely depending on the approach and the app: typical costs are between 5 000 and 55 000 dollars.

**3. Mobile App Development & Infrastructure**

This stage involves the actual coding or building of the app. Developers bring the design and functionality to life, implementing features, integrating APIs and databases, and ensuring seamless performance across different devices and platforms.

The infrastructure of the app is also set up at this stage, including the server, control panel and ensuring scalability to the desired number of users.

This phase typically costs something between 2 000 and 60 000 dollars.

**4. App Testing and Quality Assurance**

Before launching the app, the app needs to be tested. This includes functional testing, usability testing, performance testing, and bug fixing.

Testing ensures that the app is stable, reliable, and meets the desired standards of quality.

This stage typically costs 5 000 dollars or less.

**5. Publishing to App Store and Google Play**

Once the app is ready, it needs to be submitted to app stores for distribution. Each platform, Apple App Store and Google Play Store, has its own set of guidelines and review processes.

The review process typically takes about a week or less, but the duration can vary.

App publishing involves creating app store listings, providing app descriptions, screenshots, and promotional materials.

This stage isn’t as significant in costs as the others: the fees are a one-time 25 dollar cost for Google Play Store and a yearly subscription of 99 dollars for Apple’s App Store.

### Ongoing maintenance and updates

While the initial development phase is crucial, ongoing maintenance and updates are equally important to keep the app running smoothly and meeting user expectations.

It is usually suggested that app maintenance can cost 15-20% of the total development cost on a yearly basis. However, the maintenance cost of the app during its first year after launch can hike up to 50% of the initial app development cost.

Maintenance costs that require experts – customer support, updates, bug fixes – can be included in the initial pricing of app development, have a fixed monthly add-on fee, or they can be charged on a price per hour basis.

## II. Factors influencing app development costs

Now you know what stages there are in the app development process – and what costs can be involved in them. There’s a lot of variance between app development costs. What are the factors that determine the cost of the app exactly?

Development method: Traditional Mobile App Development vs. No-Code vs. Low Code

When it comes to app development, there are different approaches to consider. Custom development, coding, or traditional mobile app development – whatever you call it – is not the only option anymore.

Each method has its own advantages and considerations in terms of time, cost, and technical expertise required.

Let’s look into each one:

#### ****Traditional Mobile App Development - Coding****

Traditional app development involves writing code from scratch using programming languages.

**Costs:** Demands more time and resources due to the extensive coding, testing, and debugging involved. This increases costs as more hours are required for each stage.

**Time to market:** Takes longer due to the manual coding process.

**Customization:** Offers maximum flexibility and customization but requires skilled developers with expertise in the chosen programming language.

**Technologies and Languages:** Allows developers to select from a wide range of technologies and programming languages based on project requirements.

#### ****No-Code Development****

[No-code app development platforms like Choicely](https://www.choicely.com/app-builder) have gained popularity in recent years as they enable the creation of functional apps without the need for extensive coding knowledge.

**Costs:** [No-code development](https://www.choicely.com/blog/no-code-mobile-app-development) eliminates the need for dedicated developers, which can significantly reduce costs.

**Time to market:** No-code app builders provide pre-built components and visual interfaces that allow users to create apps by simply dragging and dropping elements. This accelerates the development process, reducing time to market.

**Customization:** Some of the no code app builders have limitations when it comes to complex functionalities or highly customized features. It's important to evaluate the platform's capabilities and ensure it aligns with the specific requirements of your app. Choicely supports custom elements created on top of no code apps. With no code, individuals without extensive coding knowledge can create apps. This democratizes app development, making it accessible to a wider audience.

**Technologies:** Solutions might only cater to one technology, or programming language. [Choicely app builder](https://www.choicely.com/app-builder) produces native iOS and Android apps and supports multiple languages. The platform doesn't require developers to learn a new one as the most common languages are covered. Still, native languages are the preferred and the most straightforward languages to be implemented with Choicely.

#### ****Low-Code Development****

Low-code development lies between traditional coding and no-code development. It streamlines the development process by providing visual interfaces for app creation, combined with some level of coding flexibility. Here are a few key considerations:

**Costs**: Because of the streamlined of the app development process, apps built with low code solutions are more affordable than custom coded apps.

**Time to market:** Low-code platforms simplify the development process and the time to market typically sits somewhere between custom coding and no code development.

**Customization:** Complex app requirements may require custom coding and additional technical expertise.

**Technologies:** The range of technologies and devices supported by low-code platforms may vary. It's essential to evaluate platform compatibility with desired features and target platforms (iOS, Android, or cross-platform).

 Considering these different development methods helps you make an informed decision based on your project requirements, available resources, and desired cost and timeframes.