From:	Eric Friedman (███████████)
To:	David Neumann (███████████)
CC:	
BCC:	
Subject:	Re: Ads in the AppStore
Attachments:	
Sent:	03/01/2015 09:25:22 PM 0000 (GMT)

The devs would love it. The problem is that Tim is telling the world that we make great products without monetizing users. Ads would be weirdly at odds with that. I do think that search and explore are much better discovery tools. Also popularity alone is a stupid ranking function for the App Store. It's fine for music (though fuse is about to unleash a torrent of fakery there too).

But in the App Store I don't only want to know what is popular. I want apps that are high quality, well looked after by engaged developers, and retained (because useful) by other users. Being popular within a category is a nice to have and should mostly correlate with the other values I described.

To this end, Luke has build a quality predictive model that does as well as our human editorial team in finding good apps. We are getting retention signal from logging check available software update traffic. We have image similarity and binary similarity tools to find duplicative and template apps. And we have a 40+ feature model for developer reputation. I think that ALL of our ranking functions - charts, recommendations, search, explore - should stack these models as an ensemble. This way the only way to game the system is to be an engaged developer who makes a useful, high quality app that lots of real devices keep around. Win!

On Mar 1, 2015, at 12:19 PM, David Neumann < ███████████ > wrote:

> I think we need a "Thoughts on AppStore Discovery" essay on   apple.com
> Where we spell out the challenge and why ads among other changes make sense.
> And then flip on the ads somewhere, presumably just search while taking links to Top This & That off of the main grouping pages, consigning them to a totally separate area
>
> d
>
>> On Mar 1, 2015, at 8:44 AM, Eric Friedman < ███████████ > wrote:
>>
>> Yes, the ability to pay for promotion would be awesome. We've floated it several times as the way to end chart gaming: if people are willing to pay "marketing companies" (bot nets) to gain position, why don't we just let them pay us to gain position?
>>
>> No one is willing to take that on, however. I suppose it would get pretty cheesy, but at least it would be transparently cheesy.
>>
>> I've actually managed to convince myself that our App Store charts aren't really a discovery tool at all. Yes, they do drive some conversions, but that is (I suspect and haven't verified) mostly the bots and/or humans responding to incentives from promotional companies. Think about it: a chart that puts YouTube and Flight Pilot Simulator 3D in the same list isn't useful to a human shopper. Sure, you might buy both, but that decision won't be motivated by their popularity **relative to one another** .
>>
>> No, I think the primary function of the charts is "inside baseball." They serve as a "who's on top?" list for developers so that they know which mechanical rabbit to pursue in the market race. Investors too watch the charts — one of the most

frantic escalations we got came last year when Seb made an unexpected change to the Paid chart algorithm and Big Fish Casino got penalized. They were in a tizzy because it was messing with their ability to raise another funding round. That's not a discovery engine for consumers.

> On Feb 28, 2015, at 11:26 PM, David Neumann < ████████ > wrote:
>
> Boy, I sure wish we could do this…
> Google now allowing ads in Google Play
>
> http://android-developers.blogspot.com/2015/02/a-new-way-to-promote-your-app-on-google.html
>
> -dave

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Eric Friedman
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