How to Measure Churn to Improve Your Mobile App UX

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The biggest problem for today's mobile app developers is that users don't use them for long. Research tells us that a quarter of users leave after one use, and four out of five leave after just three days.

For companies looking to make a living through the use of mobile technology, that's a bitter pill to swallow.

People abandon apps so quickly for countless reasons. But despite the grim figures, it turns out you can do quite a lot to prevent losing your users. You just need to pay attention and track the right details and metrics.

Enter the single most important mobile app key performance indicator (KPI) you absolutely need to measure: churn rate. Notably, more than 75% of users on average fail to return (churn) the day after first use.

Todd Grennan, senior content producer at Appboy, [emphasizes that](),

> *"Understanding your app's retention rate and how it stacks up to the benchmark rates seen in your vertical and across the larger mobile ecosystem is an essential part of figuring out your customer engagement and retention strategy."*

But measuring "churn rate" is not a simple checkbox metric, as it can be influenced by multiple factors within an app's user experience.

Below, I'll discuss which metrics you need to track and how, in order to improve your mobile app UX.

Your guide for measuring churn in your mobile app

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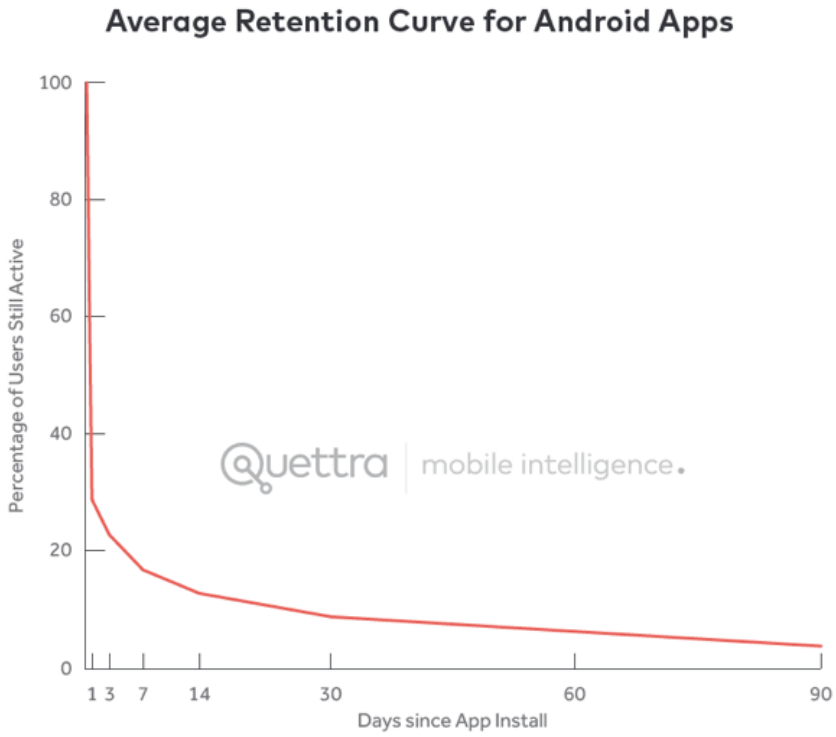


*The shocking truth about app abandonment [Source: **Quettra**]*

There are countless reasons behind increased churn rates, many of which can be tracked individually. In order to get a bird's eye view of your app's behavior in the wild, you need to pay attention to a handful of second-tier KPIs that are notably associated with churn. We'll discuss all of them individually below.

Using **quantitative analytics tools** to track these second-tier KPIs will steer you in the right direction towards the low churn zone.

To lower your churn rate, you should start by setting high standards for your app in these seven areas:

1. App crash rate

Most major apps have a less than 1% crash rate, for less than 1% of users. In other words, if 100 users used your

app 100 times, you should strive towards having your app crash just once, for just one user.

2. Unresponsive gestures

Unresponsive gestures are a hugely underrated and neglected issue. Don't fall for this trap. Be vigilant and eliminate them ASAP. To learn more, here's a piece that explains the problem of unresponsive gestures.

3. Load times

Users will abandon apps that take more than four seconds to load. A few years back, this was six seconds, which means users' expectations are increasing, and standards are improving. Apteligent's Rob Kwok advocates even shorter load times: "To delight your users, make sure your app loads in less than the industry average of 2.0 seconds, and has a crash rate of less than 0.25 percent."

4. Mobile checkout screen conversion rates

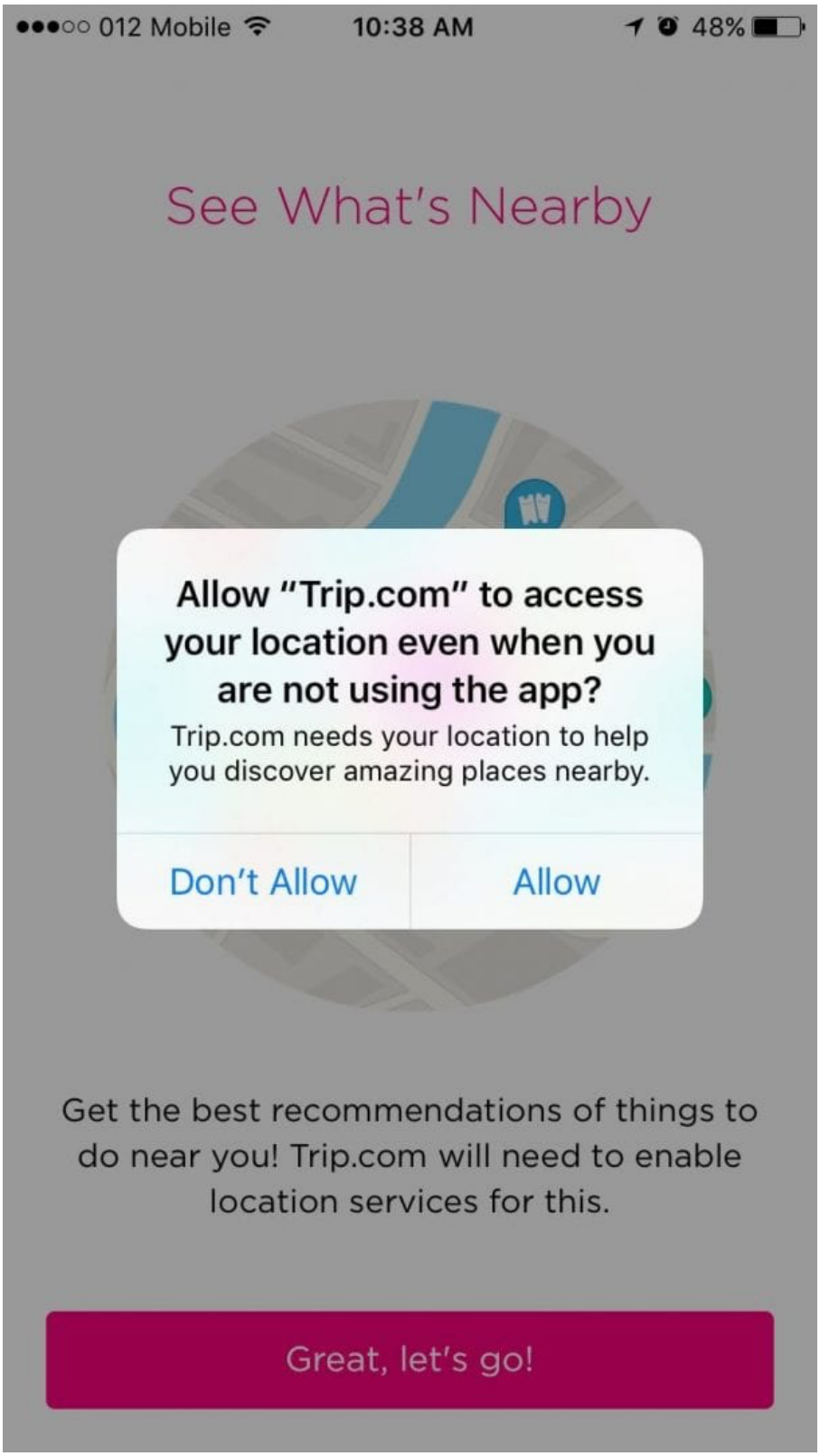
The vast majority of people quit an app at the mobile checkout screen. Reasons may vary, and you need to tackle all of them to improve your checkout screen usability. As one of the screens most connected with user sentiment, it is one of the best places to reduce churn.

5. Login form usability

Your login screen is one of the first impressions your users have of your app. Login walls are a major turnoff for users. Avoid them like the plague. Literally everyone and their grandma are against the login wall.

6. Ad and popup UX

Poorly done **mobile pop-ups** are the devil and can completely ruin your app. Always—absolutely always—make sure the pop-up or ad contributes to the app's overall user experience by adding value and being contextual.



*Here's an example of a useful, contextually relevant location permission pop-up from **Trip.com**'s app*

7. Search function performance

On mobile, a flawed search experience can be a pain in the neck. With a few tweaks, however, **it doesn't have to be**. Go for relevant defaults, and offer recent searches, personalization, and filters.

Awesome App City straight ahead

Quantitative analytics will only steer you in the direction of Awesome App City. You still need to put the pedal to the metal to get there, and in order to do that, you'll need qualitative analytics.

Why does your app crash more than it should? Why does it take so long to load? And how will you know if your app's interface is intuitive or not? Or if it's responsive at all? How do you get these answers without going through mountains of data?

The answer to these questions can only be provided by qualitative analytics tools. With tools such as user session recordings and touch heatmaps, app professionals don't have to blindly make changes to their app in hopes that they'll solve exceptionally high churn rates.

By watching real-time user sessions, app pros can see exactly how single users interact with their app, if the app loads too long, if it crashes too frequently (and what users were doing at the time of the crash), or if users decide to quit as soon as they are met with the dreaded login wall.

Touch heatmaps, on an aggregate user level, can help app pros spot unintuitive or unresponsive gestures and screen

usability issues. This enables them to offer new versions of your app with a better-suited user experience.

Addressing churn issues can help your app stand out

In a world with 2.2 million iOS apps and 2.8 million Android apps, the battle for attention has never been more fierce.

Apps with lower churn rates are the victors of that battle, which is why that KPI needs to be the center of attention for every app pro. Churn itself can be addressed through a wide variety of KPIs, such as app crashes, load times, or unresponsive gestures. Consequently, reducing churn means paying attention to many aspects of the app's usability.

When all is said and done, monitoring these KPIs and acting on them will result in an app that offers a stellar user experience. With such an awesome app, the process comes full circle and churn rates will eventually go down.

Which tools are you using to track these essential KPIs? Which are your favorite? We would love to hear your thoughts below.