

Best Practices for User Acceptance Testing and Beta Testing

An **Amazon Appstore** eBook

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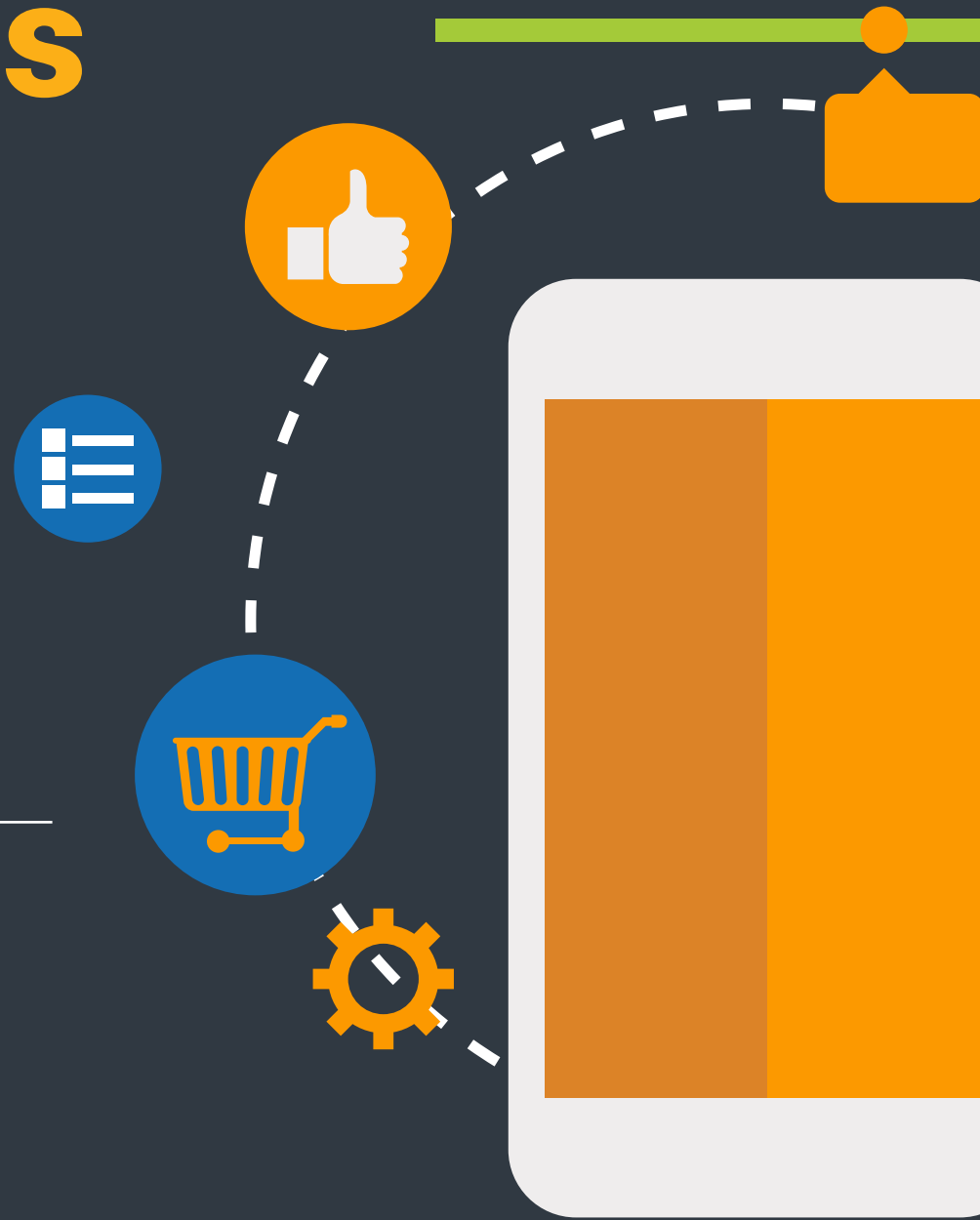


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This eBook is for you if:

Your mobile app is ready to launch.

Your mobile app is already in market,
but you want to make it even better.



1

Coming to a Screen Near You

The Final Stretch

At last, you are in the home stretch. Your prototype test almost feels like ancient history. You have performed more unit and functional tests than you can count. And it was all worth it.

Your constant testing validated your original idea, confirmed your app functions as expected, and resulted in an end product you are sure will delight all of your new users.

However, to ensure that everything is awesome and your app is ready for launch, there is one final testing stage. It is time to put your app in the hands of actual users.

This does not mean all of them, just a small sampling; or, enough to make sure you had no blind spots in all of your previous tests. It is time for user acceptance tests and beta tests. While skipping this last stage can be tempting, we suggest that you resist the urge.



Consider this statistic: According to a **Perfecto Mobile** survey, 44 percent of app defects are uncovered by users. In addition, 26 percent of newly downloaded apps are abandoned after first use.



It turns out, mobile app users have high expectations.

This guide shares our best practices to help you exceed user expectations and safeguard against making a bad first impression that could potentially hurt your user retention.

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Meeting User Expectations

The average mobile app user:

Downloads

8.8 apps per month

but abandon two of those apps
after first use.

Common reasons users abandon an app include:



Long load times

If an app takes longer than three seconds to load, you are at risk of losing users forever.



A sub-optimal installation and launch experience

This is your first impression with a user. Have you made it simple and delightful?



Glitches

Users can forgive an occasional crash or freeze. But if these become too common, users will not think twice about moving on.



Only 15 percent
of users consider
downloading an app
with a two-star rating.



Privacy concerns

Asking for too many device permissions is a red flag to many users. Only request what is absolutely needed for a great app experience.

Furthermore, be clear about why you are requesting the permissions in the first place.



Too many hurdles

Like app permissions, requesting too much info in a sign-up or log-in screen can turn users away.



OS Fragmentation

OS Fragmentation. They really want to use your app, but if it does not sync between their many devices, they may seek out an alternative that does.



Ads

Ads do not have to be a deal-breaker for users. It depends on how disruptive they are to the user's experience.

Finally, some users just simply forget about your app. Keep in mind: they downloaded more than 100 other apps in the course of a year, after all.

Users are tough customers, and it is better to find out if there are issues with your app before you release it to the rest of the world. After all, ratings drive downloads (or drive people away from downloads in some cases).

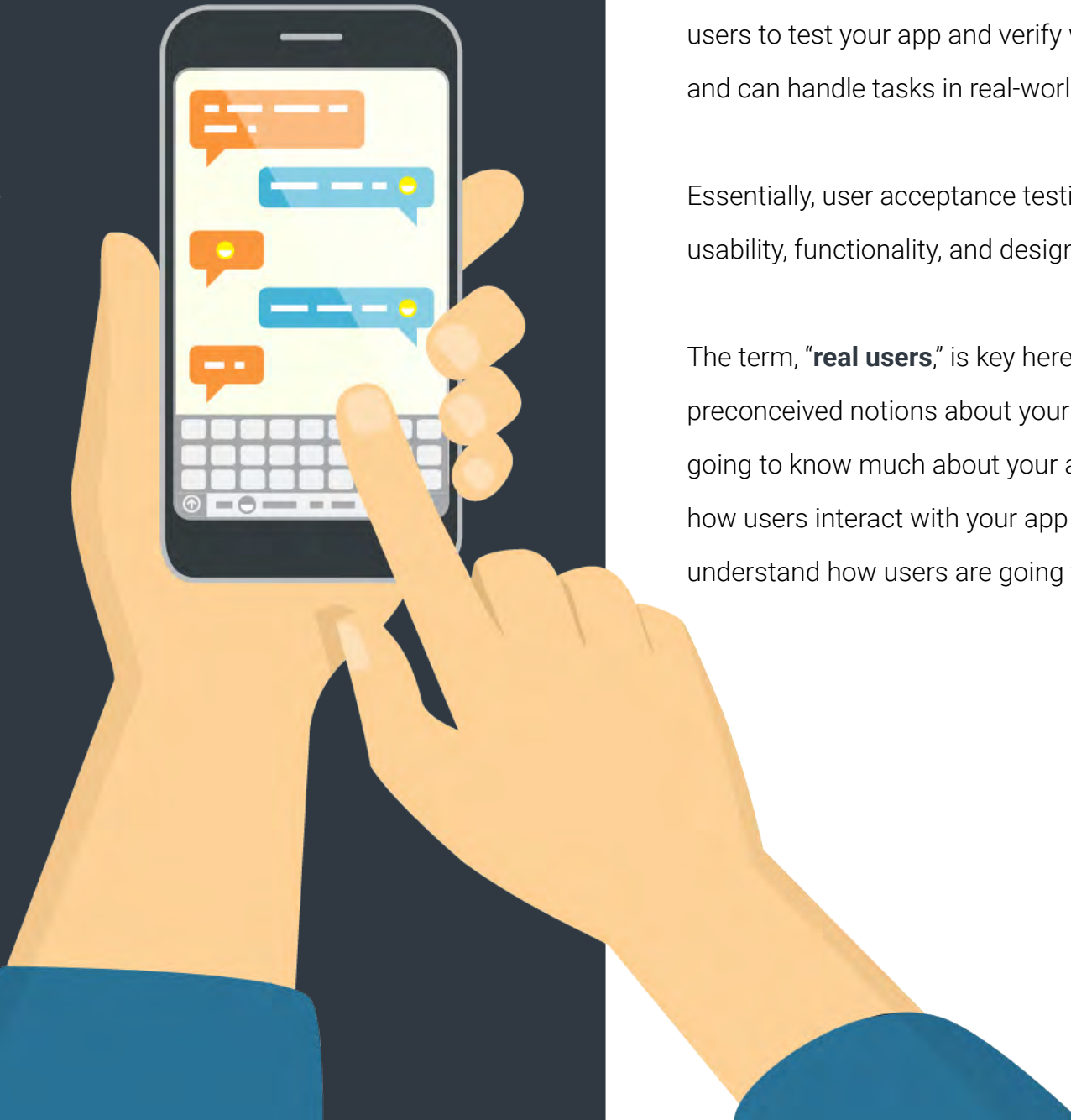
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User Acceptance Testing

User acceptance testing is an important step in the final stage of testing. It allows users to test your app and verify whether it is user-friendly, operates as expected, and can handle tasks in real-world conditions (or not).

Essentially, user acceptance testing is a process that thoroughly evaluates the usability, functionality, and design of your app by having real users try it out.

The term, “**real users**,” is key here. You want to find people who do not have preconceived notions about your app. Once your app is live, new users are not going to know much about your app beyond its app store description. Observing how users interact with your app for the first time, with no guidance, will help you understand how users are going to interact with your app in the real world.



Here are some additional tips to keep in mind:

Tests should reflect a typical session

To help your users stay on task and to make sure that your testers are providing relevant data back to you, create a series of tasks that you want your testers to complete. Not sure what to include? Start with the list of common reasons users abandon apps that we shared in the previous chapter. Also, test for the top five to 10 common uses you designed your app for in the first place.

Record the results

Put your list of tasks in a spreadsheet with additional rows to record whether or not the tester was successful, the tester's name, the OS and device, anecdotal observations, and whether anything needs to be addressed before launch.



Be a silent observer

Beyond asking users to complete certain tasks, do not guide them. You will not be able to walk all of your new users through your app or game, so you need to ensure they can navigate and complete tasks without intervention. If they cannot complete a task, this is a sign you may have some extra work to do to simplify the user experience.



Keep tests separate

Ensure that your user acceptance tests are not done in the same environment as your functional tests, or you risk overlooking usage scenarios you did not previously consider.

Follow up with a questionnaire

Observing the test will let you know how successful your test users were in completing your pre-defined test. But do you know about their overall experience? Was it enjoyable? Were they delighted?

Sample questions could include:

- ◆ What do you like best about the app?
- ◆ What was most frustrating about the app?
- ◆ Overall, how easy do you find this app to use?
- ◆ Would you recommend this app to a friend?
- ◆ How would you rate this app from 0-10?

Motivate your testers

Make testing worthwhile for your testers. Let them know you appreciate their time. In some cases, the incentives given to testers are the product itself. Or, consider giving your testers gift cards to use for any in-app purchases. These small, but meaningful, gestures do not cost a lot and help build a group of loyal fans before your app is even live.



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Beta Testing

Beta testing is much like user acceptance testing, however with far less structure. Rather than observing your tester's app interactions, you provide your app to a limited group of users and request their feedback.

According to the Instabug Blog, approximately **one of out of each five testers** you have is going to test your app. For example, if you have 1,000 testers, you should expect that approximately 200 of them are going to offer you valuable feedback. In most cases, you should aim for about 100-300 testers to make sure your app is thoroughly tested.

Selecting the right best testers

It is important to get the right beta testers as it impacts the quality and the outcome of this testing stage significantly. Split your intended testers into different groups to ensure your app receives accurate feedback and bug reports.

You can also further segment your testers based on a marketing beta and a technical beta. Marketing betas are the versions preceding the actual launch of the app intended for your brand's influencers or the media. With this group, you should test how the app is perceived regarding design and user interface. On the other hand, the technical beta testers' goal will be to find any bugs and provide constructive feedback.

Always define the goals you want to reach and communicate it to your various groups of beta testers to let them know their opinions and feedback are what help you determine what is (and what is not) working.

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Monitor and Optimize

Testing does not stop once your app is launched and installed on user's devices. Set up your app for ongoing testing with analytics to monitor and track user's activity, interactions, and crash logs. Keep a close eye on your user reviews and ratings.

If reviewers uncover bugs or glitches, or simply provide feedback on their overall experience with your app, address them promptly and let them know that their feedback has been received.





Conclusion:

Understand Your Customer's Needs

App testing is a continuous process, from idea to tangible product, and beyond. Along the way, you will acquire mountains of feedback about your app. Humbly accept all feedback, but do not feel obligated to address everything. Some feedback is critical to address (for example, long load times and privacy concerns), but others will just be a distraction from your original vision.

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Sources

1) According to a Perfecto Mobile survey, 44 percent of app defects are uncovered by users.

<https://www.perfectomobile.com/>

(Perfecto Mobile)

2) The average mobile app user downloads 8.8 apps per month...

<http://www.businessinsider.com/app-store-marketing-strategies-and-stats-2015-1>

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3) ... but abandon two of those apps after first use.

<https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/articles/mobile-app-marketing-insights.html>

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4) According to the Instabug Blog, approximately one of out of each five testers you have is going to test your app.

<http://blog.instabug.com/2015/07/the-beginners-guide-for-beta-testing-your-app/>

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