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Foreword

The internet is bombarded daily with new apps (app is the short term for application) that are geared towards new technology, new software systems, new process systems and new marketing tools. They are all focused on winning market share with their new apps. This focus is driven by one main objective which is to make money or to make even more money.



Apps Army

The New Breed Of Super App Marketers

Chapter 1:

The Attributes Of A Killer App

Synopsis

The search for a killer app is an on-going process. A killer app is one that is accepted by most as the best in the market at that point of time.



List Of Attributes Of A Killer App

Facebook, Twitter, Google, Skype are some of the killer apps that took off from the beginning they were launched. They all have hundreds of millions of registered users logged on daily. With this kind of captive audience, their websites become marketers dream domains. That is why their main income is from advertising space on their websites.

The following is a list of attributes that will benefit your app:

Most popular – widely accepted by everyone. Easy to use and configure. They are the chosen app by virtue of design, uniqueness and are usually free to encourage sign-ups.

No fees – sign-up or monthly. This is the only way to generate a user database for any new app. If there is any fee imposed, the failure rate of any new app is more than 99%. Most users can get free stuff on the internet so charging a fee would tantamount to suicide by accident. These apps do not sell any product on their website. Their objective is to accumulate as much registered users as they can. When they have a huge user base, they can then start selling advertising space on their website.

Use of minimum resources – the apps are usually simple and seldom use ‘real-time’ features except for video conferencing. This makes the apps easy to browse through.

Chapter 2:

Analyze Your Competition

Synopsis

In any business industry, it is one of the planning stones to study and analyze your competitor's products or business models. This analysis is important as it will dictate how you will position your own product or app against your competitor. It would be fool hardy to create an app that is similar to Skype and the app does not have a differential factor that is unique from Skype yet popular with users.



The Importance Of Analysis

The analysis is important as it will give you an insight into what you are up against. You have to analyze the same things about your own product or app as you do with your competitor.

You have to know what the app can do and what it cannot do. This is a simple comparison of your competitor against other apps in the market. There should be a rating checklist on features, content, design, functionality, user friendliness etc. This comparison will also tell you what you are lacking and need to improve on. It will also tell you that you may need to add new features that are popular and unique to others.

You have to rate it against your own and those in the market. This rating will tell you where you are against your competitor and what you need to do further to succeed.

You have to see how many USPs (unique selling points) they have and compare with your own and others in the market.

You have to compare against them based on design, functionality, user friendliness, robustness and web content and features. It is in these areas that most of your attention should be focused on as there may be a lot of re-modeling and designing to do to stand out from the crowd of competitors. It is time consuming but necessary.

Chapter 3:

Know Your Targeted Customers

Synopsis

For any business to succeed, all marketing efforts must be geared towards the right target audience. That is to say that if you wanted to sell toys, then your marketing campaign is aimed at children and not adults. It is the children that will create the demand when they see what they want and ask their parents for it. This can be further segmented to their age group.



Know Your Market

The previous example can also be applied to further examples. If you plan to sell an electric train set, then the target age group would probably be from 6 to 12 years old. And if you were planning to sell remote controlled airplanes then your target age group would be from 8 to 21 years old depending on the airplane models.

Even beauty magazines have their segmented target groups. There are some magazines that are targeted to female teenagers, while others are targeted to women 21 years and above. The contents of the magazine for teenagers will differ greatly from others as they are more in tune with what teenagers want, what they like doing, what's new for their age group and anything else that would interest a teenager. Magazines that target the older age group would be more towards maintaining health and well-being as well as anything that will help in their youthful image and personality.

In the case of apps, it is best to create one that caters to the general public. This is where you can build on a user database if your app is appealing and exciting to the users. Your app should also lean towards the younger generation as it is statistically proven that young people spend more time on the internet than any other group. They spend time chatting, browsing the web, updating their personal profile etc. So the biggest age group found on the internet would be teenagers from 12 to 21 years old.

Chapter 4:

Pricing Your App The Right Way

Synopsis

If your app has a distinct feature to perform a distinct function not found in the market then it would be safe to say that you have a saleable product. For example, Norton antivirus sells their product online. This app has a function to assist users threatened by possible virus attacks. Users will buy if they think that it will save them money by way of safe-guarding their computers and laptops.



Trial Periods Make Sales

On the other hand, there are also many other antivirus products in the market. So Norton's antivirus has to be either cheaper or have additional features not found on other competitor's products. Bear in mind, there are antivirus programs that are free on the internet. So one you have to make a choice after studying these products to see which one is best suited for your own use.

The free apps come with a trial period or just free downloads. The ones with free trial period give the user a chance to test the product. By testing the product, they will be convinced of its usefulness. This trial period is a good marketing tool as most users do not want to change after trying out the product unless they think that it does not satisfy their requirements. With free downloads, the apps are usually basic in nature and performs basic functions. These free downloads usually come with upgrades that have many additional features. These upgrades come with a price. If users feel that the additional features will further enhance their performance then they will buy. This method of marketing is recommended as most users will want to try out the app before deciding to either stay with the basic or buy the upgrade. When you get a user to try your product, you have achieved half the sale. Even if they do not buy but recommend to their friends, you gain on registered users. Thus increasing user base and making your website more beneficial for advertisement.

Chapter 5:

Launching Strategies For Your App

Synopsis

The creation of any app is from an idea. This idea is usually customer driven. For any app to work properly, there are a few things to take into account. You have to create a list of features that you think users will like.



Application Definition Statement

This list is called the Application Definition Statement. This statement is the declaration of an app's main purpose and its target audience. This statement includes the following:

1 List of all features users might like – come up with a list of potential features that you think users might like. For example, if it is for a game, the features would probably be single player, multiple player, online game, off line game, buy credit, sell credit, settings, create new game, save game, join game, exit game and others.

2 Who are the users – what age group, what do they look for in the features. Based on the above features, your users will be aged from 10 years old to 25 years old. The design and graphics should be exciting and futuristic.

3 Filter the statement through target definition – this will enable you to reduce your original list to a few features that seem suitable based on your target definition. With this new revised list you can now start to design and structure your apps accordingly. The use of third party tools is common for graphic enhancement. Some of these tools are free and some come with a fee.

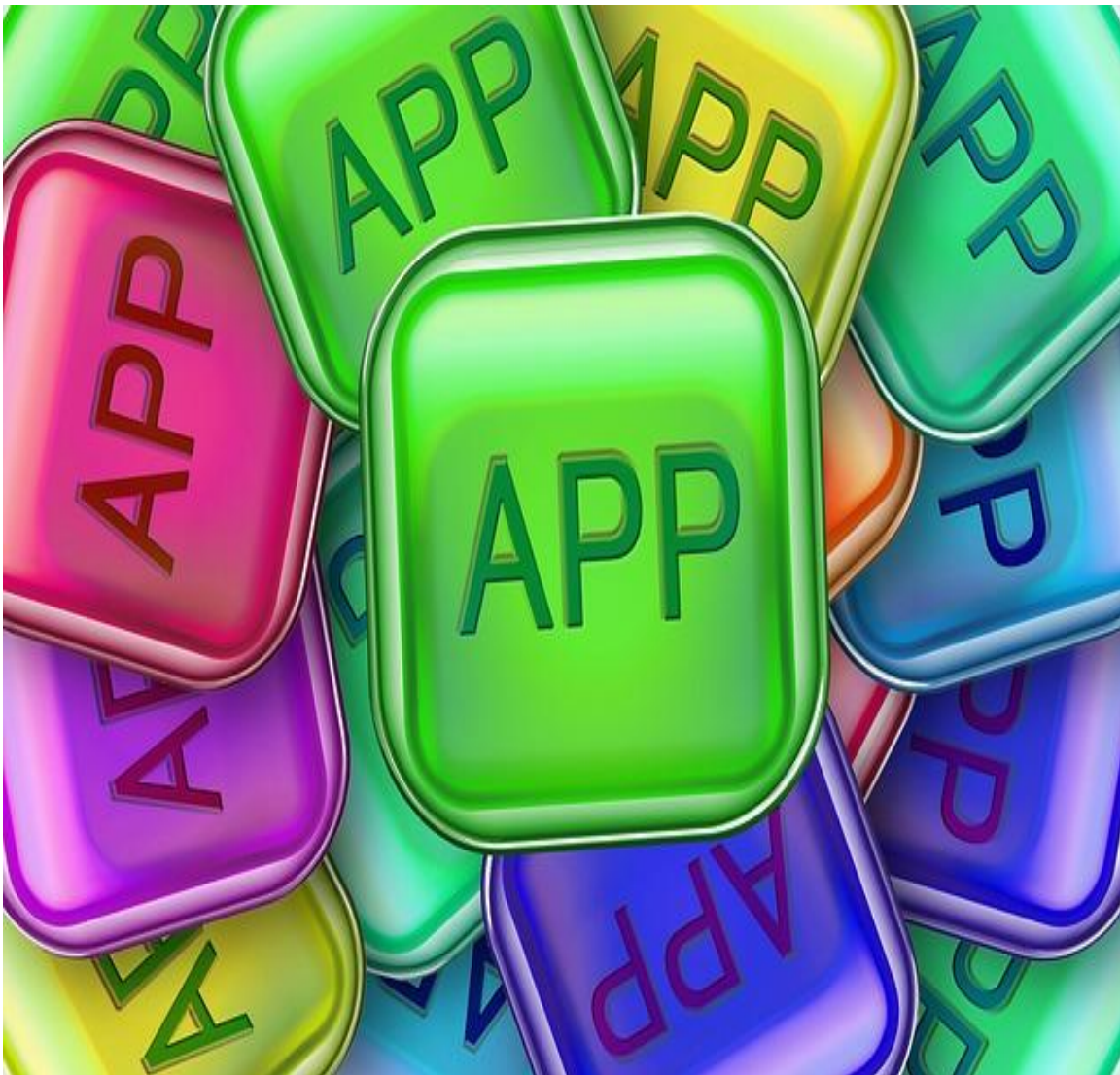
4 Process design cycle – repeat steps 1 to 3 after completing step 3 and determine if there is a need for further features, controls and terminology based on the target definition. After several cycles, you can be sure that your app is now properly designed for the intended target audience who can appreciate it.

Chapter 6:

Marketing Your App Via Internet And Social Media

Synopsis

For any app to succeed, you have to market it. That means getting it in front of users to try and get them to buy. With hundreds of thousands of apps in the market, getting yours noticed is becoming harder.



9 Helpful Steps

The following is a recommended 9 step approach to marketing your app.

Designing an app icon – a beautiful designed icon is the best thing a person can have in gaining the attention of potential users. The icon should be unique in design and color to stand out from the crowd. Most icons are green and blue. Also avoid shine and bevel. Icons should always be standard sets and sizes for conformity.

Localizing app – app must be convertible to any language. So if you are targeting China, then it must be convertible to Chinese.

Website – is it best to have your own dedicated website. This can have huge benefits.

Use of social media – let your users share their content via Facebook, Twitter and others. Encourage feedback and comments. This will also help generate a user database.

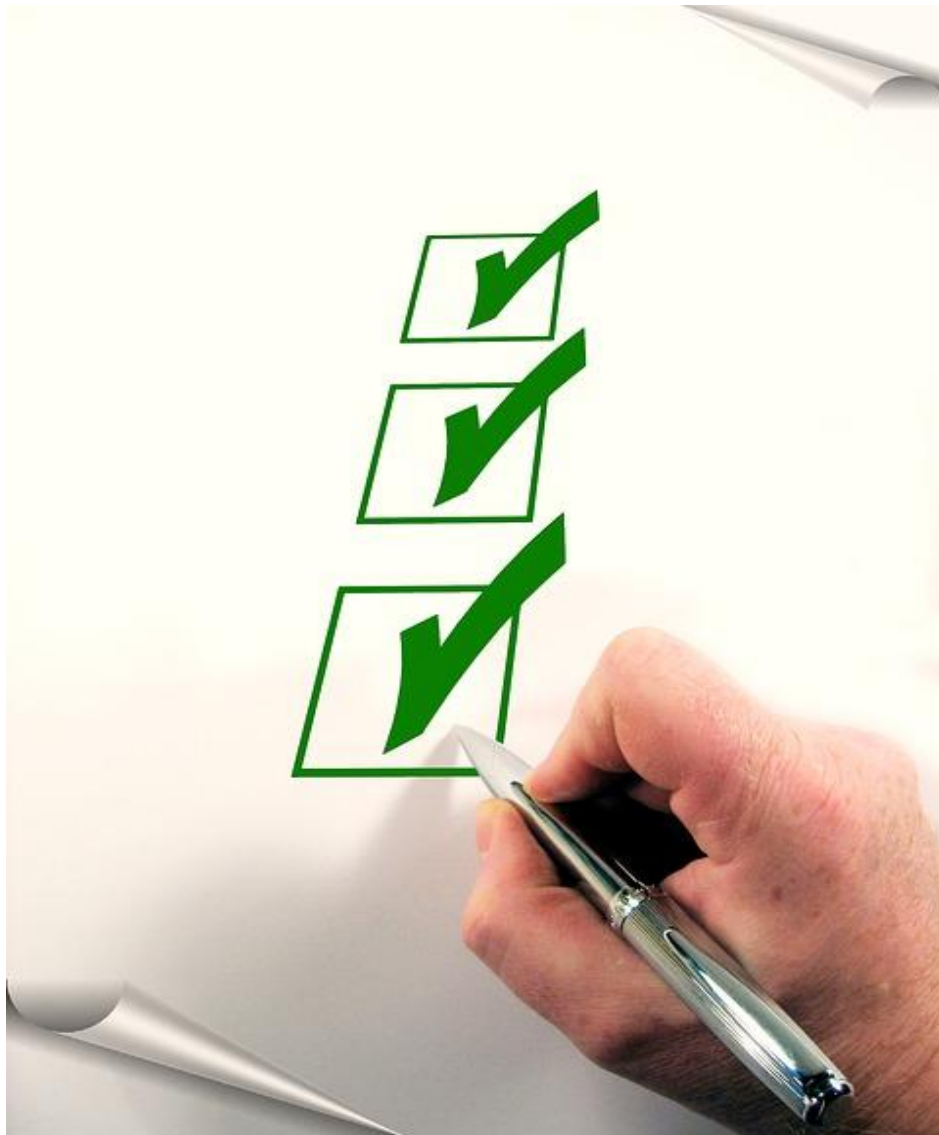
Use of free versions – let users download your app for a free trial period. Most users will only buy apps after they have tried them and found them useful. A free app download is a recommended strategy by most e-marketers.

Keywords – the use of good Meta words or keywords for your website is critical to try and get to the top 10 positions on search engines like Google and Bing.

Optimizing – to optimize your app you should keep it under the 20MB threshold.

Use the Press – if you think you have an app that is new and unique, you should let all relevant publications know about it. They help in getting the word out throughout the web.

App design – you always want your things to look good. A good app design helps in sales. Use an expert if you need to.

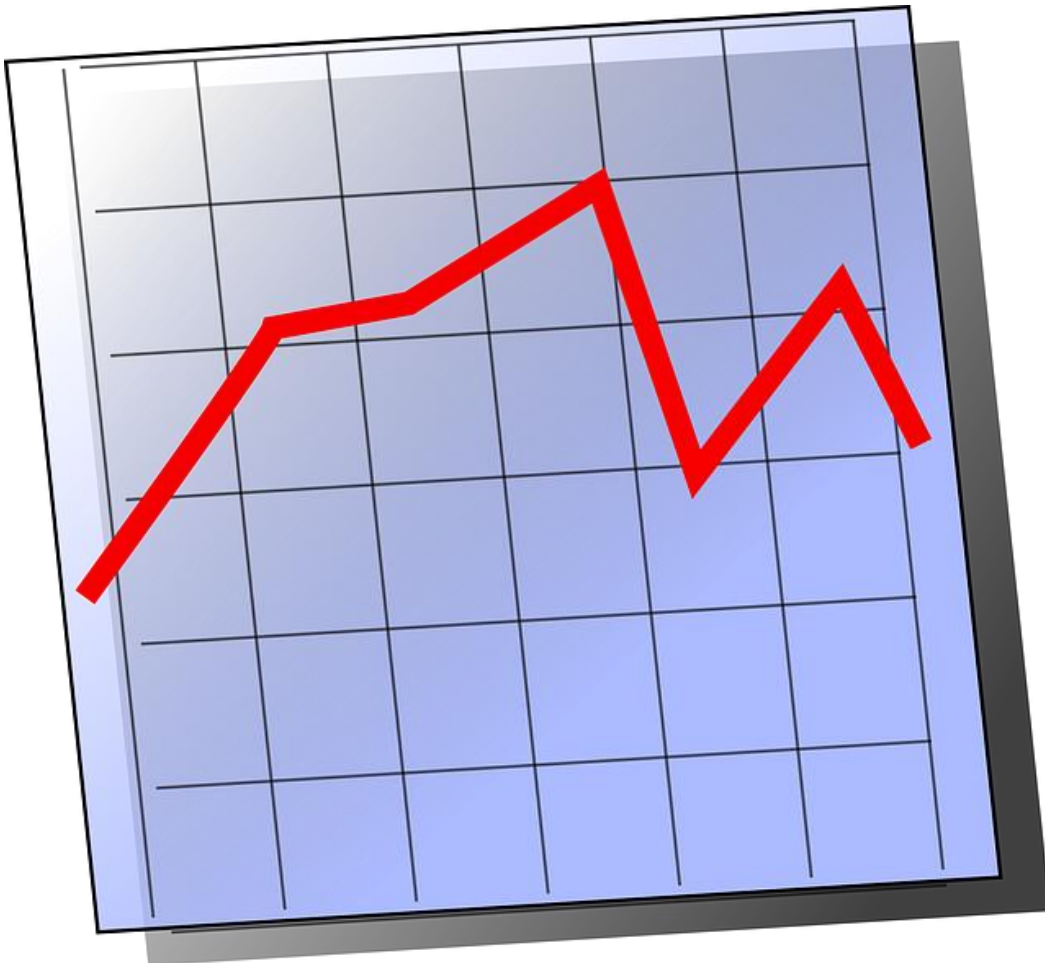


Chapter 7:

Generating Demand For Your App

Synopsis

The market as we know it is getting smaller due to product saturation. For any app to succeed, you have to market it. That means getting it in front of users to try it and hopefully buy it. With hundreds of thousands of apps in the market, getting it noticed is becoming harder and more costly.



How To Create Demand

To generate demand for your app, the use of social media, publication companies and advertising is a must have. Some will have a cost while others are free. Whether cost or no cost, it is important to get exposure for your app. Without exposure and public awareness of your app, failure is imminent.

The use of Facebook is a good way of generating demand for your app. You can also advertise on Facebook. They have a captured audience of more than 500 million registered users which is a good market for any product or business. You can also have your own Facebook account with a link from your advertisement banner to this account. That means anyone clicking on this link will be directed to your Facebook account. The important part here is the design of your banner which must sell an app that is unique with a beautiful icon. There are many banner ads shown. To make users click on them, they have to be interesting and beneficial.

You can also use search engines to help advertise your app for you. There are many search directories that you can submit your ads with. Most are free and no payment is required. It is also good to submit your website link to Google, Bing and others like them. You should do this on a weekly basis or even more frequent if possible. Millions of users search for items on them. They can create a huge demand if the app is unique and interesting.

Chapter 8:

How To Get Positive Review For Your App

Synopsis

In order to get positive reviews for your app, the app must have gone through the design process cycle many times with input from friends and family. This group of people is known as the test group and should be made up of people from the target definition. Their input and comments would be a fair reflection of your intended target group. It is from their feedback that you narrow down your features list as well as additions needed that you yourself may have left out of the app.



The Testing Phase

Your app must pass the following tests.

The application does not crash frequently- Users are most frustrated when they try a new application that crashes frequently or sometimes hangs. This happens even with giants like Microsoft where some of their Window versions tend to crash or hang. But with Microsoft, these bugs are overcome in a very short time due to the resources available in the company. Their automatic updates also help overcome some glitches with new apps introduced into the market. But for individuals, this can be a daunting task as it will cost money and time to resolve this problem. Make sure that white box and black box testing is done comprehensively before the launch of the app.

The application interface is not complicated- The interface between your app and other software must be made easy and compatible. Users like apps that are easy to install and use. So the app must be compliant to most software and hardware available in the market.

The application behaves according to what it is designed to do- The app must perform according to what it is designed to do and not do something else. For instance, you buy a DVD player but the player can only play CDs.

Chapter 9:

Announce Your App Through Press Release

Synopsis

When you are confident that your app is ready to be launched, the best way of getting attention for your app is through a press release. Most people associate the press with some new technology, new invention, new discovery and others like it. The press gives credence to any new subject matter and this kind of assistance is hard to find. The market through the press is also huge with links to various supporting associations and institutions.



Get Attention

Many new discoveries and technologies have found financial support and investment after their press releases. Major corporations and investors keep a keen eye on press releases to check on whether there are new business opportunities or new technologies that they could invest in. The same can be said for venture capitalists who constantly seek new business opportunities that have huge potential.

Press releases also generate a quick demand if an app is interesting and unique. The exposure to the public is immediate unlike advertising which has a longer return time on investment. Most advertising campaigns have a lifespan of about 6 months. That means that the response to the advertisement from the public will be effective within those months.

Take the iPad for instance. When the public knew the launching of the iPad was imminent, Apple stores was inundated with orders and the first batch was sold out before they reached the stores. The iPad was the first of its kind and generated a lot of public interest and awareness. Even though it had some negative aspects about it, sales for this app sky-rocketed. Like Microsoft, Apple has the resources to overcome product glitches and shortcomings, which we are now seeing with the iPad2. The iPad2 features some new functionalities. This new app is an enhancement over the old iPad1 model.

Chapter 10:

Direct Marketing Strategies For Your App Launch

Synopsis

There are numerous ways to launch your app. Some can be costly and some are free. Below you will find several methods using direct marketing to launch your app.



Direct Marketing

Useful ways to direct market:

Use app review sites – These are sites that frequently review new apps in the market. You can submit your app for the editorial staff to review and rate.

Good PR – establishing good public relations with columnists, radio hosts and TV producers. Be an expert in the subject matter.

Promote within other apps – try and advertise in new exciting apps.

Use AddThis – the AddThis button will add traffic and page rank to your app.

Use advertising companies – have advertisements placed in target areas that reflect your own target definition in terms of age, lifestyle, profession etc.

Q & A – Participate in targetted app Q & A sessions. Provide links to learn more about you and your app and give feedback.

Email – use email as direct marketing to friends and associates first. Adhere to spam policies on email marketing. You can get the email list from infoUSA.com

Pricing strategy – learn from Peggle. Learn how they gained top spot by dropping their price for a promotion period.

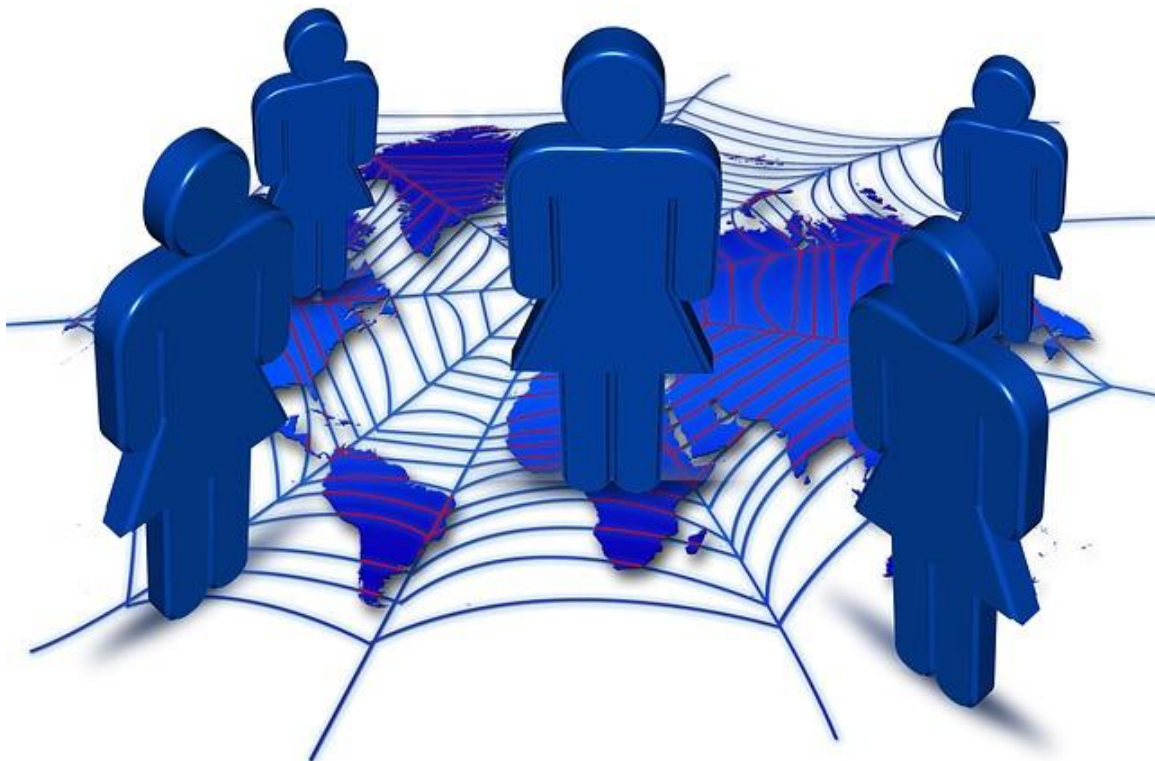
Walk through presentation – use this type of presentation with screen shots of your app and a description of the features and benefits.

Tell a friend – use this feature in your app to get personal contact details

Twitter – use a Twitter update feature in your app for users to tweet about your app.

Exclusive content – this content about your app is exclusive within your app and not found anywhere else.

Collaborate – find businesses who are not competitors but have similar products.



Wrapping Up

Getting your app out to the public is extremely important if you wish to turn a profit and be a success. If you wish to do this then it is important that you follow the above steps and tips carefully. You can be a success and you can start to make money with your apps you just need to go about it in the right way. I hope you have learned some useful information and good luck!

