

Consumers are using and installing fewer mobile apps as they settle on favorites

Article

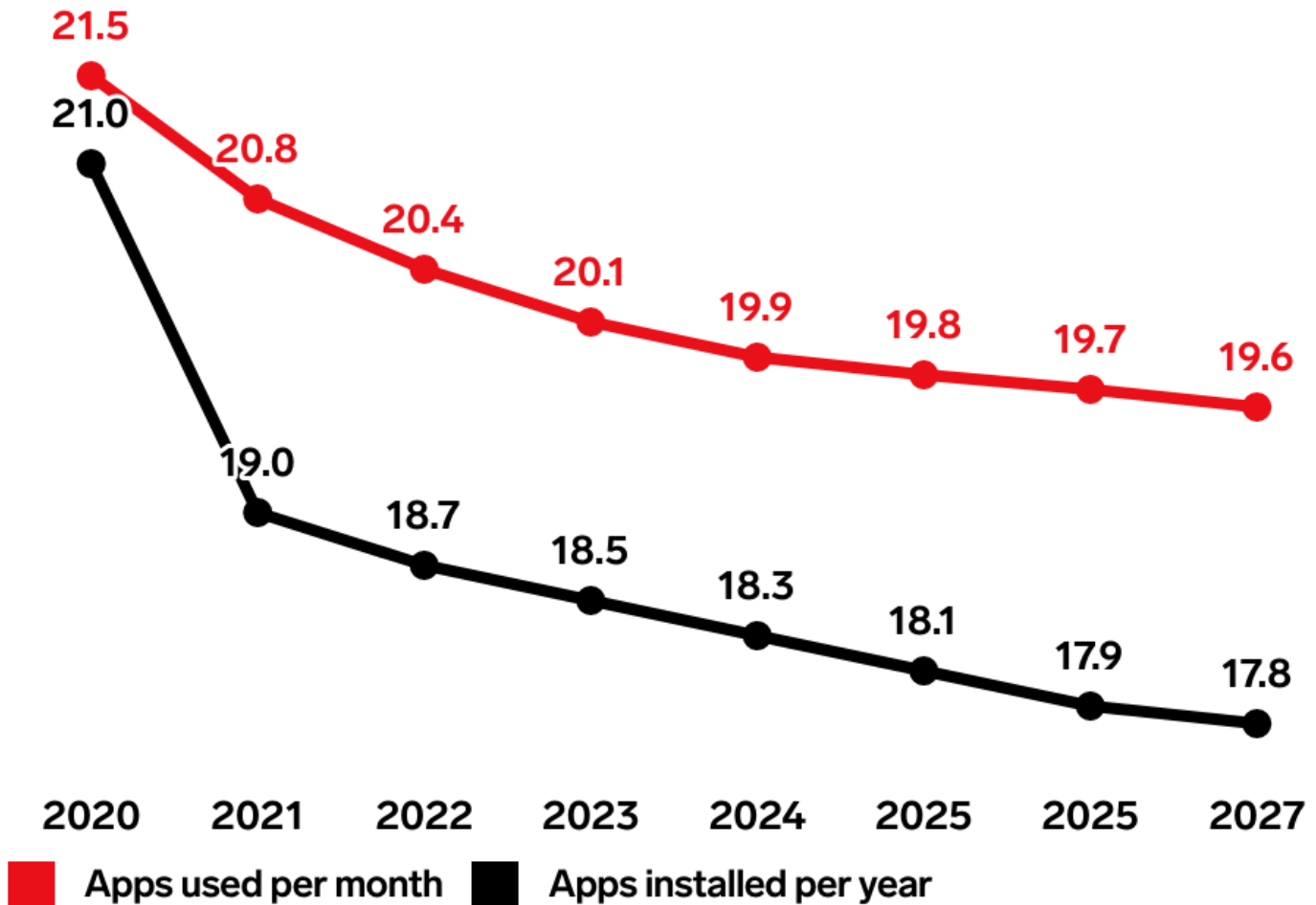
Nearly 98% of smartphone users (255.8 million people) will use apps this year. Although all major app categories will continue to gain users—and 11 will surpass 100 million users apiece

—the average user will download and regularly open fewer apps as they settle on favorites in each category.

- **Most new app users are new smartphone users.** The roughly 4 million new smartphone app users each year come almost exclusively from additional smartphone users rather than from the few remaining smartphone users who abstain from apps.
- **App users aren't exploring as much.** It's counterintuitive that consumers are using and installing fewer apps each year despite having more categories of apps overall. The disconnect is mainly because users are doing less exploring. In 2023, the average smartphone user will install 18.5 apps, down 2.5 apps since 2020.
- **Users are also opening fewer apps because they can do more with each one.** The super-app models pioneered by Asian apps like WeChat, AliPay, and Grab gained traction as full-service gateways to the internet in markets with less developed financial and broadband infrastructure. In the West, the problem is the reverse: too many apps. Some apps, **particularly financial ones**, are attempting to consolidate features, and that may contribute to a lower app count for the average user.

Consumers Are Using and Installing Fewer Smartphone Apps Every Year

number of apps used and installed, 2020-2027



Note: number of unique apps that have been launched at least once per month by smartphone app users of all ages; number of first-time app downloads per year by smartphone users of all ages

Source: Insider Intelligence | eMarketer, July 2023

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Insider Intelligence | eMarketer

- **Fifteen of 17 app categories will outpace organic growth of new app users.** Between 2023 and 2026, the number of smartphone app users will grow at a compound annual growth rate of 1.54%. Most app categories will grow more quickly than that, with only gaming and social

media lagging behind. This means the average smartphone user will slightly increase the number of app categories they regularly use.

Report by Yoram Wurmser Sep 28, 2023

Mobile App Users 2023

