To Grow Audiences, Gaming App Publishers Look to App Stores

More than half of publishers think app store promotions are of high importance

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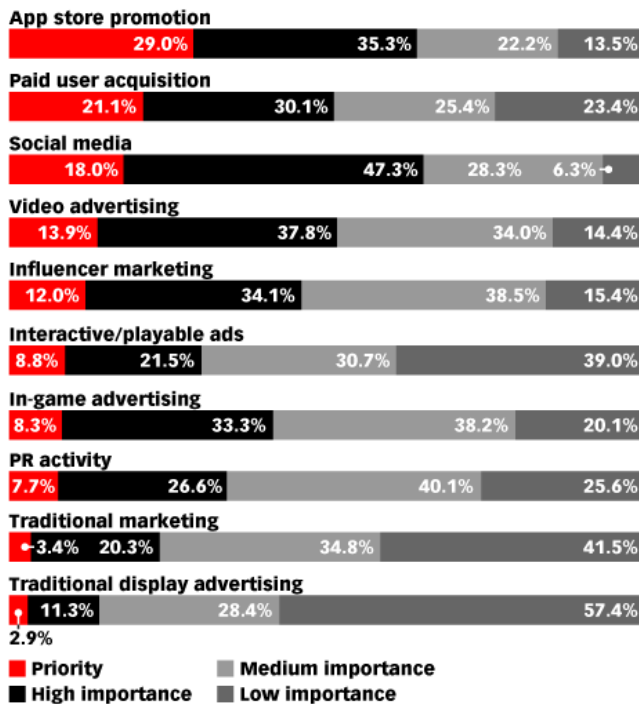The worldwide mobile gaming sector was worth an estimated $46.1 billion in 2017, according to figures from Newzoo.

And data from Sensor Tower demonstrates just how dominant games are among mobile apps overall. The firm reported that iOS and Android games were downloaded a combined 9.13 billion times in Q3 2017, significantly more than any other app category.

But gaming app publishers face the same primary challenge that all app publishers do—how to keep growing their user numbers.

According to a new poll of mobile game developers worldwide conducted by Mobvista and PocketGamer.biz, app store promotions sit atop the list of ways they hope to grow audiences over the coming year.

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Tactics that Mobile Game Developers Worldwide Plan to Use to Grow Their Audience, by Level of Importance, Nov 2017

% of respondents

Tactic	Priority	High importance	Medium importance	Low importance
App store promotion	29.0%	35.3%	22.2%	13.5%
Paid user acquisition	21.1%	30.1%	25.4%	23.4%
Social media	18.0%	47.3%	28.3%	6.3%
Video advertising	13.9%	37.8%	34.0%	14.4%
Influencer marketing	12.0%	34.1%	38.5%	15.4%
Interactive/playable ads	8.8%	21.5%	30.7%	39.0%
In-game advertising	8.3%	33.3%	38.2%	20.1%
PR activity	7.7%	26.6%	40.1%	25.6%
Traditional marketing	3.4%	20.3%	34.8%	41.5%
Traditional display advertising	2.9%	11.3%	28.4%	57.4%

■ Priority ■ High importance ■ Medium importance ■ Low importance

Note: over the next 12 months; numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding
Source: Mobvista and PocketGamer.biz, "Mobile Games Developer Trends Survey: Autumn 2017," Dec 6, 2017

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Almost three in 10 (29.0%) game developers considered app store promotions a priority for growing audiences.

That's an interesting result, given that Apple's App Store underwent a significant redesign in September 2017. As a result of the revamp, Apple began to curate some of the apps featured on its App Store, changing the formula for app store optimization.

Additionally, the company rolled out search ads within the App Store soon after, in October 2017.

Mobile game developers are certainly not ruling out ads as a way to drive adoption of their apps. Paid user acquisition was also named as an important way to increase user bases, as was the use of social media, according to the Mobvista and PocketGamer.biz survey.

The poll also found that while North America was still considered the most important region for the mobile games sector, China and the

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wider Asia region were not far behind.

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