

How to be an APP STORE

SUPERSTAR!



**MAXIMIZE YOUR APP'S
DOWNLOADS WITH APP
STORE OPTIMIZATION (ASO)**

**THE ULTIMATE ASO GUIDE
FOR HOSPITALITY OPERATORS**

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ASO: Standing out from the app store crowd

Operators about to launch their app for ordering food often ask about how to drive engagement and get people to continue to use their app following download rather than rashly deleting it when they need space for photos or music. Strong engagement and offering real value within the mobile order app is hugely important but unless your guests can find your app, they won't download it in the first place. So how do you as a brand help your customers cut through the cacophony of app store noise?

This ultimate ASO guide, complete with advice and tips from experts at [Waracle Mobile App Developers](#), takes a look at how app store optimization (ASO) can help your mobile ordering app stand out amongst the millions of apps in the store making sure you have top billing for the long term.



It takes nothing to join the crowd. It takes everything to stand alone.

Hans F Hansen



Why is ASO so important?

ASO is a crucial part of mobile app marketing. In order to be really successful in mobile you have to continually analyze and optimize your app. You can own an amazing app from the best developer in the land, but you need to make sure it's discovered and known for its benefits to drive installation. In fact, getting your app discovered is one of the biggest issues facing mobile marketers today, especially with millions of mobile apps in the app stores.

ASO drives 48% of all new app discoveries and in a distant second comes word of mouth driving just over 15% of discoveries.¹ This means in a sea of over 1.5 million apps floating about in various app stores, it is the single most important way of finding your brand's application.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY:

"There are lots of techniques when it comes to marketing your app but one very important technique guaranteed to generate more app downloads is App Store Optimisation (ASO). ASO is quite simply a way of optimizing mobile apps to rank higher in app store search results and therefore be more visible to potential downloaders. ASO is important because if you increase the visibility of your app you should therefore increase the quantity of download traffic and your revenue."

Caroline McClelland, Marketing Manager, Waracle

¹AppTentive: The Mobile App Marketing Funnel 2016

CHART TOPPING APPS



Waracle explains what top 3 things Hospitality operators could do to make sure their app ranks well in the app store charts:

1 Keyword (search term) analysis over time and competitor app analysis
To understand how your app ranks, you need to identify which search terms people will use to find your app and then track these words over time. By gathering data, you can show how your app ranks in search results for the key terms prospective users are likely to use when searching for your app. And, just like any product, you need to have an understanding of competitor apps and see how they rank for your search terms, over time. We would suggest setting up keyword tracking on competitor apps and collecting data over 120 days.

TOP TIP

Apple App Store's algorithm uses primarily keywords from the app's title when it ranks apps for specific search queries. It also considers keywords from the iTunes Connect Keyword Field to index apps so make sure both of these are keyword optimized. Tools that can help you include:
[AppTweak](#) | [Google Keywords Planner](#) | [App Radar](#)

2 App store listing analysis including title, description, release notes, screenshots – compared to competitors
The description that prospective app users see will affect their tendency to download the app. The first step to improving your listing is to analyze your title, app description, release notes (and more) compared to your competitors' apps. Your app description should continually evolve and change with each new app update. Therefore, each time you submit an update to the stores, make sure you reflect the changes in your app description and screenshots.

TOP TIP

How to find your competitors' best App Store keywords
Companies such as [MobileAction](#) have online tools that allow you to see what keywords your competitors are using. Their Keyword Research Module also allows you to see the top 190 apps that are currently ranking for that keyword.

3 Ratings & Reviews analysis to measure the sentiment of users
Ratings matter when it comes to app store ranking. So it's important to analyze existing reviews and ratings and have a strategy to encourage more. It's been proven that apps with a number of positive ratings dominate the charts and there's a strong correlation between ratings and ranks. You should keep a summary of all recent reviews and most helpful reviews. Act upon these to improve your app and app store listing. You should also have a strategy to get as many reviews and ratings as possible.

TOP TIPS

TOP TIPS TO BUILD UP YOUR APP REVIEWS

Here are our top 4 tips to encourage reviews of your app:

1. Use an app review plugin such as [Appirater](#) that prompts users to review your app after they have used it a certain number of times.
2. Offer an incentive to review your app such as additional loyalty rewards or a discount coupon to use next time they order through your app.
3. Time the prompt. Rather than asking guests to rate the app after launching it (which makes for a poor experience), ask them to review the app after certain conditions have been met. For example, they have been using it for a set period of time or have undergone a certain user journey.
4. Run a contest. Some blog forums allow app developers to offer giveaways to other members in exchange for reviews of their app.

IS THERE ANYTHING DIFFERENT HOSPITALITY OPERATORS SHOULD BE DOING WITH ASO VS. APPS FROM OTHER SECTORS?

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY:

"ASO techniques are pretty much the same regardless of sector. However, for hospitality operators, they should be thinking specifically about what their users will search for in the app stores. Also, due to the nature of hospitality, we would recommend that extra emphasis is placed on obtaining reviews and ratings for the app."

Caroline McClelland,
Marketing Manager,
Waracle

ASO isn't a one size fits all approach





Changing your ASO tactics depending on the store.

We asked if operators should employ different ASO tactics depending on what store their app is in. Waracle's answer? Yes.

Caroline explains, "ASO strategy does differ and you need to do platform comparisons over time for the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. Your app performance can vary depending on the platform so it's essential to look at your iOS and Android app listing and performance on both stores. Comparing the information side by side is a good start. Usage stats can vary per platform and it's useful to view a 12-month breakdown to spot any trends."

The main difference between Apple's App Store and Google Play Store are as follows:

 	
Keyword Ranking Algorithm	
Exact match only when considering keywords from developer name, title and in-app purchases	Pulls keywords from the app's full and short description
Uses iTunes Connect keywords space	Google reduces rank for non-branded keywords found in the app's title
Thought to favor apps that produce higher revenues through in-app purchases	
App Listings	
Shows title, icon, developer, name, ratings, preview video and screenshots	Shows only title, icon, developer name and rating
Shows reviews and ratings from most recent update	Shows estimate of total downloads and an aggregate rating
Promotional art and custom background	80-character short description and graphic
Requires a new build to be submitted and approved before making changes to screenshots, titles, keywords etc	Allows changes to be submitted immediately
Data	
Cohort analysis for up to 30 days, subscription data and other drill-down capabilities	Trending data on install/uninstall numbers, ratings data, acquisition sources

What's in a name?

Getting your app's name right not just for ASO, but for your market

Your app's name plays a very important role when it comes to how your guests find it in the app store. It's also an extremely important piece of metadata used by app stores in their ranking algorithms.

Top tips for your app's name:

- Unique and creative
- Clear
- Short and to the point
- Include keywords

Caroline adds, *"The App Title is very important and not just for ASO. You need to make sure it describes what the app does while also making it as concise as you can. This really is the most important piece of ASO. If it doesn't clearly say what it does, potential downloaders will just scroll by or worse they'll download a competitor app."*

A good example of what to include in the app's name field is the app's name followed by its differentiating features e.g.:

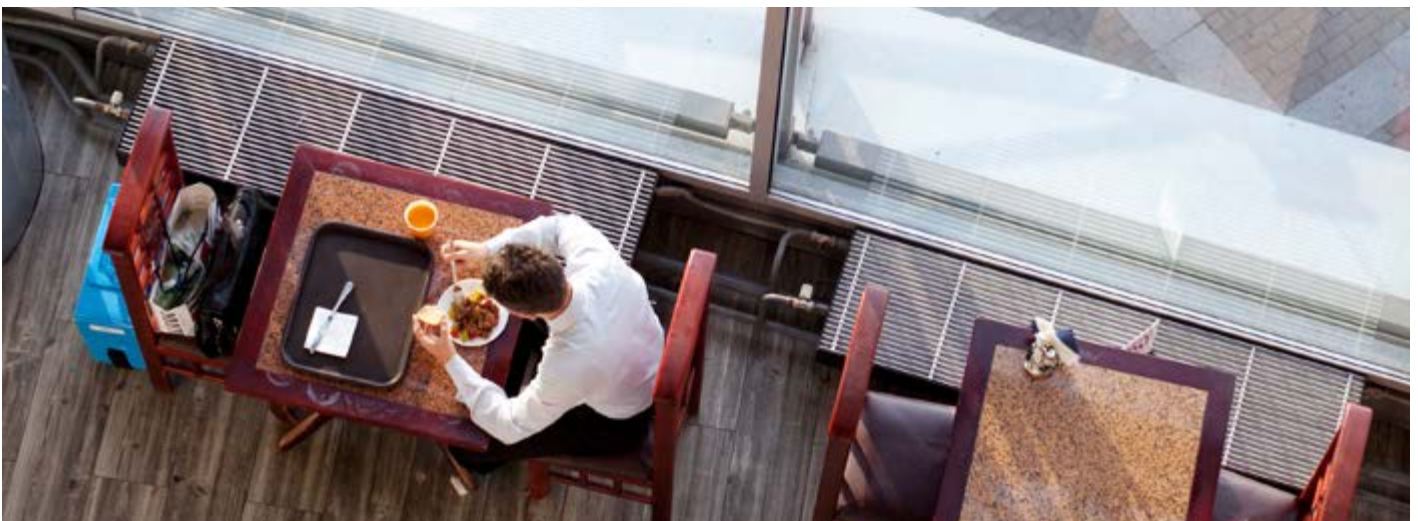
Hotels.com – Hotel booking and last minute hotel deals

Brand name: Hotels.com

Feature 1: Hotel booking

Feature 2: Last minute hotel deals

The modifier 'last minute' allows the brand to target both the phrase 'last minute hotel deals' and the shorter, broader, 'hotel deals' keywords².



²Gummicube: How to name an app



Now you're speaking my language

The importance of internationalization

If you're a global operator, it is crucial to your app's success to localize it for different markets. It's not a small task but you'd be missing out on a huge slice of the pie if your app isn't tailored for different worldwide markets.

Localization is more than just translating your app into the local language. You also have to consider localizing measurements. For example, presenting distances to your store in kilometres or miles or showing localized screenshots and preview videos.

Although translation is only a part of localization, it's a good place to start.

Here are our favorite resources to get you going:

- **LocalEyes** – an Apple spin-off that offers marketing and localization services
- **Babble-on** – they are app localization specialists based in San Francisco
- **OneSky** – offer a localization audit of your app as well as translation services

Throughout this eBook we've provided you with a number of agency resources and you might be wondering whether it's worth doing it in-house.

You might be reluctant to pay an agency to do your ASO but you have to weigh it up with the internal resourcing to do ASO properly in-house.

WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY:

"Mobile app internationalization and localization is important. It's not just a case of translating your app content into another language but more about localizing your keywords, videos etc and making them relevant to the local context. Users are more likely to discover and download apps that are in their own language."

Caroline McClelland,
Marketing Manager, Waracle

Doing it in-house takes a lot of time and requires a team who are focused on analyzing data and are prepared to run split tests. This often means that in-house teams don't know where to start and prefer to use an experienced ASO agency. A dedicated optimization and consultancy team will live and breathe ASO and be up to date with app store algorithms. It also takes a keen eye for app data analytics and a determined mindset to help deliver your mobile app strategies throughout the entire app life cycle.

Beyond ASO for Hospitality Operators

What else can I do to secure long-term app success?

Although very important, great ASO alone will not secure the long-term future of your app. So we asked Waracle what else can operators do to make sure their app is not only downloaded, but kept on guests' devices.

"We're glad you asked that, as it's important to not only focus on app downloads. One of the best ways to retain mobile users is to create an on-boarding strategy. Statistics reveal that 22% of downloaded apps are never used more than once. Surely this stat makes you realize that if you were only concerned with downloads, you'd be tracking an empty metric.

1. If you want to improve your app, the real data to study is around engagement! Operators need to look at what their app users are doing in the app and take action to improve any screens.
2. Push notifications are a great marketing tool and effective push notification campaigns can double the retention rate of app users. Push notifications can encourage users back into the app to explore new areas.
3. Using signposts or hints/tips will get people started in the app although excessive use of these should be avoided as overloading people with info can be off-putting."



Are certain demographics more likely to use self-service apps? Are these demographics changing?

"Absolutely. Traditional Customer Experience is being disrupted by the mobile-first generation. Look at financial services such as banking and insurance - are millennials inclined to visit their high-street branch? No. Do they expect many or all of their critical services to be available at their fingertips? Yes. Take dining-out for example, do millennials and baby-boomers share the same expectations with regards human interaction in this setting? I think the feedback would be interesting and perhaps not too encouraging for those front-of-house staff acting as the interface between customer and seller."

David Romilly, Business Development Manager, Waracle

Final Thoughts

Don't make ASO an after thought

From initial discussions and spec-ing out your app to design, customer flow and release – launching an app can be a time-consuming and expensive undertaking and you can get lost in the excitement and end-goal of releasing it to the market. It's important to remember all the crucial marketing activity that happens before, during and after an app launch too if you really want to make it a success. And yes. ASO is just one important tool in your app marketing arsenal.

When it comes to ASO, our final takeaways are:

**Keywords.
keywords.
keywords.**

Do your research and use them wisely.

Rate me.

The more your app is rated and the better the rating, the higher you'll rank.

**Optimize
all your
assets.**

From titles and descriptions to videos, screenshots and release notes – they're all important!

Localize.

Make the most of your markets and Localize.

About QikServe

QikServe is the leading global provider of technology that enables restaurant customers to order and pay themselves, on mobile, tablets, the web and kiosks.

The QikServe platform is flexible, customizable, and can be rolled out as a single or multi-channel solution, scaling up as needed. Getting started with QikServe couldn't be simpler. With out-of-the-box functionality, you can be up and running in weeks with a fully branded order and pay solution. And - even better - QikServe also gives you a unified interface and content management system for ALL your guest facing integrations, including payment and loyalty

QikServe's mobile app enables you to:

- **Increase customer order value.** Encourage guests to buy more and stay longer with built-in upsell and cross sell prompts. A recent study of 1,000's of transactions from QikServe clients showed an uplift of spend per head of between 50% and 73%.
- **Keep your guests loyal.** Improve customer lifetime value with personalized incentives and a differentiated, convenient mobile experience.
- **Reduce staff costs.** Take the pressure off existing staff and remove the need to hire additional staff during busy periods. Redeploy staff to hire value areas or for guests who want or need face-to-face assistance.
- **Spread the word with social media.** Amplify brand exposure and capture valuable customer feedback with integrated social media functionality.
- **Improve operational efficiency.** Remove the pressure from busy environments. QikServe improves order accuracy, lets customers relax and lets staff concentrate on great service.
- **Flexible and tailored customer experience.** Define the customer journey and configure available features to support any service model, from takeaway and quick service to high end.
- **Boost profits with targeted marketing.** Attract new customers and drive additional revenue with targeted marketing campaigns guided by detailed customer data and insights.
- **Keep your brand at the center of it all.** Customize our app with your logos and color scheme so your brand is up-front and center.
- **Quick and easy deployment.** Seamless integration with your existing payment gateways and POS systems.

www.qikserve.com

Get in touch with us to find out how you can transform your guest-facing services with QikServe today.

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About Waracle Mobile App Developers

Waracle, part of Exception, are one of the UK's largest mobile app development, IoT and digital consulting companies. Since 2008 Waracle have created some of the most exciting Mobile and IoT apps.

With offices in Dundee, Glasgow, Edinburgh and London, Waracle have a rapidly growing team of industry leading UX designers, scrum-masters, iOS, Android and Hybrid developers, QA and App Store Optimisation experts. We've proven in-depth experience across many industry sectors including; Fintech, Scientific Research, mHealth, Energy, Transportation and Luxury Goods and have become a trust partner for many of the UK's largest brands.

Waracle is regularly cited as an industry leading mobile app and IoT development company from independent research companies including Clutch, AppIndex and Carnival. Waracle are also an IBM Watson IoT Partner.

www.waracle.com

