

### The Mobile Marketer's Guide:

## How to Retain Mobile App Users & Convert Them into Paying Subscribers



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### The Current State of Mobile Apps

Because of the pandemic, mobile app downloads <u>rose 33% in 2020.</u> Consumers spent \$143 billion on apps, a <u>20% increase</u> year-over-year, and in-app revenues from subscriptions were <u>up 34%</u>.

Gaming apps soared, as did entertainment apps like YouTube and Netflix, placing massive demands on internet infrastructure and causing slowdowns in Europe and the US. (<u>The New York Times</u>)

When gyms closed, many turned to apps like Nike Training Club (123% increase from 2019) to keep in shape and hit their fitness goals, and purchases of health and fitness equipment more than doubled. (Washington Post)

Even though smartphone sales dropped 10.5% last year, they're <u>poised</u> to grow 11.5% in 2021 – similar to worldwide sales in 2019. App spending should reach <u>\$270 billion</u> by 2025, well beyond the \$143 billion spent in 2020.

"In 2020, consumers reduced spending on smartphones, but availability of new products will see users drive significant uptick in demand in 2021. The combination of delayed smartphone replacements and the availability of lower-end 5G smartphones are poised to increase smartphone sales in 2021."

Anshul Gupta, Senior Research Director

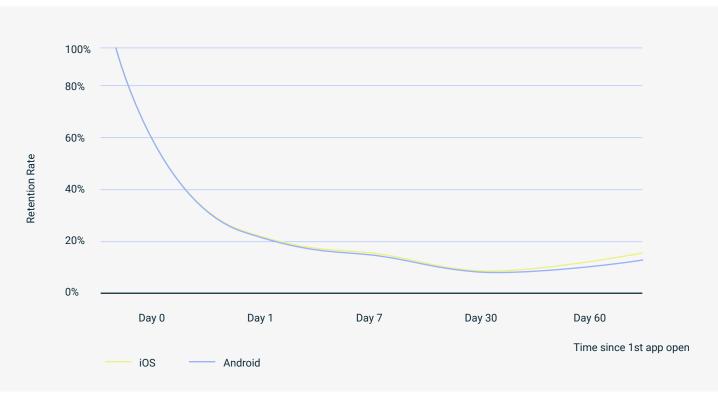
**Gartner** 

# From Acquisition to Retention in Mobile Customer Engagement

Before we dig into the exact steps you can take to convert mobile users into subscribers, let's first understand the journey that customers take from the moment they install your app to becoming a subscriber.

Time is of the essence, as there's a 75% chance that users will <u>open</u> <u>your app only once</u>. Think about that – **only 25% of your mobile app** users will ever open it more than one time.

#### **Mobile App Retention Rate Drop After 24 Hours**



Source: Appsflyer 2019 App Retention Report

You have a limited time to connect with app users, because most won't come back after the first 24 hours. The longer you wait to engage them, the fewer number of conversions you'll be able to capture.

## The Disconnect Between Business Outcomes, Marketing Execution & User Demands



#### \$295B

is the forecast mobile ad spend for 2021 and accounts for 74.4% of all digital ad spend.

E-Marketer

#### 65%

of mobile marketers spend more than 80% of their budgets on acquisition.

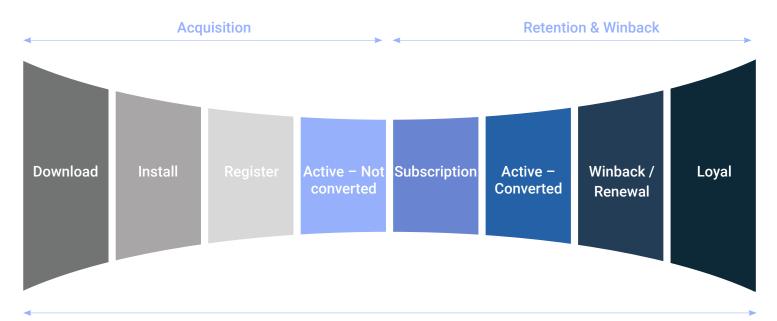
Liftoff

## 2K - 2.5K apps

are submitted everyday, and 90% of users do not stay with an app for more than 7 days, illustrating the difficulty of retaining and converting them into customers.

Apptopia, Appsflyer

The good news is that by simply increasing your user retention rate 10%, the value of your company can increase by as much as 30%.



**Customer Engagement & Lifetime Value** 

#### **App Install**

With mobile apps, first impressions mean everything. Providing a personalized introductory experience goes a long way in connecting with users and helps you understand more about them, so you can provide personalized experiences and engagement to keep them coming back to your app. Consider animated or simulated walk-throughs or instructions messaging upon download.

#### Registration

Retaining your users really comes down to several things, but the most important is obtaining some type of identifier during their registration. Whether you get their email or their number (or both), it's important to acquire some identifiable information to connect with your app users.

#### **Active - Not Converted**

In this next step, a user is still actively using your app but has yet to make a transaction. Maybe they're using the free trial of your app (like Netflix), or they're using your ad-funded free version (such as Spotify's free version).

#### **Subscription**

By the subscriber stage, you'll want to showcase the benefits users receive with their subscription. Once they subscribe, internal teams normally transfer accountability – from acquisition to retention.

#### Active - Converted

The number one way to keep more of your subscribers is to engage them. Doing so on a continual basis may get them to continue using your app. You can continue to connect with them about new features, benefits, or even ask users for their feedback. For example, Freeletics, Europe's #1 fitness app, asked users for feedback and they requested a notification between exercises to indicate when they should start. So Freeletics added a sound indicator (a beep) to alert users when they should begin working out.

#### Winback/Renewal

By keeping an eye on what users are doing within the app, especially if app usage has dropped, your team may want to ask for feedback so you can resolve issues and make improvements, thus enabling you to keep more subscribers.

#### Loyalty

Loyalty is important because it's <u>5x more expensive</u> to acquire a new customer than to retain a current one. Keeping your subscribers happy, providing value, and making certain they can provide feedback are all important parts of keeping subscribers loyal.

The approach to loyalty for a mobile app subscriber is different from an app that's specifically designed around loyalty, which is not what we're discussing here. For example, the Starbucks app is designed around loyalty – the more it's used, the more benefits a customer receives.

A <u>Harvard Business Review</u> study states: "To maximize customer value is to move beyond mere customer satisfaction and connect with customers at an emotional level." Happy, loyal customers may turn into ambassadors and tell their friends, family, and even coworkers about your app.

So how can you help to generate subscribers who will stay loyal to your app? With all the first-party data mobile app users provide, you can easily leverage this information to create richer, more personalized experiences. This is a major advantage you will have over the competition and subscribers won't have an excuse to jump to your competitor.

"It's about embracing a more holistic view of the user's language-learning experience and meeting their needs at more points along that <u>journey</u>."

Julie Hansen, CEO

+Babbel

So, how can you better manage all the data within your respective apps to understand and connect with your user base, capture new subscribers, grow your renewals, and win back inactive customers? Keep reading to find out.





## Step 1:

#### **Consolidate Your Data into One Platform**

"The world's most valuable resource is no longer oil, but data."

#### The Economist

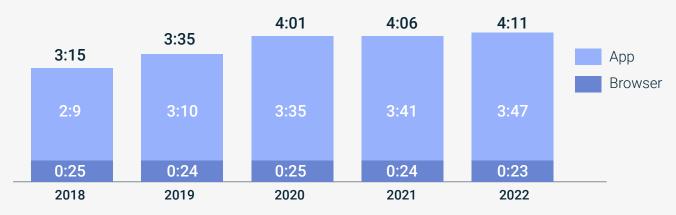
<u>Data is the new oil</u> — it is the lifeblood of your company — but the more data you obtain doesn't necessarily correlate to a successful company. It all depends on how you use the data.

For example, "93% of <u>consumers</u> report receiving marketing communications that are not relevant to them." According to an <u>Infogroup</u> survey, "44% of consumers **are willing to switch to brands who better personalize marketing communication**."

Since 90% of time on mobile is spent in apps, and users spend an average of 4 hours each day on apps, it's important you're able to collect the right type of customer data and ask the right questions to continually stay top-of-mind. (eMarketer)

#### Mobile Internet: Average Daily Time Spent in the US, App vs. Browser, 2018-2022





Note: ages 18+; includes all time spent with internet activities on mobile devices, regardless of multitasking; numbers may not add up to total due to rounding

Source: eMarketer, April 2020

## Why Your Martech Stack Hinders Your Team and What You Can Do About it

On a daily basis, marketers use anywhere from 6-10 different martech tools, each with their own database, causing multiple data silos. These silos lead to fragmented, disconnected data.

Many times, the marketing team has to rely on other internal teams (such as IT) to extract and organize this data in a way that can be used to run campaigns. This leads to lost time in creating and adjusting your campaigns.

Not only is siloed data an issue, but so are the various pieces in your tech stack. In fact, <u>82%</u> of sales and marketing professionals lose up to an hour each day by switching between marketing tools, and <u>70%</u> of marketers believe that some of the tools they have are redundant, costing your company money.

The best strategy is to use a customer engagement platform (CEP) that combines all the tools found within your technology stack, plus your data, so internal teams can easily find and use the data to make the most profitable decisions for your company, all without the need for additional IT dependencies.

The future of your company may depend on the technology you use and how fast you can create and adjust your campaigns to connect with and engage mobile users based on the data you've collected over time.

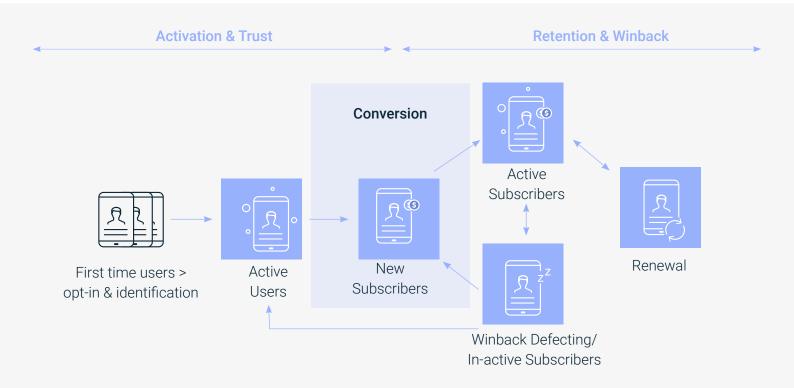
## Step 2:

### **Create Your Lifecycle Marketing Plan**

The essence of lifecycle marketing is to communicate with and provide mobile app users unique experiences that move them along the journey from acquisition to a loyal subscriber.

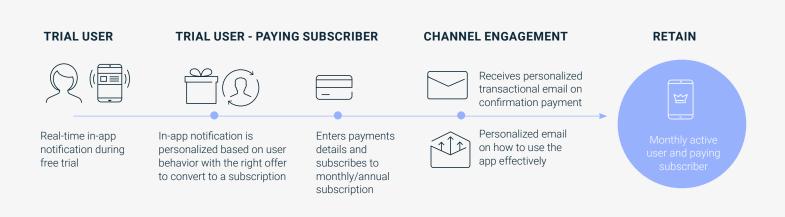
Lifecycle marketing should be a top priority for acquisition and retention and should do all of the following:

- Place each user at the very center of your marketing activities, allowing you to create personalized journeys based on what they do within your app.
- Earn the trust of users through an ongoing relationship.
- Create a clear path to conversion, no matter the user journey.
- Progress each user through your app and connect with them at the right moment through the right channel (Email, SMS, in-app, push, or social media).

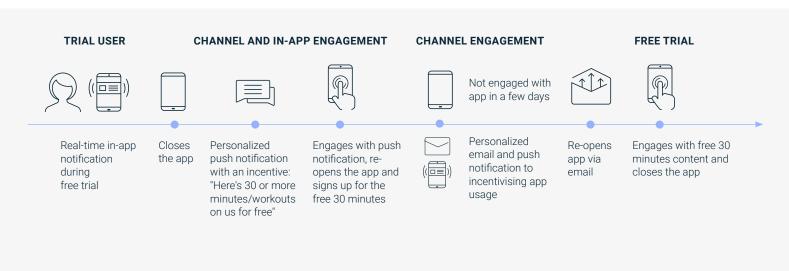


No two mobile app users are alike. Every user's journey is different and most platforms are unable to account for every type of journey that customer will take.

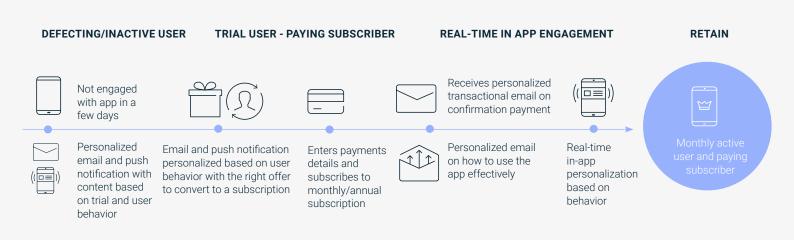
#### **Ideal Customer Path**



#### **Custom Customer Path**



#### **Custom Inactive Customer Path**



Runtastic, an **Adidas-owned** subscription-based **fitness app**, personalizes a fitness plan for every one of their 90+ million users, all while adding 150,000 users to their app each and every day. All this personalized information allows them to send custom in-app messages, push notifications, and emails. Because of this customized approach, their campaign creation efficiency increased by 300%.

"The unified management platform is key. Being able to plug in different products and channels, analyze, and act upon the results from one single dashboard significantly improves productivity and efficiency."

Mario Aichlseder, VP of Growth

**A RUNTASTIC** 

#### Segment Your Mobile App Users by Lifecycle Stage

The easiest way to begin connecting with users throughout their lifecycle is to segment them into various groups, interests, traits, or even actions they take within your app. Segmentation allows your team to predict and anticipate what a customer does before they do it, empowering your team with a proactive approach.

To make your segmentation a success, make certain your team has access to all your mobile app user data, and that all of that data is contained within your <u>customer engagement platform</u>. Your platform should automatically segment users based on their lifecycle within your app, and allow you to adjust your segments based on the marketing campaigns you run.

"Emarsys differentiated itself because it was one tool that did everything: the truly integrated omnichannel aspect, the marketing automation, and its advanced capabilities in terms of reporting. Email, SMS, Push... everything communicates well and easily. It was facilitated by the user-friendly approach of the solution. Additionally, we needed an open and scalable solution that could partner with our internal ecosystem, which the platform could easily integrate into."

Jean-Baptiste Chapelleaubos, Customer Engagement Solutions Manager

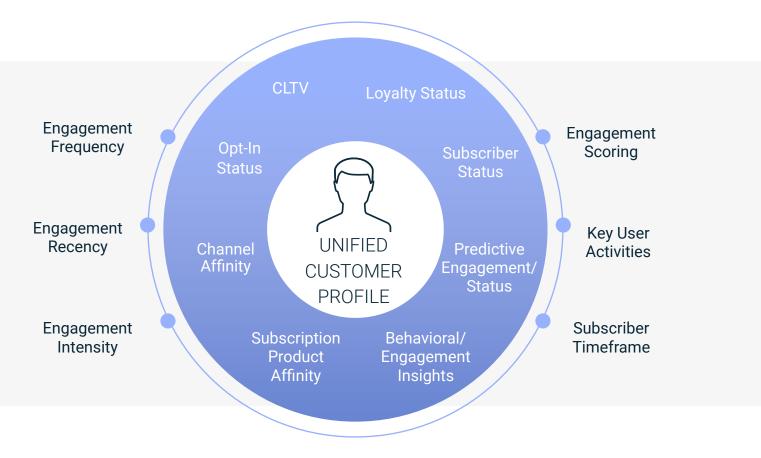


#### What Al Can Do for You

Al is not just some plugin or add-on to your customer engagement platform, it should be your platform's foundation. Al can work across every channel to understand how customers move through their lifecycle (when they purchase, when they drop-off, when they're likely to unsubscribe, etc.).

The AI platform uses this information to handle the complexity of segmenting users so you can better understand when and where your team should interact with users in real-time.

#### Al Analyzes Your Customer Data to Unlock User Insights



Overall, using AI to power your marketing will bring users the customized experiences they seek and have a strong positive impact on your company's bottom line. Plus, it'll save your team a great deal of time.

"By leveraging AI and automation against its rich vertical first-party data... brands like ours can generate greater insights into consumer behaviors, create consistent, personalized journeys and deliver them across all of our consumers' different touchpoints – whether online or offline, within one single platform. Our partnership [with Emarsys] has not only transformed how we communicate with our

customers, but also allowed our marketing team to spend more time creating better engagement for consumers wherever and whenever they engage with our brand."

Rick Almeida, Vice President, E-commerce





## Step 3:

# Unlock Personalization Across More Channels (Than Your App)

Once data silos are broken down and the integration of all your data is complete, you can begin to connect with mobile app users outside the app via email, SMS, push notifications, and even CRM ads. This is all possible with appropriately permissioned customer information such as an email or phone number for SMS.

Just be aware of the following when communicating with mobile app users:

- Personalize your marketing. App users do not want to see general messages. They crave personalization.
- Your cadence. Notifications such as push and SMS are disruptive, so make certain it's done at the best time and frequency to engage users.



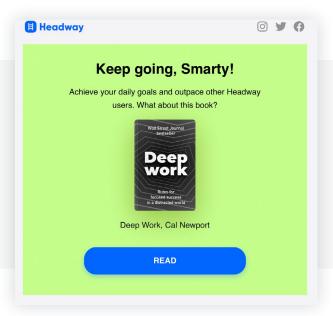
#### Social Media & CRM Ads

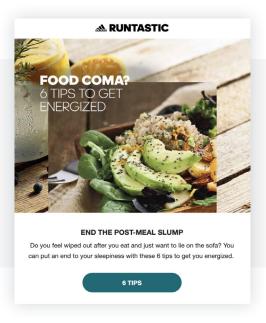
One of the easy ways to deliver 1:1 personalized messages is to use CRM ads. These ads allow you to match your app user's first-party data with profiles across Facebook, Google, and other platforms, so you can easily retarget your users and deliver personalized content and offers relevant to their lifecycle stage and their interests.

#### **Email**

Email can easily be used to remind a user to try your app out again, take action, or to remind a subscriber about a new feature. There are many, many ways to use email to connect with users and subscribers. You can email users:

- About a limited time off a subscription purchase
- When changes are made in the app settings
- About your newest app updates





#### **In-App Messages**

With in-app messages, you can notify users about new features, answer their questions, and request feedback. One of the more unique in-app use cases is sending a message based on geolocation and weather.

For example, Drizly, recently acquired by Uber, delivers alcohol to your door in less than 60 minutes. They discovered that more people want alcohol delivered on days it rains. In their "Make it Rain" campaign, they sent in-app messages to users on days where there was an 80% or higher chance of rain.



Image credit: Drizly

Another example is <u>Uber</u>. During peak times when it costs more to ride, they send out a notification that surge pricing is ending so they can book a lower-fare ride.

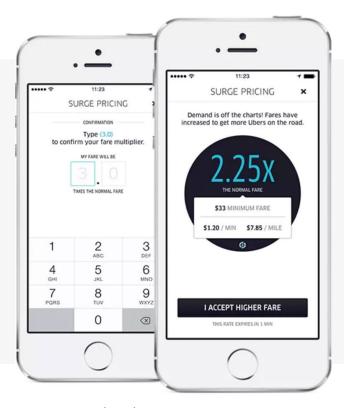


Image credit: Uber

#### **Push Notification**

The fitness app <u>Runtastic</u> uses trigger-based push messages that are sent to subscribers when they finish a workout, such as a push notification with a link to a blog post that contains ingredients for a post-workout meal. The brand noticed an engagement increase of 90% by using these trigger-based push notifications.

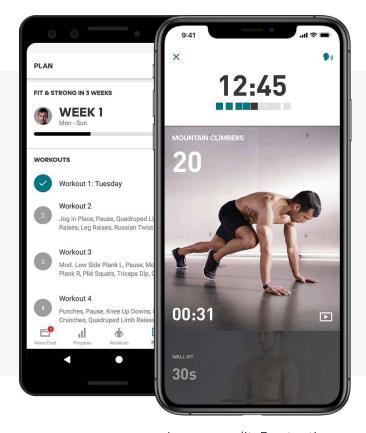


Image credit: Runtastic

#### **How Privacy Changes Affect Your Data**

For the past several years, data privacy has been changing through regulations such as Europe's GDPR, Singapore's PDPA, and the USA's CCPA. What a company can do with a customer's data is <u>becoming stricter</u>.

Apple's IDFA (identifier for advertisers) opt-out for mobile app users is another privacy change. Through Apple's new App Tracking Transparency (ATT) Framework, mobile app users will be shown a popup and <u>asked if</u> they agree to the app tracking their online activities. This is similar to apps that ask permission to use a mobile app user's microphone or camera.

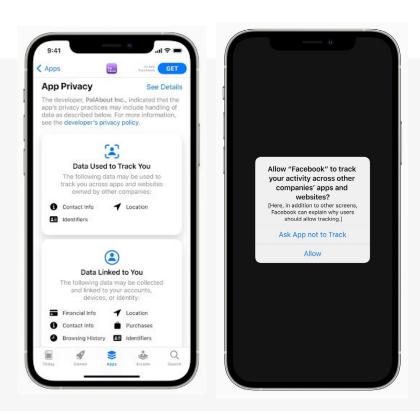


Image credit: Apple

"About a year or so ago, Apple, Google, and Firefox also announced that they won't be supporting the use of third-party cookies on their browsers anymore. And as part of Apple's announcement in 2020 [for] iOS 14, the IDFA (Identifier for Advertisers) will also no longer be relevant or widely used for a customer identifier on mobile for any kind of advertising and marketing purposes. And with regards to those third-party cookies, Safari and Mozilla, they've already blocked the use of third-party cookies, and they now require explicit consent and opt-in per channel from the customer to be able to use that data... Right now, it's not something that we've seen a lot of brands prioritize, but it does need to be a strategy that they build on because the impact is that marketers will actually have no way to get those insights from mobile and online customer behavior unless a customer provides them with the explicit permission to track and use their first-party data."

Payal Hindocha, Vertical Product Marketing Manager



Access to data lies in the hands of your mobile app users. The sad news is that only 10% of US companies are working to comply with 50+ privacy laws.

To comply with data regulations and empower your teams to leverage customer data for marketing campaigns, now is the time to make certain your data is no longer siloed, but placed in a location that allows it to be easily accessed by the person responsible for privacy laws within your company. Data is your primary owned asset.

#### Provide a Value Exchange

A big part of your mobile strategy must be in obtaining your mobile users' email address or phone number. Getting both would be ideal and you must then ask permission to send emails or text messages so you can connect with people across channels outside mobile.

Gaining an opt-in is all about the sweet science of the value exchange. Your mobile user wants to hear from you... but only when you offer value in the form of highly relevant and personalized experiences. The entire lifecycle journey of your users should be full of personalized experiences that never make them second-guess whether they should unsubscribe from your messages.

"Right now I believe that marketers have a huge opportunity to get on the front foot with regard to customer data, how they gather and use it, and how they explain and demonstrate the value to customers for giving them the permission to use that for a period of time. And, you know, I think I'm seeing it, and I'm delighted that I'm seeing it, that marketers are absolutely thinking about their data strategy and how they're going to move into that totally different mindset. It's a totally different mindset to give me all of the data I can, just get it from anywhere, and I'll see what I can do with it, into what do I need to add value to my customer? What is the value I'm going to give them back for it? And then how do I acquire directly in a relationship of trust? And to me, you know, this is kind of core to the new battleground for brands going forward, will be how will they do that"

David Eldridge, Chairman & Co-Founder



## Step 4:

# Create Highly Personalized and Targeted Campaigns

Okay, you've made it through everything you must do to reach mobile subscribers, engage, and connect with them in real-time, and on a personal level, across multiple channels. The big question is: how can you actually do this? Where do you start?

Well, you could do it the hard way by meeting with your team to discuss and think about every way your brand should connect with users throughout their lifecycle, which channel to connect with them, and the right timing to send them targeted 1:1 communications and experiences.

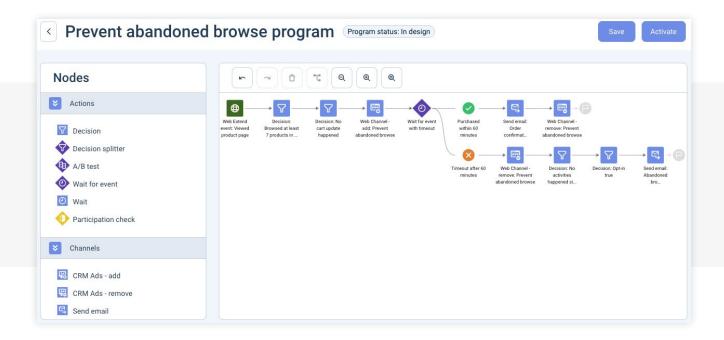
Scaling this way with your team would be nearly impossible without an Al platform that does most of the hard work for you to pull in and segment all the various users, and then allows your team to use that information to connect in real-time with users across multiple channels.

#### Personalize Users' Experiences with Real-Time Interactions

Personalization is most critical to the 18-34 demographic, and often <u>leads</u> to more impulsive purchases, more loyal customers, and increased revenue. Personalization is about creating 1:1 experiences for the right user, on the right channel, at a time when they're most receptive... all in real-time.



Every second, your customer engagement platform is flooded with user data. This data can be harnessed to gain a deep understanding of each mobile app user so they can automatically be segmented and assigned a lifecycle stage.



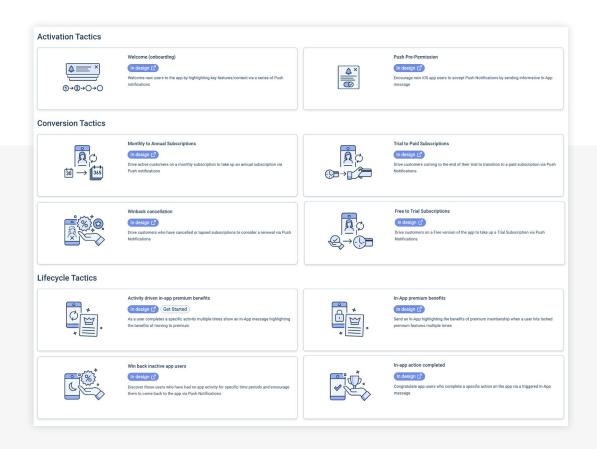
You can then use real-time interactions to connect with users throughout their journey in real-time across multiple channels, and even boost the lifetime value of subscribers. Below are some examples of what you can do with real-time interactions:

- Live Reactions You can target users with timely in-app messages or push notifications based on specific actions they take within your app. You can send timely messages to:
  - Offer a trial period
  - Request their feedback
  - Send specific and relevant information based on what they do in your app
- Reminders You can encourage users to act based on what they have or haven't done lately. Drops, an app that makes learning a language easy, sends reminders to users if they haven't recently completed a learning session. This helps to bring back users who may be churning.
- ▶ **Abandoned Cancellation** If a subscriber visits your cancellation page, you can quickly send them a feedback request to find out how you can better provide for your user. You can do much more to keep active subscribers by connecting with them before they cancel.

#### **Speed to Market**

Even if you have a great platform that enables you to craft unique 1:1 user experiences, how do you create all the multitude of ways to connect with users across multiple channels? One of the best ways is to use a platform that has built-in tactics. With the click of a button you can quickly deploy:

- Activations such as highlighting key features of your app and welcoming new users.
- Conversion such as driving customers to become a subscriber through push notifications.
- Lifecycle such as a triggered in-app message that congratulates users who complete a specific action within your app.



By selecting the built-in tactics, you'll be able to quickly create innovative campaigns so your team can save time, generate specific business outcomes, and interact with users across any channel. All of this helps to bring your mobile app to market quickly.

"The Emarsys Interactions offers Tipico a platform that matches the customer-centric nature of our sports betting business. We can leverage its architecture and intuitive user interface to achieve a fast time-to-market, with personalized customer journeys across all integrated communication channels in Emarsys. Being able to use real-time event data in combination with historical data points to calibrate our decision making in customer journeys is of great benefit to us. This allows the operational teams to react quickly to results and to set up A/B tests with ease. At the end of the day, it brings us a big step closer to target our customers at the right time and on the right channel in a highly segmented approach."

Thomas Allendoerfer, Product Manager





## Step 5:

### **Measure Outcomes and Adjust Quickly**

Some marketing teams are unable to see how their campaigns are running until the end of the quarter. Why? Because their data is siloed and other internal teams (such as IT) have to wrangle all this information together to view the results.

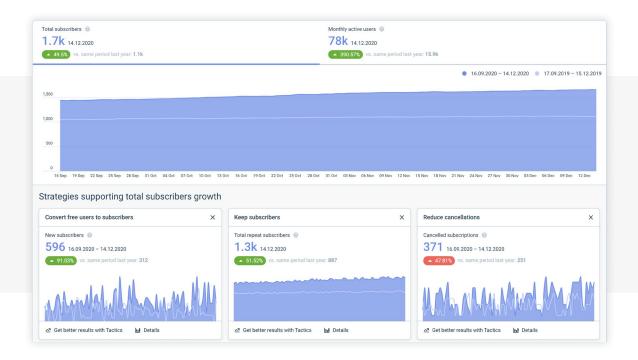
For example, if your app was featured in the App Store and 200% more users download your app in the month, you'll want to know how many were converted, why some chose not to become subscribers, and be able to quickly adjust your campaigns to get as many subscribers as possible.

Once your data is all connected, you gain deep-level insights on how your campaign impacts users and if they're converting from a free to a paid subscriber. You'll be able to quickly adjust your campaigns within minutes or hours, rather than days or weeks.

#### View and Optimize Your Marketing's Impact for Growth

<u>Gartner</u> believes that by 2025, 80% of marketers will cease implementing personalization efforts due to what some marketers may believe is a lack of measurable ROI.

Analytics within your customer engagement platform should provide you a dashboard that showcases the impact of your marketing efforts on the bottom line of your company. Brands who don't have a similar dashboard may be unable to show the C-Suite how their efforts increased their company's bottom line.



You'll be able to access specific mobile metrics, like those below, so you team can identify how your mobile campaigns and real-time interactions are contributing to the success of your company:

- Conversion rate
- Repurchase rate
- Retention rate
- Win-back rate (defecting)
- Win-back rate (inactive)
- Customer Lifetime Value
- Monthly Active Users
- Revenue attributed to Push
- Revenue attributed to Email
- Revenue attributed to SMS

## Bonus #1:

## The Importance of Tutorials and User Onboarding

There are a variety of ways to onboard users... but it all depends on how you want users to approach your app.

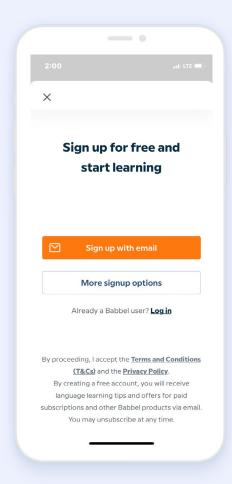


Image Credit: Babbel

First off, collect their information as soon as possible so you can connect with them if they leave your app. Whether you get their email or their number, you want to ask clear permission that allows you to connect with app users. And don't forget to ask permission to send push notifications.

Second, if you have an app that is highly customized – such as Babbel, who can easily teach anyone a language – walk users through the app so they create a custom experience based on their goals.

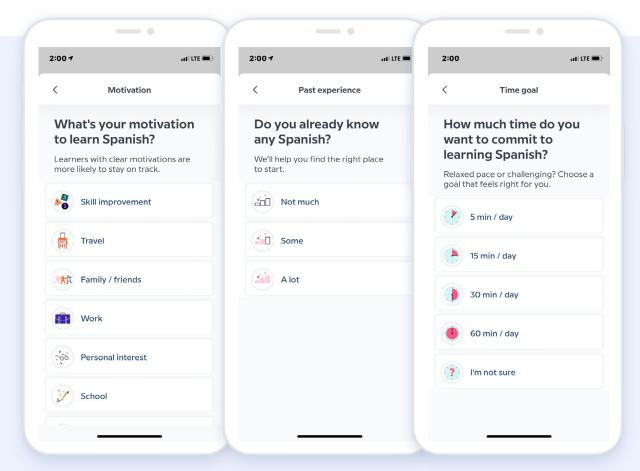
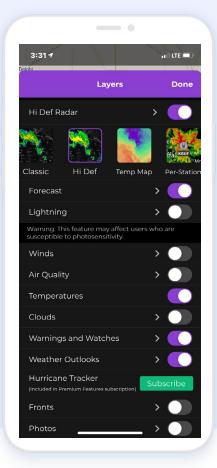


Image Credit: Babbel

Third, if you're offering a feature or benefit that other apps don't offer, go ahead and show customers how to use your app. For example, if your new weather app offers many more features than the competition, you may want to have a small overlay showing how things work.





What you don't want to do is overload users with a hefty tutorial before they begin using your app. Sometimes a user just wants to try something out for themselves and all the extra up-front instructions may push them away from even attempting to use your app.

A very simple onboarding journey for a fitness app might go something like this:

- Send a welcome push notification.
- Within 24 hours, check if the user completed any training and send a specific in-app message based on their activity level.
  Repeat this process over the next week.
- Gradually promote additional training for those only doing one workout per day.
- Introduce additional premium features that can improve the lives of your app users.

## Bonus #2:

# Why You Must Treat Seasonal Users Differently

Many times you'll find that holiday and seasonal users are vastly different from the users you gather throughout the year. Why? Well, as an example, if you're a fitness app and they join right after the new year, users are likely motivated to either lose weight, stay in shape, build muscle, or just get healthy.

This group wants to make changes for the better, and having the right experiences and communications in place to target these users will serve you well.

For this specific audience you must adjust your onboarding to connect with their desired outcomes. You can highlight specific app features that may help users achieve their goals for the year.

What you don't want to do is use the same strategy you've used throughout the year. Communicate your value and the benefits they can expect to see if they stick with your app.



# **About Emarsys**

Emarsys empowers digital marketing leaders and business owners with the only omnichannel customer engagement platform built to accelerate business outcomes.

By rapidly aligning desired business results with proven omnichannel customer engagement strategies — crowdsourced from leading brands across your industry — our platform enables you to accelerate time to value, deliver superior 1:1 experiences and produce measurable results ... fast.

Join more than 1,500 companies who trust Emarsys to deliver the predictable, profitable outcomes that their businesses demand and the highly personalized omnichannel experiences that their customers deserve.

Watch a 3-minute demo ▶



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