



Press release

UK mobile app culture shows no sign of abating

Date

25 June 2010

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London, 25 June 2010 - Britons' love affair with mobile phone applications has turned from a dalliance into a settled and dependable relationship. With a fifth of smartphone users downloading more apps than six months ago, mobile applications may soon replace browsers as the main gateway to the web for British consumers.

A study of over 1,100 smartphone users by leading market research company GfK NOP found that on average they download 15 applications to their phones, keeping 12 of them and using about five daily. The transitory nature of many apps means that while they only use a third of their applications, consumers will always have an appetite for more – with a quarter of smartphone users saying there is no limit to the number of applications they'd have on their phone.

Although a fifth of those questioned would never spend money on an application, the survey suggests that the majority would pay, with half those polled having already paid for an app, which typically range from 50p and £5. Mobile applications that can be used frequently or which provide a necessary service or function are the main reasons for paying for an application, but surprisingly the chance to use an advertising-free app is less of an incentive.¹

Ian Ralph, mobile technology expert at GfK NOP, says: "This study reveals people love their mobile phone applications and are willing

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to pay for the right one if they can find it. Companies that can offer apps with the right user experience will find their way in to the hearts, minds and wallets of smartphone users.”

The study shows that a quintessential must-have app does not exist for British consumers, with the most popular mobile phone applications covering diverse areas such as entertainment, social networking, news and – inevitably – weather.² The under 25s use the most apps on a daily basis and the affluent download the greatest number.³ While both genders primarily use applications for email and games, women like to use them for social networking whereas men prefer travel apps.⁴

Ian Ralph says: “There is no such thing as a ‘killer app’ that everyone wants, as every person’s needs and interests are unique. Instead mobile applications are like music or DVD collections, representing the needs, personalities and interests of the individual. As people become more app aware, they will tailor their mobile applications to fit in with their own lifestyles. The World Cup is a great example, with many smartphone users utilising disposable apps that they will discard when the tournament is over.”

Word of mouth is the biggest driver for app-usage with two-fifths of people downloading mobile applications based on the recommendation of their friends, family or colleagues. This is followed by web research and advertising on app stores.⁵

About the survey

The survey was conducted online by GfK NOP between 15/05/2010 and 21/05/2010 among 1,108 UK smart phone users.

1. 10% of respondents agreed that an app is worth paying for if “the app offers a service / information available elsewhere, but without advertising.”

2. 45% of respondents regularly use an entertainment app, 37% of respondents regularly use a social networking app, 36% of respondents regularly use a news app, 36% of respondents regularly use a weather app



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3. 16-24 year olds use 10.03 apps daily (mean score) which is double the national average of 4.76 (mean score). Respondents earning more than £76k download 22.21 apps daily (mean score) compared to the national average of 15.42 (mean score)

4. 44% of women and 43% of men use email apps, 48% of women and 42% of men use games apps. The third choice for women is social networking, with 42% of women having social network apps. The third choice for men is travel apps with 38% of men using a travel app.

5. When asked what drives/encourages you to download an app, 30% of respondents said 'I read about apps on the web; and 28% said 'I see apps listed / advertised on the app store.'

– ENDS –

EDITOR'S NOTE: Please source all information to GfK NOP.

For further details or to arrange an interview, please contact Allison Joyce, PR Manager, tel: +44 20 7890 9432 / email: allison.joyce@gfk.com

About GfK NOP

GfK NOP Ltd is part of the GfK Group and a leading market research agency in the UK and internationally. It is a renowned supplier of market information and insight, offering sector specialists and best-in-field research for qualitative, quantitative, ethnographic, omnibus and online research services.

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