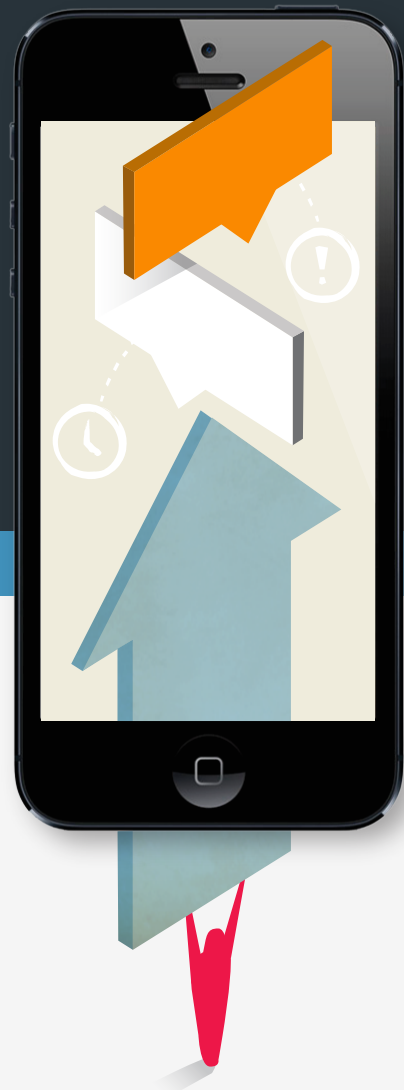




GUIDE TO PUSH

—
5 Tips For Success



INTRODUCTION

Winners in the mobile app ecosystem know that installs aren't enough any more. They cost a lot of money, most are gone within a couple of weeks, and the vast majority don't stick around long enough to deliver real value to the business.

That all-too-familiar scenario represents a failure to build relationships with app users. The solution is to treat those app users as individuals, and communicate with them on that basis - so that each app user receives a personalized experience, and using the app is a process of deeper engagement rather than simply a series of transactions.

It's no surprise that companies taking that approach enjoy levels of retention, engagement and revenue that others can only dream of.

Push notifications are a key part of that approach.

They are how we talk to users when they are outside the app. And despite what many believe, they are at their least effective when sent indiscriminately to long lists of lost users in a usually futile attempt to bring them back.

Instead, they should be at the heart of your engagement strategy with all your app users - wherever they are in the lifecycle. And to help make that happen, we've put together 5 tips to put you on the right track.

Enjoy!



01 | DELIVER VALUE

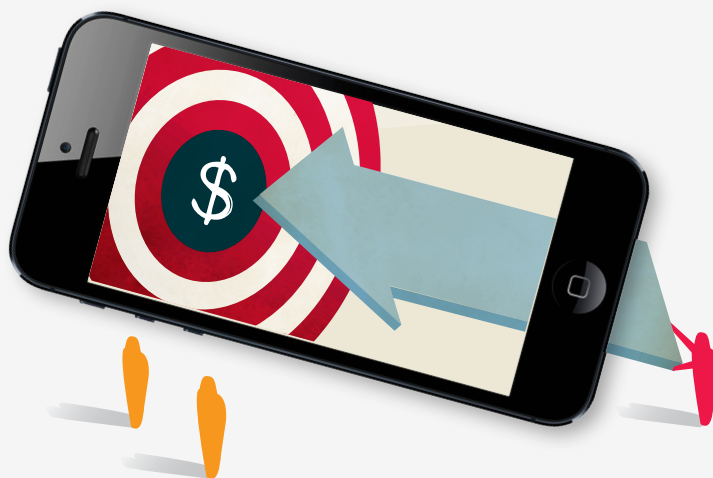
A user who is willing to receive push notifications is giving you a chance. They're willing to have a conversation with you. But as in real life, that conversation won't last long if all you have to say is worthless, irrelevant or self-promoting (trust us - we learned that the hard way).

So remember first this golden rule - *unless you have something worthwhile to say, say nothing.*

In this context, 'something worthwhile' means something that you genuinely believe is a message, offer or promotion that is, or could be, of real interest to the person you are sending it to. If you follow this rule, you are on the way to a successful long-term relationship. If you don't, your campaigns will actually have a negative effect on your business: plenty of users won't respond to invasive push notifications by carefully updating their notification centre. They'll just uninstall your app.

By way of example, a 50% bonus on in-app credit available on a particular day is probably worthwhile. The fact that there is a new item available in an in-app store probably isn't.

Of course, ultimately this is a judgement call, but track your click and conversion rates. If they start falling, it's time to re-think exactly what goes into your push notification campaigns.



02 | SEGMENT THE USER BASE

If push notifications have a bad reputation, it's probably because so many organizations use them in such an indiscriminate way. Consider email: in many ways the online equivalent of the push notification. We're all familiar with unfocused, untargeted and largely ineffective email marketing campaigns. We call them spam.

Don't make the same mistake with push. Mobile app developers are lucky enough to have access to vast amounts of data relating to their users. We know how long they have been active, what their current status is, which items they have purchased or not purchased, which app features they have used and how often - the list is almost endless.

All that data can help in delivering push notifications that are highly targeted, which in turn means:

- * Any offer you promote is relevant, and more likely to be acted upon
- * You can speak in the language of your target audience, and resonate with them effectively
- * You can avoid cannibalizing revenue by excluding users likely to buy or return anyway from your offers

In our example from above, it might make sense to promote a 50% bonus on buy-ins to a user segment that otherwise is unlikely to convert. That might be those who have been active in the app for over 5 hours, have never purchased previously, and are beyond a certain level or stage in the app.

Remember - the goal is to build a long-standing relationship that is beneficial for all. That means respecting your audience and it means thinking carefully about who you talk to. As a rule of thumb, the fewer people you are sending to the better: and the more successful your campaigns will be.



03 | GET YOUR TIMING RIGHT

Nobody likes to be woken up in the middle of the night to be told their virtual pet is hungry. Still less to be told that their daughter's virtual pet is hungry. So think carefully about when you send your push notifications.

Users who opt-in to push deserve to be treated with a little respect. And you can guarantee that if they aren't, your app won't be on their phone or tablet for long. So follow a few simple rules for ensuring your campaigns are both considerate and effective:

Always consider local time. It sounds obvious, but too many organizations fire out push notifications at the same time to users all over the world. It should be obvious why that isn't a good idea. If you want to send a notification at 7pm, make sure it goes at 7pm wherever in the world the user happens to be.

Be smart with operational push. Notifications that simply inform a user that a certain event has occurred in an app can be a great way to keep them engaged and retained. But they should be used with care, and if at all possible disabled during 'quiet hours'

Leverage the positive aspects of timing. Notifications sent at peak usage times with highly time-limited offers are likely to get attention - and mean future communications are assumed to be equally relevant.



04 | DELIVER A SEAMLESS EXPERIENCE

Great push notifications are targeted, and deliver relevant, compelling offers that simply demand to be clicked! And then your user is led to the home screen of your app and the trail goes cold. “What did that message say again? And how do I find it?”

If you want your push notification campaigns to generate real results, it’s essential to keep your users within a seamless experience, so that when they click on a push notification to avail of a specific offer, they are sent to a meaningful location that builds on the information they already have.

There are two smart ways to make that happen. One is to embed within the push notification a command on click to go to a specific location in the app. For example, if you’re promoting a bonus on real-money buy-ins (get a 50% diamond bonus on all diamond purchases today!), take people directly to the purchase screen for that item. If you have a new feature within your app you’d like people to see, when they respond to the push notification take them straight there.

The second alternative is to deliver push respondents directly to an in-app message (or ‘rich message’ as they are sometimes called) that specifically follows up the push notification message with additional information and context. As there isn’t usually a huge amount of space in a push notification, this might be necessary.

Either approach is an effective way to ensure that push notifications are part of an integrated campaign that leads users all the way along the specific path you want them to follow - with a minimum of fall off along the way.



05 | TEST YOUR CREATIVE!

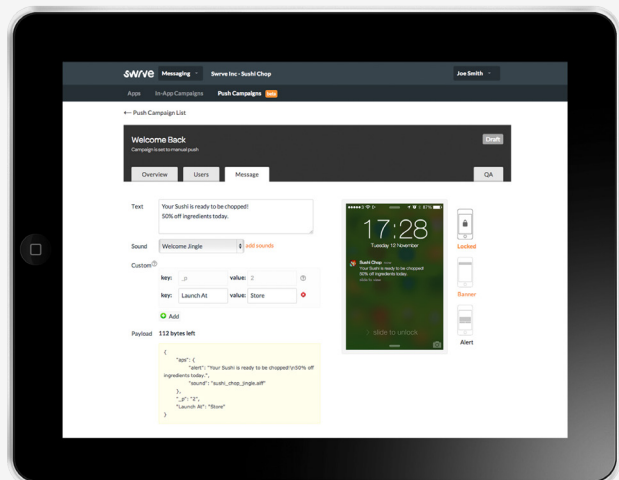
There are many variables to consider when constructing a push campaign. Creative - or to put it in plain English 'the words you use' - is just one, but it certainly makes a difference. Phrase an offer or promotion in the wrong way and you can guarantee a lacklustre response. Get it right and you can drive engagement and retention to new levels.

So how DO you get it right. A/B testing is the smart way to identify, using real user data, which language works and which does not. But unlike the A/B testing of changes in user experience, push notification requires an immediate decision - you won't get the chance to go back and try again, or at least in many cases you won't.

For that reason it makes sense to consider a 'micro-test' ahead of each campaign you run. After identifying your segment, serve competing variants to a subset (perhaps 10%) of that group, and use response data to establish which phrasing was most effective in terms of clicks and conversions.

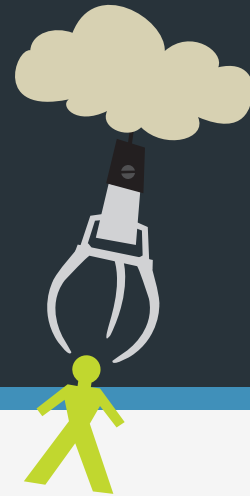
You're then ready to serve the winning variant to the rest of your segment, right there and then, meaning that every time you send a push notification, you're finding out with real user data exactly which version of your message will work most effectively.

Don't forget - for some more regular promotions and messages it's perfectly possible to A/B test over a longer period of time and 'lock in' successful variants - so testing isn't always necessary. But it is a smart idea to keep experimenting with new alternatives - nothing ever stays exactly the same!



ABOUT SWRVE

Swrve is relationship marketing for mobile apps.



We're dedicated to one thing and one thing only: helping our customers build lasting, personalized relationships with their mobile app users and maximizing in-app retention, conversion, usage and revenues.

The Swrve platform delivers everything you need. Live editing and A/B testing of all aspects of user experience, plus the creation and delivery of both in-app messaging and push notification campaigns.

Our 'active' platform is supported by industry-leading segmentation capabilities that make all marketing activity ultra-targeted and - thanks to our A/B testing abilities - proven with real user data.

Many of the world's largest and most successful app companies use Swrve to deliver success. Contact us at www.swrve.com and join them

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