

Gartner: App Downloads to reach over 100 Billion

Written by Marco Attard
20. September 2013

Global mobile app downloads should reach 102 billion in 2013 according to Gartner-- up from 64 billion in 2012, with annual revenues growing from \$18bn in 2012 to \$26bn in 2013.

Free apps account for 91% of total 2013 app downloads, a perhaps non-surprising total seeing how cheap-as-free apps make 60% of Apple App Store offerings and 80% of the Google Play store.

Table 1. Mobile App Store Downloads, Worldwide, 2010-2016 (Millions of Downloads)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Free Downloads	57,331	92,876	127,704	167,054	211,313	253,914
Paid-for Downloads	6,654	9,186	11,105	12,574	13,488	14,778
Total Downloads	63,985	102,062	138,809	179,628	224,801	268,692
<i>Free Downloads %</i>	<i>89.6</i>	<i>91.0</i>	<i>92.0</i>	<i>93.0</i>	<i>94.0</i>	<i>94.5</i>

Source: Gartner (September 2013)

The two major stores should account for 90% of 2017 global downloads thanks to richer ecosystems and large developer communities, even both will see at least some declines-- Gartner predicts average monthly app downloads will drop from 4.9 in 2013 to 3.9 in 2017 per iOS device and from 6.2 in 2013 to 5.8 in 2017 per Android device.

"We expect strong growth in downloads through 2014, but growth is forecast to slow down a bit in later years," Gartner says. "The average downloads per device should be high in early years as users get new devices and discover the apps they like. Over time they accumulate a portfolio of apps they like and stick to, so there will be moderate numbers of downloads in the later years."

Meanwhile in-app purchases (IAPs) should grow from making 11% of 2012 app store revenue to 48% by 2017. According to the analyst IAPs already make a "significant" amount of Apple App Store revenues. Other platforms do not have such high IAP levels, but such contributions

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should also grow in the future.

"We see that users are not put off by the fact that they have already paid for an app, and are willing to spend more if they are happy with the experience," Gartner concludes. "As a result, we believe that IAP is a promising and sustainable monetisation method because it encourages performance-based purchasing; that is, users only pay when they are happy with the experience, and developers have to work hard to earn the revenue through good design and performance."

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