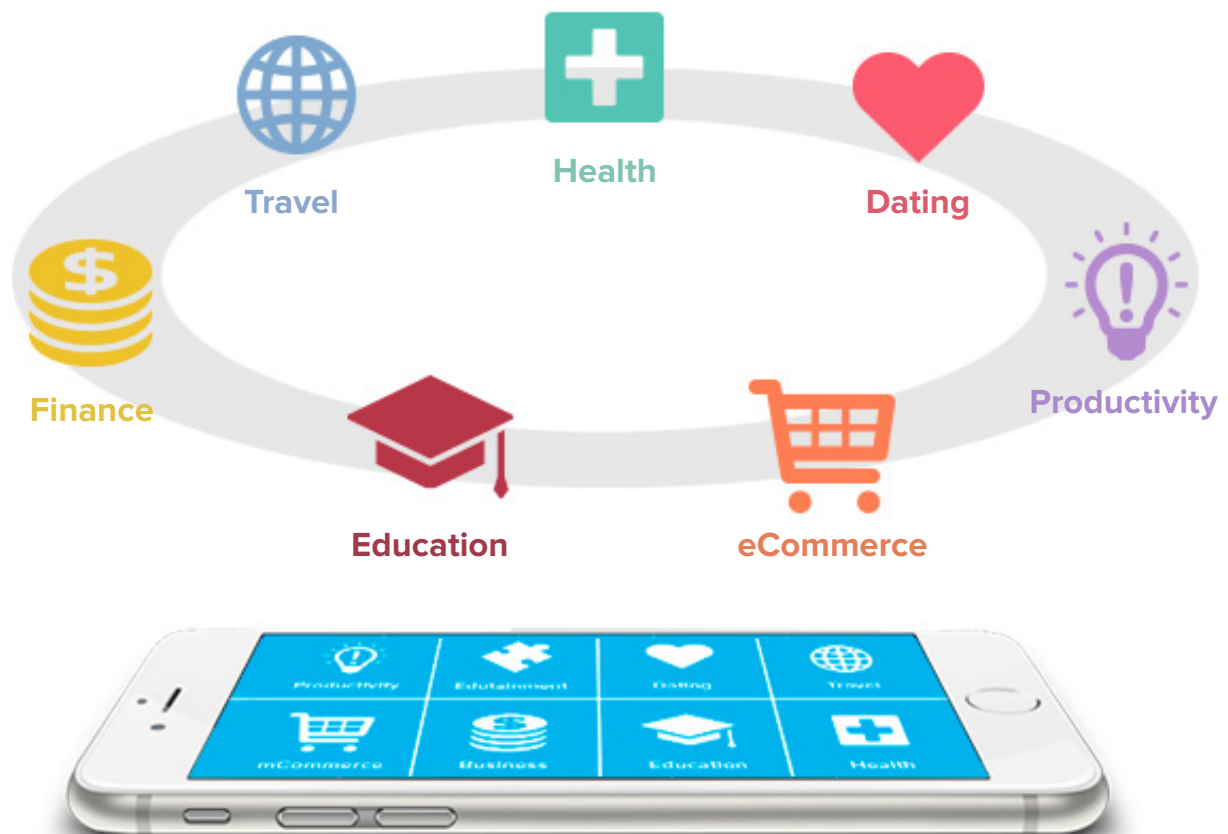




## GUIDE TO MARKETING NON-GAMING APPS

Interviews with 9 Leading  
Mobile Marketers





# Liftoff's Guide to Marketing Non-Gaming Apps

## Interviews with 9 Leading Mobile Marketers

Build a great mobile game, and it will sell itself. Build a great mobile subscription app, and get ready to bust your tail for every single active subscriber.

Marketers of non-gaming apps face a unique set of needs and challenges in growing their mobile businesses. From driving return customers to a mobile eCommerce app, generating paid users of a subscription-based app, to explaining the ROI involved in using a mileage tracking app, every app marketer has their own hurdle to jump in order to acquire new quality users.

This guide, comprised of interviews with nine expert mobile marketers all across the spectrum of app categories - dating, eCommerce, education, finance, business, and health - shares best practices and tips for successfully growing a non-gaming mobile app. Read on to find out how top mobile marketers optimize their KPIs, communicate with new and existing users, and diversify their channels to rapidly grow their business.



# Kevin Hsu

Mobile Marketing Manager at Touch of Modern

## TOUCH OF MODERN



### Touch of Modern eCommerce

Touch of Modern is a curated eCommerce experience that offers daily discovery of the most fascinating and well-designed products in the world.

- Founded in 2012
- Headquartered in San Francisco



## Q&A with Kevin

Kevin Hsu is the Mobile Marketing Manager at Touch of Modern in San Francisco. His key to success is utilizing multiple device touch points to turn prospects into engaged, returning customers of their eCommerce platform.

### What are your day to day duties at Touch of Modern?

I run a lot of the user acquisition for both mobile as well as web, specifically a lot of Twitter advertising, Facebook advertising and working with partners like Lifftoff. I find new channels to try and grow this company and drive as much top line revenue as I can. Customer retention is another big focus for me, I'm working hard to increase their lifetime value to Touch of Modern.

## **What does a quality mobile user look like to Touch of Modern?**

A quality mobile user to us is really someone who comes in, is really engaged with our app, makes a lot of purchases, and shares the app with friends. Virality plays an important role in our growth.

## **How important are app installs?**

Installs are fairly important for us. As a top of the funnel action, they serve as the first indicator of how well we can scale the operation.

## **What strategies have you found work best to convert installs into engaged users or, perhaps in your case, purchasers and sharers?**

For us to convert power users, we focus on the channels and DSPs that consistently back out for us. At Touch of Modern, we're very aggressive about analyzing how our partners are performing month over month.

It's not always apparent initially, but as we continue to test our variables, we can really hone in on which channels are backing out best over time.

## **What have you done in the past year to help better monetize your app?**

We've really focused on to better monetize our app would be making sure that the technology itself, the app itself, works well and it works very simply. The experience you'd have

with our app a year ago is much different than now, we've invested heavily into the technology and reduced downtime. The result is a reduction in attrition, something we're keenly focused on.

## **What do you think about diversifying user acquisition channels outside of Facebook?**

We're very active and aggressive when it comes to diversifying our user acquisition channels, as well as partners that can drive app users to us. Twitter is a great example of a company that has a tremendous amount of traffic and is driving pretty strong user behavior for us, actually.

**“Don't get complacent. Always diversify and optimize user acquisition channels if you want to grow.”**

**Kevin Hsu, Touch of Modern**

## **What are some of the things that you might do differently to market your app during the holiday period?**

We do focus a lot more on re-engagement because we've already spent a lot of money into acquiring these users. We want to make sure that the app is top of mind for them so we actively re-engage our end users at the places on every device they interact with us.

**“Focus on re-engagement. You spend a lot of money acquiring users, don’t lose them.”**

**Kevin Hsu, Touch of Modern**

**What’s the biggest challenge that you’ve encountered in app marketing with mobile user acquisition?**

Two challenges come to mind. The first is that, as a mobile marketer, the landscape is really fragmented and it can be really challenging to cut through the noise and understanding which channels to focus on for user acquisition. The second challenge for me is attribution. Touch of Modern began as a web-based eCommerce site and eventually transitioned into an app-first company. Having insight into how our customers are interacting with us, and where they’re converting – whether it’s mobile or desktop, app or website – is a top priority for us.

**What do you see as the next big thing in mobile marketing?**

I think the next big thing for mobile marketing is true omni-channel and device type advertising. Facebook is the closest to building out their dynamic product ads to something where you focus in on that person’s experience and how they’re interacting with their devices in their everyday lives.





# Iryna Newman

Director of Customer Acquisition at Invoice2go

# Invoice2go



## Invoice2go Business

Invoice2go helps small businesses manage their cash flow through simple invoicing, expense tracking, and reporting. Trusted by more than 200,000 customers, it's the #1 mobile invoicing app in the App Store.

- Founded in 2002
- Headquartered in Redwood City, CA



## Q&A with Iryna

Iryna Newman is the Director of User Acquisition at Invoice2go, headquartered in Redwood City, CA. She's found success in keenly understanding where, when, how, and on what device to speak with customers to best engage and deliver an invoicing solution.

### What does a quality mobile user look like to you?

A quality mobile user for Invoice2go is a user that has a propensity to become a paying subscriber of our product. What that means from the acquisition perspective is that if our product is an invoicing subscription, then our ads should not be served to teenagers with no credit cards. In general, a quality user to us is a user who, at a minimum, is a small

business owner who wants a simple way to create and send invoices from their phone, wherever they are.

### **How do you stay ahead of changes in technology?**

It's always tempting to follow the latest trend in marketing tech, whether it's, for example, advertising on wearables or local. The key here is to understand where your customers are. Often times our customers are driving from job to job, so they're not even on their mobile device. We need to think about how we talk to them. When we have their attention and they're ready to be engaged, we focus on providing a caring experience and delivering a genuine message with a solution tailored to their needs.

### **What the biggest challenge that you've encountered in marketing Invoice2go?**

The biggest challenge that I've encountered in marketing an app is scaling. What's really hard is scaling a channel at an effective cost per acquisition. It's not complex to find pockets of well-priced subscribers or purchasers, but what's difficult is finding 10 to 50x those subscribers at the same price. That's where we rely on creativity, strong analytics, and automation to be successful.

### **Are marketers too dependent on Facebook for app installs?**

Diversification is extremely important for marketers, just like it's true for investment

portfolios. It's tempting to get relaxed when one or two partners or channels work really well and stop testing new ones. When marketers get too content with early wins, they may not be not prepared for what to do when existing partners' performance dips. I can't emphasize enough the importance of diversification, but that comes at a cost of stretching the bandwidth and investing in R&D and exploration without an immediate payoff.

**“Our users’ attention is divided among many apps. We need our marketing to engage users everywhere they are.”**

**Iryna Newman, Invoice2go**

In terms of dependency on Facebook, it's important to understand that it's a closed ecosystem and the players are competing for the same inventory at an auction with a finite number of high quality impressions. Prices vary by quarter and season, which is normal, and smart marketers will be prepared for that. For example, Q4 is going to get really expensive, as all retailers are going to compete for limited inventory, so you have to plan for it in Q2 and Q3.

**Another thing marketers need to realize is: You've never seen a person with only Facebook installed on their smartphone, right?**

People's time and attention is divided between Facebook and many other applications. We want to meet users wherever they are, and from the perspective of cost, it could be more effective to give them that impression or click outside of Facebook. What's important is finding additional touchpoints to re-engage with users and provide exposure to your product both in Facebook and the many other publishers that are interesting to that user.

**“A good mobile marketer is 50% technologist, 30% analyst and 20% creative artist.”**

**Iryna Newman, Invoice2go**

**What's the biggest mistake that you've made as a mobile marketer?**

The biggest mistake I've made is testing vendors that I shouldn't have tested, or testing too many at the same time. It's tempting to say yes to every new channel or opportunity, but it takes time (and faith) to nurture a channel. Sometimes the best thing you can do is say no, and stay focused on what you've committed to.

**How would you describe the ideal mobile marketer?**

I say that a good mobile marketer is 50% technologist, 30% analyst and 20% creative artist. What makes this job so fun is that you get to use your left brain and your right brain. You have to be very analytical and precise, and you have to understand how to emotionally connect with a person through the creative side, but at the foundation of everything you have to understand attribution and how to scale.

**What is one piece of advice you would give to marketers of non-gaming apps?**

Don't forget that it's all about driving mobile revenue. There are only one or two KPIs and metrics that should be optimized for – everything else is a distraction. We're bombarded with SDKs and metrics at every single event. Some marketers get distracted and start optimizing for installs and other things that may not be aligned with the health of the business (i.e. more installs does not mean more engaged users)... My advice is focus on what matters. Remember that you're driving new users and revenue.

**What do you see as the next big thing in mobile marketing?**

We're shifting away from the misconception that marketing is an expense, and moving rapidly towards treating it as a profit centre, a revenue-generating arm of any company.



Technology is a huge supporter of this shift. We're seeing a lot of innovation happening in the space with everything being attributable, trackable and optimizable.

We're moving toward a place where marketers are getting out of the weeds and are able to spend their intellectual time on much more strategic decisions, thanks to marketing analytics automation. I think we're going to see a lot more sophistication coming from marketers in the next year or two.

**What are a few things you are excited about that are happening in mobile marketing?**

There are two things that I'm most excited about now, two things that I hope marketers are taking advantage of. One is retargeting and the second is marketing automation. On the retargeting front, the big idea is frequency. On average if we say, "We need to touch somebody six times before that person is ready to make a purchasing decision," then we want to be able to reach that person from multiple channels so we can get there faster.

I'm also excited about marketing automation. Most companies today are international, marketing on multiple operating systems across various interest groups and targeting categories. They have several segments of customers that they're going after, and probably have multiple images and calls-to-action in rotation. When you have that

level of complexity – and on top of that you want to test out different messaging – you can't do it manually. Taking advantage of the automation and bidding platforms that are available to us is critically important.

**“Have you ever seen a phone that only has Facebook installed? Diversify. Be everywhere your users are.”**

**Iryna Newman, Invoice2go**



# Chris Nguyen

Marketing Manager at Zoosk

zoosk

## Zoosk Dating

Zoosk is the #1 mobile dating app with over 35 million members in 80 countries. Users can browse local singles, chat, and flirt using Zoosk's unique Behavioral Matchingmaking™ engine. No lengthy questionnaires, just great matches based on your behavior and preferences.

- Founded in 2007
- Headquartered in San Francisco



## Q&A with Chris

Chris Nguyen is a Marketing Manager at Zoosk in San Francisco. Armed with a background in user support, Chris focuses on giving users a quality mobile experience before they've even registered to make sure that once they are Zoosk members, they're more likely to stay engaged and active in the community.

### What does a quality mobile user look like to Zoosk?

A quality user for us is someone that fills out the profile as soon as they install the app. They upload a photo, they fill out all the fields about themselves like, "What are you interested in? What do you like? What do you not like?" When users promptly fill out the profile, they're more likely to subscribe as a paid user.

### **Are there specific tactics that you've found work best to convert installs into engaged users?**

Creative testing definitely works out well for us. We test our creatives to find out which ads drive the best view-to-registration rate as well as what landing page will get more profile creations. Those are our most valuable actions and we can always get better so we test constantly to improve.

### **What is one thing you've done in the past year to improve monetization?**

We've done a lot of landing page testing. We've seen the profile creation and conversion to subscriber rate jump, just from optimizing our landing page. We've done a lot of creative testing as well, to see what creative actually gets users to convert at a higher percentage. Those are two really big ones.

### **How important are the holidays to your business?**

The holidays are extremely important to us. We see a huge surge in subscribers from after Christmas to New Years. A lot of people are trying to find that special someone, that's what we capitalize on.

### **What do you do differently to market your app during the holidays?**

During the holidays what we do is that we spend a little bit more because we want to capitalize on this upswing. Conversion rates

are naturally higher, subscribers convert at a much higher rate, we want to make sure that we're getting all the profiles and subscribers we can.

### **What's the biggest mistake you've made in mobile marketing?**

The biggest mistake I've made in mobile marketing is probably that I didn't do as much testing as I should have early on. There are a lot of parts in our funnel that we could've optimized, but I didn't test as much as I should have. I felt like that could've really helped our business.

**“Test as much as possible, and test everything in the funnel. It's the only way to find out what really works best.”**

**Chris Nguyen, Zoosk**

### **What's the one piece of advice that you would give to other marketers of non-gaming apps?**

Test as much as possible. Creatives, Landing Pages, everything. Test everything in your funnel and see what works. You'll never know what works until you test it out.

## **How did you get into mobile user acquisition?**

I joined Zoosk straight out of college but I didn't start in user acquisition. I needed a full-time job and I had a lot of background in tech support so I came here for a customer support position in the fraud protection department. Zoosk really cares about creating a quality user experience and we want to make sure the profiles you're connecting with are legitimate, real human beings. I worked in fraud protection for two years before our Director of Marketing invited me to join that team. I trained under him for a year and then he brought me full-time onto the marketing team.

## **What do you see as the next big thing in mobile marketing?**

The next big thing to me is going to be mobile video. I feel like if whoever you're running with doesn't have mobile video traffic, they're probably going to get left by the wayside. I already see it happening this year. Now users have better Internet and cellular connections with 4G and LTE, so you can stream video extremely easily. I'm already seeing companies dedicated to it. I think that's definitely going to be the next big thing. If you're not in on it right now, you better get started.

**“Be proactive and look out for new vendors. They're not just going to fall into your lap.”**

**Chris Nguyen, Zoosk**



# Nick Adkins

Marketing Analyst at SeatGeek



## SeatGeek eCommerce

SeatGeek is a ticket search engine. The site aggregates ticket listings for live sports, concerts, and theater events and presents them to consumers within an elegant and powerful user interface that makes finding the best value on events tickets painless and easy.

- Founded in 2009
- Headquartered in NYC



## Q&A with Nick

Nick Adkins is the Marketing Analyst at SeatGeek in New York. Knowing that returning users provide tremendous value to SeatGeek's bottom line, Nick and his team place an emphasis on mobile re-engagement to keep customers coming back for tickets to the hottest events in their city.

### What do you do at SeatGeek?

I am the Marketing Analyst here at SeatGeek. A large part what I do is mobile user acquisition but I also dabble in SEO and a few other things. Re-engagement is something that we're trying to put together right now, and I'm trying to lead those efforts.



## **Why is it so important to get early registrations?**

We find that registered users are much more active and in turn, much more valuable. We get a lot more information about registered users, which helps us find events they'd be interested in. We push registration as early as possible so we can be more valuable to users and vice-versa.

**“Quickly learn from your failures. There's no industry knowledge to rely on for support.”**

**Nick Adkins, SeatGeek**

## **How important are installs to SeatGeek?**

Installs are really important to us. We need to know how many people are downloading the app and what's the average price that we're paying for an install on each of our channels. We've calculated how much an install is worth to us, so we look at that compared to our ad spend and focus on re-engagement to maximize those installs.

## **How much focus do you guys put on post install engagement?**

We put a lot of emphasis on re-engagement. A registered user is several times more valuable than an un-registered user. With such a dramatic increase in value, it makes

sense for us to do everything we can to convert installs into registrations.

## **What does a quality mobile user look like to you guys?**

We want to see somebody who's interacting with the app fairly regularly, responds positively to push notifications, tracks artists, performers and teams. Obviously, someone who is making purchases in the app is more valuable, it's the best indication to us that they're going to make another purchase.

## **What is your strategy for converting installs into quality users?**

There are certain optimization techniques that we use. For example, our use of narrowly-targeted creative for our app install campaigns. If we're running campaigns across the country, rather than just having generic creative, we geo-target ads around major sports hubs and see a lot more value from our users who engage with that creative.

## **Is there any one thing that you guys have done this past year to better monetize your app?**

The one thing that I would point to is SeatGeek Checkout. When we started, we showed all the tickets on our site and app but the transactions didn't take place in either location. Having SeatGeek Checkout, where people make the transaction, is a much more seamless process and it's converting much better than our app used to do.

## **What has been the biggest challenge in marketing SeatGeek?**

We aren't able to bid as aggressively as some of our competitors, so we just have to be a little bit more intelligent about the strategies that we pursue aggressively and what's doing well. We've kept the team pretty lean, and a relatively large challenge is making sure that we're not overspending on marketing. We want to be efficient with our money, but we want to scale up as well. When a campaign is working, we're going to throw a lot of money at it. If it's not working, we want to know that as quickly as possible.

## **What's one piece of advice you would give to other marketers who are just getting into the space of marketing a non-gaming app?**

Something that's tricky for us is finding your market and understanding where are you going to be providing a lot of value. People go on gaming apps and they interact with them much more aggressively than they would an eCommerce app. Understanding how and when to engage with your users is important, but there isn't much literature on the subject for non-gaming apps. You've got to learn from your failures, and you can't always rely on industry knowledge to support you.

## **What's the biggest mistake you've made in mobile marketing?**

There have been a handful of tests I felt pretty excited about pursuing and as soon as I saw

even the slightest positive result I decided to throw more money at the campaigns without waiting for a statistically significant sample. The lesson there is to be patient. Run a full test before you try and draw any conclusions.

## **What roles do re-targeting and re-engagement campaigns play at SeatGeek?**

Diversifying your re-engagement campaigns is important, each medium has its own unique value proposition. Emails are really valuable because it's possible to put more information into an email than you would be able to put in a mobile interstitial ad or a banner ad, which you can fit maybe half a sentence on. Trying to educate people on the benefits of using an app is more in the domain of non re-targeting re-engagement. We supplement that with ads, which are great for keeping SeatGeek top of mind and associating it with the performers that users are specifically interested in.

## **What are your thoughts about the next big thing in mobile marketing?**

Video is going to be crucial moving forward. You are able to convey a lot more information about your app and your product in a 15 second video than you'd be able to do with any kind of interstitial ad or a static piece of creative. Additionally, re-targeting and re-engagement are going to be a crucial complement to video because CPIs will continue to rise and maximizing each install will become that much more important.



# Nat Robinson

Head of Marketing at MileIQ



## MileIQ Business

MileIQ service takes the hassle out of mileage tracking with a mobile app that tracks drives automatically, syncs them to the cloud, and dramatically simplifies the process of generating accurate mileage records.

- Founded in 2012
- Headquartered in San Francisco



## Q&A with Nat

Nat Robinson is the Head of Marketing at MileIQ in San Francisco. His focus is on driving subscriptions of MileIQ's mileage tracking mobile app by educating users on earning more valuable reimbursements.

### What does a quality mobile user look like for MileIQ?

A quality mobile user for us is one that's engaged in using the app, which is a little different for MileIQ. It runs quietly in the background and automatically detects when you're driving, then asks you to classify those drives as business or personal. A quality user just needs to have the app running, they don't have to actively use it.

## How do you turn app installs into quality users?

Right from the get-go, when you open the app we communicate the value of MileIQ with tutorials. We also use email to help new users understand the value of our app very quickly. We try to get drivers to what we find is an “Aha!” moment for them. Then, they can easily see the value of their business drives adding up and turning those miles into money.

**“Be diligent about your metrics. It’s very easy to make assumptions, especially the wrong assumptions.”**

**Nat Robinson, MileIQ**

A lot of people think that they can just do mileage tracking manually. What we found out from users and our data is that when they track mileage manually, they miss out on about 20% of the miles that they could be tracking. People tend to underestimate the amount that they actually drive for business. The challenge for us is educating users about how using a subscription service can help get them reimbursed for more money. In most cases, our users recapture the value of our subscription cost in just one 11 mile drive, so

we just have to help get them over that hump where they’re asking, “Why is this a subscription-based app?”

## How do you re-engage with users to keep them active?

We use notifications and emails to alert users when they’ve reach a level of relevancy in the app, whether they’ve hit a point where they should classify the drives they’ve made or the dollar amount they’ve reached in terms of business deductions. We use proactive re-engagement to help users get more value out of the app.

## How do you feel about diversifying user acquisition channels outside of Facebook?

Like any mobile company, we use Facebook today to acquire users. But we also are worried about how those economics degrade over time. We are heavily investing in other channels to diversify beyond Facebook. Things like Liftoff and even non-digital channels – we’re currently experimenting with direct response television, radio, podcasts, and direct mail.

## How important are the holidays to your business?

For MileIQ, our seasonal holiday is April 15, tax day. Our users are thinking about mileage tracking and mileage deduction when that question comes up on their tax return, and that’s when we become top of mind.

### **What are the key actions you want MileIQ users to engage in?**

We started with installs and optimized for that, then as we got better and more mature, we moved down the funnel and optimized for sign ups. Today, we're optimizing around subscriptions, that's the most valuable action a user can take.

### **What does mobile user acquisition mean to you?**

To me, it's about the way we do a couple different things. One is, "How do we get in front of people who are looking for something like us?" Another one would be, "How do we get in front of people who don't know they need something like us?"

There's such a variety of ways we can do both of those. You've got to try and do both of them pretty much equally well. Obviously there are different economics and education in those different audiences.

### **What piece of advice would you give to marketers of non-gaming apps?**

Be diligent about your metrics. It's very easy to make assumptions, especially the wrong assumptions. You want to get the best data you can before you run a test, the best data you can during a test. Then really check if that

data matches your expectations at the end.

### **What does it take for someone to succeed in mobile marketing?**

In mobile marketing, you can't be afraid to try new things. It also helps if you have a good combination of analytical ability and creativity, but you absolutely need to be adventurous.

### **What do you see as the next big thing in mobile marketing?**

Customization. Being able to understand who your user is very quickly and customize the whole app experience for them, from onboarding to daily use. For us, that might be running a campaign on Facebook for realtors then re-orienting the app around real estate agents and what their business is, even to the point where we would customize parts of the app for that particular vertical.

**"Mobile marketers need to be strong in both analytics and creativity, but they absolutely need to be adventurous."**

**Nat Robinson, MileIQ**





# Jon Michaeli

EVP, Marketing & Business Development Medisafe



## Medisafe Health

Medisafe is the leading cloud-synced platform helping patients stay on top of all their medications. Way more than a pill organizer (although it's that, too), Medisafe makes it easy to adhere to the most complicated medication schedule, so wondering, "Did I take this already?" is a thing of the past.

- Founded in 2012
- Headquartered in Boston, MA



## Q&A with Jon

Jon Michaeli is the Executive Vice President, Marketing & Business Development at Medisafe in Boston, MA. Motivated by his passion for helping people live healthier, he's focused on bringing new users to Medisafe's cloud-synced mobile healthcare platform.

### What do you do at Medisafe?

I'm responsible for marketing and business development, which includes marketing principally, at least initially to patients and consumers, either directly or through partnerships. I also work with other stakeholders in the care continuum around the patient in the health system, including hospitals, physicians, payors, or health plans. Anybody who would be a user of our platform or customer of our data.

## **What does a quality mobile user look like to you?**

A quality user is one that we believe is active on a weekly basis. By active, that means they're taking their meds, because that is what the app is intended to do, to get them to take their meds.

## **How important are installs to you?**

Installs are important. Obviously, we want to grow our user base, and the top of the funnel is how you start to do that. Without that nothing else happens downstream. We also know that to the market, whether we're talking to investors or potential partners, top line numbers matter. Installs matter, but they aren't the end-all, be-all KPI. That's not where we are principally-focused.

## **What does the Medisafe app funnel look like?**

At the top, of course, we have installs. Post install, you can either register or you can just get started. The lighter way, of course, is to get started without having to enter any information. But by registering, we're able to tailor the app for the user.

## **Is there a particular strategy that works to convert installs into engaged users?**

Lowering the friction is really important. Streamlining the flow, lowering the friction. That's why we don't require people to register or sign up from day one. It's like asking someone to marry you before you start dating.

Users are asking themselves, "How does it work? Can I trust this company? This is private information." They want to know it works for one medication before they commit time to entering all that information.

Beyond that, it's just about doing UI/UX exercises and testing usability. We take feedback from our users and constantly A/B test up and down the funnel to improve the experience.

**"Installs are important but they're only the beginning of the journey."**

**Jon Michaeli, Medisafe**

## **What are some of the biggest challenges that you've run into in growing and scaling an active mobile user base?**

There are two pieces to that. There's the acquisition side, and there's the retention side. On the acquisition side, we all know that scaling can be challenging. We originally planned to build a web interface for certain things, but the killer solution here is using mobile for taking your medications. We really rely on a lot of mobile traffic, because you're even more removed on desktop web. There are so many extra steps in converting desktop, users fill out a form, we text them an app download link, then they get to the app store, and finally

they can download. You start to see more of a drop-off in registrations there, so we focus more on mobile traffic.

### **How does device fragmentation impact Medisafe?**

From an acquisition standpoint, it just splinters. You've got your development team building apps for several devices with different screen resolutions and technology to support. Then there's the two different app stores you're optimizing for search, Google Play and Apple.

A huge opportunity for marketers is going to be indexing app content and deep linking to it in Google search results. That's going to be the next wave of mobile app marketing.

**“Asking a user to register on day one is like asking someone to marry you before you go on a first date.”**

**Jon Michaeli**, Medisafe

### **How do you feel about diversifying user acquisition channels outside of Facebook?**

In terms of Facebook, all I can say is it is certainly amongst the most cost-effective. We get great volume, high quality Medisafe users from Facebook at a CPA we're mostly comfortable with.

Of course, you don't want to have a one trick pony. You don't want them to make changes that impact your company overnight. They're in the driver seat there. They're in control, and that's scary. It's no different than what you should be doing in every other area of your marketing, which is diversifying, testing, and finding new platforms. That work pays dividends. But at the same time, you've got to go with what works, and Facebook works for us.

### **What's the biggest mistake that you've made in mobile marketing?**

I haven't believed in banner advertising in a long time on traditional web but I tried it for mobile, and it failed miserably. It only cost us a few thousand dollars, but I only saw about three installs, maybe a few more than that. Banner ads might work in some categories, but it didn't work for us. I will not try it again any time soon.

### **What's one piece of advice you'd give to someone marketing a non-gaming app?**

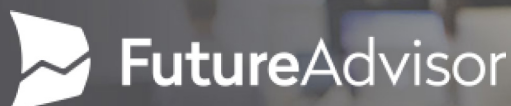
Number one is identifying the critical activation and/or engagement metrics that you want to manage to. Once you've identified them, really drive those requirements with the partners you work with. It doesn't mean that everybody's willing to work on a CPA basis with you, but you need to be able to manage to that CPA and have that level of intelligence. It keeps your vendors honest and it keeps you aligned with your business goals.

## **What do you see as the next big thing in mobile marketing?**

Mobile marketers are going to start leveling the playing field in traditional search. We'll have the ability to reveal high-quality, real app content to users searching topically by keyword and showcase apps that are solving real-life problems in a visually captivating way. I think we're on the verge of that, which is great.

# Loren Austin

Mobile Marketing Manager at FutureAdvisor



## FutureAdvisor Finance

FutureAdvisor was built on the premise that investing for your future does not have to be difficult or expensive. After learning about your current financial situation, FutureAdvisor provides you with a unique financial plan to help you reach retirement sooner, send your kids through college with less debt, or just grow your nest egg long term.

- Founded in 2010
- Headquartered in San Francisco



## Q&A with Loren

Loren Austin is the Online Marketing Manager at FutureAdvisor in San Francisco. The key to his success in marketing a mobile finance app is using re-engagement campaigns to educate users and convey the value of the app.

### What does a quality mobile user look like for FutureAdvisor?

A quality mobile user for us is somebody who has existing investments, perhaps an old 401(k) or an IRA that they don't know what to do with, and they want to learn more. Users who are going to get the most benefit out of FutureAdvisor are those with an existing investment portfolio that they're able to link to our app and get free, personalized investment advice.



### **What tactics do you find work best to convert installs into engaged users?**

I've been surprised at how well our re-engagement advertising works.

The initial install is certainly useful but it only tells a very small part of the story. FutureAdvisor offers both free and paid, managed products. While the free products are great, the fee-based product that we offer to our users is really where our benefit comes into play. The benefits require a lot of explanation, and re-engagement ads offer us an opportunity to continue that conversation with users until we've conveyed our value.

### **What's the biggest challenge that you've encountered in marketing an app?**

The biggest challenge to me in marketing a finance app is that requires a lot of education and it requires a good deal of explanation prior to making people feeling like this is something that addresses the problem that they have. Everybody has a unique financial profile. Everybody has a unique financial situation and being able to explain how your product helps fit into that unique situation is very difficult on a small screen.

### **How do you feel about diversifying user acquisition channels outside of Facebook?**

I think in mobile marketing there's always one big player that everybody seems to flock to. Facebook is really a powerful tool in terms of targeting and how effective it is in reaching

potential users. People spend more time on Facebook than on any other single app, so it's natural that you'd want to spend marketing dollars to reach potential users. However, if you focus on only one channel, you're going to miss out on a whole wealth of additional opportunities to speak to your audience. As in investing, when you're marketing, you want to make sure you're diversified.

### **How important are the holidays to your business?**

Black Friday and Christmas aren't exactly prime time for investment management, mainly because people are looking to spend their money rather than save it. However, once the holidays are over and people are starting to review their checkbook and pay their credit card bills, they start to think more about how they can grow their wealth in coming years. That's really prime time for us and when we find our message is most resonant with our potential users.

### **What's the biggest mistake you've made as a mobile marketer?**

I'd say the biggest mistakes that I've made haven't been doing something, it's been not doing something. It's been deciding that something's not worth my time or not worth testing and that has, been a problem. The biggest mistake I've made as a mobile marketer has been not testing enough: Neglecting certain channels, certain

mediums, thinking about my marketing initiatives as an isolated way of engaging users. I think that you really need to get comprehensive in your attack and about how you approach your relationship with users that you're acquiring and retaining.

**What's one piece of advice that you'd give to other marketers of non-gaming apps?**

Everyone will tell you that you need to pay attention to the data, and I'm not saying that you shouldn't, but I'm also saying that you should not neglect the quality of the feedback that you're getting directly from individual users. While broad trends will be uncovered by sifting through data that you attribute to specific IDs, the stories that your users tell you can be a way to uncover things you otherwise wouldn't even begin to imagine. You can get a wealth of behavioral data, but the reason why a user clicked that button specifically isn't really going to be uncovered. You really need to speak to your users, they're more than happy to talk to you.

**What is the most important KPI for FutureAdvisor?**

The most important KPI for FutureAdvisor is upgrades to our managed service. We offer them three months of free managed service to try out the platform but getting them to the point where they're willing to test us out is something that all of our efforts are geared towards. We feel strongly that once they have

tested us, they will see the benefit and continue to use us long term. However, everything is geared towards explaining our product in such a way that the value is clear to our potential users.

**"The biggest mistake I've made in mobile hasn't been trying something new, it's been not trying something."**

**Loren Austin**, Future Advisor

**What do you love about mobile marketing?**

The thing that I like most about mobile marketing is the lack of historical baggage. I've worked in desktop marketing, but mobile is a new thing, it's like the wild west, there's always a bleeding edge to be on and that's exciting.

**What do you see as the next big thing in mobile marketing?**

The next big thing to me is going to be a platform shift. You see people wherever you go, heads down, staring at their phones. The shift is going to be getting to the point where it's heads up, whether that's augmented reality or some sort of heads up display. We can only refine the screens we stare all day at so much. We need to get beyond that to have a real shift.



# Tim McCloud

Director, Growth & User Acquisition  
at PlayKids by Movile

PlayKids



## PlayKids Education

PlayKids is the #1 ranked children's edutainment app in more than 25 countries. It includes more than 300 books, hundreds of top TV shows, educational games, and puzzles designed to help kids develop motor coordination, memory, and pre-kindergarten skills.

- Released in 2013
- Headquartered in São Paulo, Brazil



## Q&A with Tim

Tim McCloud is the Director of Global Mobile Marketing for PlayKids by Movile. His background in mobile game marketing gives him a unique point-of-view in marketing a subscription-based app and building trust between the parents and children who are the ultimate end-users of the product.

### **Your market is clearly kids, and the parents, to a great extent. What does a quality mobile user look like for PlayKids?**

A quality mobile user of PlayKids is basically two people. It's the parents, who need to feel comfortable with the app, and then it's the kids who are engaging with the app. A kid who is excited to engage with new content on a regular basis and is asking their

parents to let them play with the app, that's a high quality user. Ultimately, the goal is to find somebody who monetizes, but the first step is to make sure that content speaks to our target audience.

### **How important are installs?**

Installs mean a variety of things, they influence the ranking in app stores, for example. On the gaming side it's really important to drive scale and volume. On the non-gaming side, it's a little different. Installs are meaningless. We need people who are engaged and who want to become customers.

### **What strategies work best to convert installs into engaged users?**

It starts with simply bringing in a qualified user. If we have a purchase intender, whether that's gaming or non-gaming, that's going to help monetization happen much quicker in the funnel. User acquisition is basically the start of that monetization process. That's where we found success: acquiring people who are relevant.

### **What are some of the most important KPIs as a mobile marketer?**

When you think of the journey of the consumer from the beginning, the impression down to the click, the install and the conversion, those events are the primary KPIs, plus all of the in-app events that come below that.

Sometimes, marketers are so focused on the conversion they forget that each piece of creative also have KPIs, such as click-through-rate and conversion to install. That's really the beginning of that KPI story.

### **What's the biggest challenge that you've encountered in user acquisition on mobile?**

The biggest challenge I've encountered in user acquisition on mobile is really different depending on if you're marketing a gaming app or a non-gaming app. On the gaming side, competition and saturation are significant challenges. On the non-gaming side, it's basically scaling and then monetizing that user base.

### **What are some of the biggest challenges you've faced in marketing PlayKids?**

The biggest challenge marketing PlayKids is I have to convince parents first that they trust the app, they trust the content, and then I have to keep the kids engaged.

**“Dependence on any one channel will guarantee you never hit your target CPI or CPA.”**

**Tim McCloud, Plakids**

## How do you feel about diversifying user acquisition channels outside of Facebook?

I feel really strongly about being too dependent on any one channel, including Facebook. This is something that marketers face, especially when you get closer to the peak holiday times, where CPIs go through the roof. It's something that is a concern on anybody's mind, whether gaming or non-gaming.

**“User acquisition is just the start of monetization. It's the job of mobile marketers to communicate, engage, re-engage and convert them to paying customers.”**

**Tim McCloud, Plakids**

## How important are the holidays to marketing PlayKids?

Holidays are very important. Any app developer knows, holidays mean new devices. My thoughts are that, as people get new devices, who's going to get the old devices? It's going to be kids. That's why I think we're going to see really, really intense competition this year, both in the terms of rates but also inventory availability. If history

provides any guide, every time around November, we start to see CPIs start to increase dramatically. This is really apparent on Facebook and other platforms where the demand is high during the holidays.

## What are some of the things that you do differently to market PlayKids during the holidays?

During the holidays, we take a very different approach to marketing PlayKids. Basically, it starts with the creative. It has to be completely different and it's got to speak to the seasonality of the campaign. That extends all the way down into the targeting. We know that there's increased competition and we know that prices will increase, so we have to be much smarter during that period.

## What's the biggest mistake you've ever made in mobile marketing?

The single biggest mistake I've made as a mobile marketer has been on the social casino side. My team ran a pretty large advertising campaign that included a sale as a part of the messaging and the copy. Unfortunately, that didn't align with what was actually happening on the product side. You can imagine the confusion it caused for both new and existing users; it also caused anger, some negative reviews and a lot of unhappy customers. It was a learning lesson. Align everything that you're doing on the user acquisition side internally with your external partners as well.



# Matthew Sadofsky

Digital Marketing Manager, User Acquisition at AYI



## AYI Dating

AYI is one of the largest online dating websites on the internet with over 70 million users. Connect with local singles who share your interests or mutual friends.

- Founded in 2007
- Headquartered in NYC



## Q&A with Matthew

Matthew Sadofsky is a New York-based mobile marketer primarily focused on using digital channels to drive users to the AYI dating app, ultimately converting them into paying subscribers of the service.

### What does the funnel to an active user look like in the AYI app?

The most important thing is to get them to install the app first. At the very start of the funnel, we want them to click on an ad, bring them to the install page, and install that app. Once we get them within the app, we like to get them to confirm or register their account which could be done through a simple email form or they can connect with Facebook. After that, once they interact with that site, once they hit a paywall and it goes straight to the purchase.

## What does a quality mobile user look like to AYI?

A quality user is someone who is going to be highly engaged on the app. As a dating site we generate revenue by having people come on to the app who are intending to look for a relationship and are willing to interact with people online. The best feeling is when we get somebody who sends us a letter or writes into our support team and tells us that they're getting married because they met somebody on AYI. That would be the highest quality user, somebody who is looking for love and ends up finding it.

**“In mobile, you have to understand how to best communicate with your audience to get them to install your app and actively engaged.”**

**Matt Sadofsky, AYI**

## How important are installs to AYI?

They are everything! Without installs we really wouldn't have much of a business. When the company first started, we were only on desktop as a Facebook app so mobile installs weren't a KPI, but over the years we've transitioned to a place where the majority of our new users come through mobile and I think that's the standard now with companies

that have both mobile apps, mobile sites, and desktop sites. Installs are key!

## How do you convert installs to active users?

We've developed a strategy around creating content that tells people exactly what they're going to get when they come to AYI. That way, when they click on the ad and they come to our app, they're people who know what they want to do. They know what the app is about and they're more likely to become premium and be engaged on the site.

## What are some of the challenges that you've encountered in mobile user acquisition?

A lot of the time, you want to create an ad that's beautiful. You write something up and you think it's perfect, but what's perfect in your mind and what's perfect for your end user aren't the same. The challenge is figuring out which campaigns speak to your customer exactly how they want to be spoken to, and get them to download your app and engage with it. That's the hardest thing – finding out how your customers want to be spoken to, that's really what our job is as marketers.

## How much do analytics come into your job?

We're very heavy into analytics. Everything you do in mobile, you have to back it with data. Everything we do is A/B tested, we track everything all the way through the funnel. We have mobile attribution partners that allow

us to see from top to bottom, when we run a campaign, did these users come in and were they installing at cheaper rates than other campaigns? If they did do that, great. When they came to the site, were they sending out lots of engagement, or were they users that were coming in but didn't really know what they were getting into? Then ultimately, we track them down to see if we got them at an ideal price, they came in, really engaged, and ultimately loved the site and became a premium user. That's the ideal situation.

**“We live in a data-driven world. Smart mobile marketing is all about using data to make better decisions.”**

**Matt Sadofsky, AYI**

### **What's the biggest mistake you've made in mobile marketing or user acquisition?**

What you think is the absolute perfect targeting, isn't necessarily the perfect targeting. We get so focused on this ability to target these people down to the most minuscule things. Sometimes you can get carried away with targeting and that's definitely something I've been guilty of. Just thinking like, “I have this great idea! We're going to target dog lovers and we're going to hit them with dog ads and

it's going to work great,” but it doesn't pan out and when you think about it, it's because there's no correlation between dogs and dating. Sometimes you have to take a step back and say maybe being too niche isn't right.

### **Is there any advice that you would give to new mobile marketers?**

I think that a lot of new marketers in this space become so obsessed with reducing CPIs. What's really important is the cost of the engagements you want to see. Tailor your messaging to drive those results, whether they're subscriptions or another paid event, because at the end of the day, those are the actions you want to compare to your ad spend.

### **What do you see as the next big thing in mobile marketing?**

The evolution of the type of content that you can use with mobile marketing. I know Facebook recently opened up video ads for mobile installs, which we're very excited to start doing at AYI. In general, we're seeing cool things now with 3D videos, higher quality animated GIFs, lots of mediums where you can create content that can really engage a user in a way that you couldn't have before. I think users are becoming numb to the type of creative that we currently have. The people who can come up with that next round of creative and what's really going to stand out to end user, those are the people who are going to win the marketing competition.



## Liftoff. Fueling mobile Growth



Liftoff is a full-service mobile app marketing and retargeting platform which uses post-install data to run true CPA-optimized user acquisition and retention campaigns. App install campaigns are optimized to drive actions beyond the install, like booking a hotel, making a reservation, or renewing a subscription.

Powered by machine learning and predictive intelligence, Liftoff enables programmatic, real-time targeting across the entire mobile RTB ecosystem. Based in Menlo Park, CA, Liftoff powers CPA-optimized app marketing campaigns for some of the biggest app publishers and brands.