How To Grow Your App During Ramadan
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Ramadan is a much anticipated sacred period for Muslims around the world. It is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, observed by Muslims worldwide as a month of fasting (sawm), prayer, reflection, and community. Daily routines alter significantly during Ramadan - people wake and sleep at different times, family and friends come together more often to pray, connect, and celebrate. These changes in daily behavior have arisen in course of time, having a direct impact on people’s purchasing habits. At the end of Ramadan, Muslims observe a celebration called Eid al-Fitr (the Festival of Fast-Breaking). During Eid al-Fitr, Muslims enjoy time with their families and often exchange gifts.

Nowadays, mobile is the preferred channel for shopping and finance during Ramadan, not only in Indonesia, but also in most Muslim countries such as UAE, Pakistan, and Turkey. A recent analysis by AppsFlyer in the Middle East & Turkey, of 400+ million installs of over 4,060 mobile apps, highlights the positive impact Ramadan has on the rapidly scaling mobile app economy in this region.

According to analysis, over the course of the Holy Month there was a 10% increase in overall installs for shopping apps and a whopping 71% for finance apps, compared to the same period the previous year. In line with the spike in installs, in-app spending by UAE consumers on both shopping and finance apps recorded triple-digit growth during Ramadan, indicating that mobile apps are fast becoming the preferred engagement channel between consumers and businesses.
Ramadan is a key period for marketers who want to connect with Muslim shoppers. The pandemic has changed the way people live, connect and shop, and mobile has become a safer alternative for those observing Ramadan as well. Investing in mobile ads helps businesses to capitalize on spending behaviors during the Holy Month, as well as drive **long-term customer loyalty**. Once installed, these applications can continue to deliver **personalized** and impactful experiences to customers throughout the year.

Marketers that have strategies in place to acquire users on mobile, and engage existing customers, will give themselves a competitive advantage.

A **survey** conducted in 2020 on media usage during Ramadan in Indonesia found that the average time spent on mobile phones during this time was 4 hours 41 minutes. This was around 3 hours more than watching television.

Ramadan is a month that provides many benefits to mobile marketers. The changes in behavior and lifestyle that occur during Ramadan, especially during a pandemic limits people's social interactions, so more are inclined to use mobile services instead. For mobile marketers, this is a good month to improve performance, both for the image of the mobile app brand and sales.
Another survey from InMobi shows that:

- 61% of women and 58% of families with children use mobile to discover products and services
- 84% of Indonesian users explore products on their smartphones.
- 71% of millennials look at smartphones as the medium to fulfill all their buying needs during Ramadan
- 53% of Indonesians consider shopping on mobile
Benefits of Retargeting Lapsed Users during Ramadan

- Drive more engagement
- Boost retention
- Gain more high lifetime value users

The Ramadan season is filled with opportunities to acquire high LTV users and businesses can reach the right people who’ve shown interest in their products through smart retargeting. Your campaign’s success will depend most importantly on using all the knowledge you can gather on your targeted users, and applying those data points to tailor your campaigns to your users’ needs and interests.

Naoki Kobayashi
VP of Asia

AARKI
How To Retarget Users During Ramadan

As the mobile programmatic marketing industry continues to mature and develop, engaging and retaining users with high lifetime value (LTV) has emerged as a critical challenge. Retargeting your mobile user base is a key strategy to maintaining the longevity of your app. Using mobile programmatic media, you can target previous users of your app to perform a specific action or to become active app users again.

- **Identify segments**
  The more we know about users, the more we understand their interests. Sharing as many relevant segments as possible makes it easier for us to analyze and utilize audience segments efficiently and helps our models to target the best users. Based on the provided data, and our deep expertise in different verticals, our team will make suggestions on which segments are most effective for a specific category.

- **Prepare targeting lists and creative groups**
  Once we have the audience data, our analytics team identifies the intersecting segments and targeting groups to get to know the users better and serve the right ads. Creative groups are then planned based on the target group’s user behavior and specific creative strategies are applied to the ads.
There are two retargeting campaign strategies: static and dynamic.

**Static Retargeting**
Static retargeting is where ads differ based on the groupings of users, by presenting an engaging creative to attract this audience. You can divide the audience into segments by:

- Users who haven’t made a purchase for a certain period, who will then be clustered based on their lifetime spend.
- Users that haven’t made a purchase but have shown great engagement with the app.

**Dynamic Retargeting**
Dynamic retargeting uses each individual users’ preceding engagement to personalize an ad specific to their previous actions. Divide users into three (3) major user clusters for more personalized or granular optimization.

It is key to also analyze a product feed, user attributes, and all necessary event postback for more personalized creative for each cluster.
The Impact of Ramadan on Shopping Apps
One of the most popular app categories during this season is shopping. A study by Facebook shows that the days before Eid is the “single biggest 10-day shopping period.” This can be correlated with the gift-giving festivities that happen during this season. There is a big misconception among mobile marketers that they should allocate their marketing spend to the two weeks leading up to Ramadan. But data by AppsFlyer and Braze showed there was a 60% increase in non-organic installs in the period right before Eid.

Overall, installs of shopping apps increased year on year across the Middle East and Turkey, although this was largely driven by organic installs as opposed to paid user acquisition efforts. This had a positive impact on in-app purchasing revenue which more than doubled in the UAE, followed by a 43% increase in Turkey, and a 20% increase in Saudi Arabia.

Hence, this festive season is a great opportunity for mobile marketers to boost their ad spend for their shopping app. There is no wonder that shopping apps are also getting a lot of attention when it comes to retargeting.

Now let’s dive deeper into creative strategies that will help your shopping app go above and beyond during Ramadan:
Design personalized ad creatives to retarget users

Develop ad creatives based on your target users’ interests and previous activities within the app. Examples of clusters are:
• Users who searched for a product but didn’t view it,
• Users who viewed a product but didn’t add it to their cart; and
• Users who added an item to their cart but didn’t make a purchase.

Grow your user base with great shopping app deals

As a season of gift giving and community appreciation, offering Ramadan-linked deals is a great way to entice shoppers. You can incorporate current discounts or deals into your ad creatives to attract more users to your app.

Engage your users as early as possible as they start buying gifts

Start engaging your customers early as they begin to think about buying gifts. Marketing near the beginning of Ramadan will help you capture users while they are browsing and allow you the opportunity to keep messaging them and help them find gifts for friends and family.
The Impact of Ramadan on Finance Apps
Finance apps are on the rise in Ramadan too and should continue to surge as banks accelerate digitization. This presents a tremendous marketing opportunity as more people continue to adopt mobile apps. The survey showed that e-wallets have been gaining traction in Indonesia: one in three Indonesians report using e-wallets to pay for their daily expenses. Advertisers must rethink how they can better equip themselves with insights into in-app shopping trends, as well as in-store purchases with e-wallets to keep pace with the accelerated use. The rise in e-wallets offers brands the opportunity to understand how digital advertising converts into sales.
Finance apps grew by leaps and bounds last Ramadan as well in Malaysia, Pakistan and Singapore. The overall installs across the Middle East and Turkey increased by 115%.

Highlights include:

- **237%** app install increase in Turkey
- **71%** app install increase in UAE
- **21%** app install increase in Saudi Arabia

This uptake was accompanied by an even bigger increase in-app spend, which rose by:

- **357%** in UAE
- **296%** in Turkey
- **108%** in Saudi Arabia

Although non-organic installs increased, the rise in finance app installs can largely be attributed to organic installs. This data is not surprising given how banks in the region have made digital offerings a priority, particularly mobile apps.
Below are some ways to promote your finance app’s features for inactive, medium engaged users:

**Highlight new finance app features like new payment methods**

Having many payment methods to shop during Ramadan makes it easier for the users to complete a purchase. Don’t forget to inform users about the options they have.

**Use personalized ads based on user’s last activity**

To target the users on a more granular level, analyze your users’ app behavior such as spend level and days lapsed (lowest lapsed, low lapsed spenders, as well as, medium and highest lapsed spenders). Take into account several creative strategies for attracting each audience. For instance:

- Remind users of the convenience the app brings
- Encourage users to continue using the app to earn credits
- Show what users can redeem with their credits

**Promote new deals to bring back lapsed users**

Special holidays and paydays are perfect opportunities to offer users special promos or discounts during Ramadan. After all, everyone likes saving money, especially during a big shopping season.
The Impact of Ramadan on Casual Apps
During Ramadan, there is a major surge in the usage of smartphones as people rely heavily on their smartphones for entertainment such as gaming. Facebook MENA research has revealed that over 70 percent of people in the Middle East use smartphones.

The intense competition in the mobile advertising industry drives app marketers to think of new, innovative strategies to engage current users, attract new users, and help with user retention. Casual apps are no exception.

The right segmentation strategy is one of the essential components that can define the success of your casual app marketing campaign. Sharing as many relevant segments as possible makes it easier to analyze and utilize audiences efficiently and helps models to target the best users.

- We define various audience segments which would inform our bid strategies and set up Creative Groups and Targeting Groups. Then we select the best creative for each group.

- To demonstrate the uplift of our strategy and understand the impact of personalized ad creative, we run an Incremental Lift Analysis.

- We divide the audience into 2 groups:
  - Control Group, who are shown PSA (placebo) creative.
  - Treatment Group, users outside the control group who are presented with personalized reactivation creative for higher engagement.
Below we also discuss three creative strategies for casual apps that are effective during the upcoming Ramadan season.

**Tutorial creatives**

Tutorial creatives aim to present a detailed how-to of the app. They can entice users by showing them the best features of your app and giving them a head start in how to navigate and use your app.

**Compose challenging messages**

Another creative strategy is to compose a unique inviting or challenging message which will motivate users to download the app or, if they already have it, pass new levels.

**Use meta creatives**

Meta creatives have gained popularity in recent years. These ad creatives show certain problematic situations to the user and present options for how they can be fixed.
Other Tips for How to Market Your Apps During Ramadan

As the Muslim world spends Ramadan at home, they are also opting to spend more time and money online, creating more opportunities for brands to reach and engage consumers as they shop, eat, and pay for daily necessities using their smartphones. Below we have highlighted some useful tips that will help guarantee the success of your next app marketing campaign during the upcoming holiday season:

- **Focus on meaningful storytelling**
  Tell a story through your mobile ads, with themes of togetherness of family and friends, and self-care, to capture your audience.

- **Make use of relevant imagery**
  Popular symbolism associated with Eid are crescent moons, lanterns, Mosques, dates etc.

- **Be respectful and use the correct messaging**
  Ramadan is celebrated all over the world, so localize your ad to the area you are targeting. There are a lot of greetings for Ramadan, so you can find the one that best suits your campaign.

Ramadan continues to be a crucial period for marketers and the value of emphasizing mobile channels should not be underestimated during this holiday season. Advertising during the Holy Month can help acquire high LTV users for your apps that are customers not only during Ramadan but throughout the whole year.
About Aarki

Aarki is a 100% real-time bidding (RTB) demand-side platform (DSP). We help companies grow and re-engage their mobile users, using machine learning, data, and large customer reach. Aarki has run many retargeting campaigns utilizing a variety of ad formats, including native, video, interactive, playable, and interstitial. Leveraging a rich database of audience and user engagement data, Aarki’s data scientists use robust machine learning algorithms to find audiences who share similar interests and are most likely to engage and spend with the app. This enables Aarki to consistently deliver strong app marketing performance no matter the app marketer’s retargeting goals.

Interested in running a retargeting campaign in this Ramadan season? Shoot us a message here and see the results for yourself.