Produce Winning Mobile Ads for Dating Apps in Japan

Gain insights into programmatic creative strategies and best practices
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Who Should Read this Report

- Marketers of dating apps in the Japanese market
- Marketers who would like to market dating apps in Japan

What to Find in This Report

- Dating app landscape and trends in the Japanese market
- Valuable insight for marketing dating apps in Japan
- Creative strategies to help reach - and even exceed - KPIs for mobile programmatic campaigns

Dataset  January to May 2021

- 11,315 dating app ad campaigns in Japan
- 543,440,959 impressions
- 98,048 dating app installs
- 47,885 in-app purchases
What are Dating apps?

Dating apps are software applications that a user can download onto their mobile phones or tablets, that can help them meet a desired partner. The matchmaking algorithm considers a user’s demographic, gender, location, preferences, interests and more, to help find them an ideal match. Dating apps have been growing in popularity since their inception back in 2003, driving the explosion of online dating worldwide.

Understanding the Japanese Market

According to Nikkei, there were a combined total of only 872,683 Japanese babies born in the country and abroad for 2020. This was down 25,917 from 2019, making it the lowest birth rate ever on record. The total number of marriages for 2020 was also down by 12.7%, the lowest ever since 1950.

This decline did not come as a shock, considering that Japan has always been dealing with a shrinking birth rate since 2007. One of the factors contributing to this decline is the modern Japanese culture that makes it difficult to work whilst being a mother. This generation of Japanese females would rather continue to earn and further their careers than give up their jobs to take care of a family.

In an effort to solve this problem, the Japanese government supports the local government units’ matching services through AI. They are also planning to fund an Artificial Intelligence (AI) matchmaking service to help boost the birth rate. Their goal is to have sophisticated software that will be more effective in matching partners, compared to services available today.
The Dating App Landscape in Japan

Based on data by Statista, the online dating segment in Japan is expected to have a revenue of US $91M in 2021. This predicts an annual growth rate (CAGR) of 2.43% for 2021 to 2025, leading to a forecasted market volume of US $84M by 2025. This takes into account the multiple mobile dating apps that have taken off in the past years.

In 2020, Japanese mobile users spent US $1B on messaging and social gaming platforms, and their mobile spending has broadened to other communication-related services, such as dating apps. This data can be seen in App Annie’s “How to Succeed On Mobile in Japan” report. With dating being a high growth area, it is expected that more consumers will spend money on dating services via mobile apps.

The onset of COVID-19 and Japan’s quarantine guidelines has left single persons in the country yearning for partnership and companionship, driving users to seek out dating and connection products, to meet with new people.

As of January 2021, 3.9% of mobile internet users aged 16 to 64 years old used dating apps in the past month. This makes it part of the top 10 app categories in Japan, as seen in the image below.

![Image of mobile app usage categories in Japan for January 2021](image.png)
Gender Appeal for Japanese Dating Apps

Dating apps in Japan are mostly monetized toward male-identifying users. It is typical for dating apps to have male users make a purchase to send a message to a female user. For female users, dating apps are usually free. One of the most popular dating apps in Japan has a 46% female user base, but on average, most dating apps have only a third of females in their user base.

A study was done by Statista in late 2020, to determine the most popular dating app among Japanese users that identified as either male or female. The respondents were aged 20 to 49 years old. Their results show that the dating app Pairs was the most popular among the female users, with 63.9% of female respondents having used the app, but only 55.9% male respondents. Two other apps that are more popular among female users are With and Omiai. Among the respondents, With had been used by 27.5% of the women, and 25.1% of men, while Omiai has been used by 25% of the female users, and 22.1% of the male. Tapple was more popular among men, with 36.5% male respondents having used the app, and 33.1% of female respondents. The only non-domestic dating app that was mentioned is Tinder, which is considerably more popular among males with 25.5%, then female respondents at 14.4%.

Most popular matchmaking apps among Japanese smartphone users as of March 2020 by gender

![Bar chart showing the share of respondents for different dating apps by gender](image-url)

- **Pairs**: 63.9% female, 55.9% male
- **Tapple**: 36.5% male, 33.1% female
- **With**: 27.5% female, 25.1% male
- **Omiai**: 25% female, 22.1% male
- **Tinder**: 25.5% male, 14.4% female

*Via Statista 2021*
Common Challenges Facing Dating App Advertising

Although gaining more popularity and acceptance, dating apps still carry a stigma among Japanese people. There is an assumption that these types of apps are not a legitimate way to find love, and that dating apps are only for casual relationships, or “hook-ups.” This leads to dating apps being frowned upon and being distrusted by Japanese people.

Advertisers face the problem of establishing trust that their dating app is safe to use and that their matchmaking features can help people find genuine relationships. This challenge has ramifications in terms of ad design and campaign budget required to fulfill potential and drive scale, despite these struggles.

Poor Performance of Ads

Dating app campaigns are tough to get right, and sometimes performance metrics can seem disappointing. An important factor is that users are reluctant to download and use dating apps due to security concerns. There has been a lot of sensationalized media coverage of meetups gone wrong, and this can be seen in lower install rates.

Nevertheless, dating app advertisers’ expectations remain high with Aarki, where performance dashboards and effective client communication ensure every effort is made to deliver against campaign goals. Aarki also pairs creative optimization with machine learning when running mobile programmatic campaigns. With proprietary data, we build predictive models that forecast the probability of important in-app events at an optimal acquisition price. This lets us produce custom models that support the advertiser’s dating app campaign goals, such as garnering higher install rates, which we optimize across the client’s key performance indicators (KPIs).
Lack of Design Team

New dating apps are being developed every week, so advertisers need to figure out the optimal ad creative to stand out against the other apps, communicate the value proposition, and encourage action. According to Apptopia, as of April 2021, there are 19,277 Dating apps in the Google Play store. Dating is also the 11th most profitable out of 51 app categories.

Most clients who approach Aarki do not have their own creative team and are unable to produce and scale creatives by themselves. In these instances, the client can provide the necessary creative inputs and Aarki will create a number of creatives in different formats such as: videos, displays, and banners, at no charge.

Campaign success is determined by the right combination of distribution, algorithm, and creative. The plan–do–check–act (PDCA) cycle of programmatic advertising is faster than for other forms of media, so Aarki’s creative ads are quickly optimized and iterated, and are guaranteed to experience an improvement in results.

Limited Budget

With limited budget and constrained time, it is crucial for the client to reach the optimal solution early in the campaign. Aarki presents data-driven solutions and evaluates multiple model options and creative strategies for an app, so that clients will have the optimal variations of campaigns to deliver against their campaign KPIs.
Trends for Dating Apps

Dating Apps are Becoming a Necessity

With four dating apps in the ranks of the Japanese Top 50 Grossing Apps, they no longer must prove themselves in terms of popularity, and they are fast becoming a daily necessity, providing entertainment and social connection. The stigma has declined, and users don’t feel they have to hide their use of dating apps. There are also new dating apps available that are tailored to specific matchmaking requirements, such as finding marriage partners of the opposite sex, finding casual romance, searching for friends with common hobbies, and apps that cater to people from the LGBTQ+ community.

New Functions and Features

Many users turned to dating apps during COVID-19 lockdowns to find human connection, and dating apps had to adapt to a new reality. Several dating apps introduced an additional line-up of in-app functions to allow couples to communicate safely online.

Advancement of New Technology

Artificial intelligence (AI) brings about new possibilities for match making. According to this whitepaper published by Eureka, the development of deep learning is also progressing, and a completely new matching algorithm using AI will be used in the future. This brings dating apps plenty of opportunities to create features using AI.

Shifting Focus from Male to Female

The satisfaction level of online dating during the pandemic was over 90%. According to Tech I.S., the matching app market will exceed 100B Yen in 2023 and 160B Yen in 2026. As these apps gain more popularity, it is predicted that more dating apps will charge both males and females for their services. Currently, most apps charge only male users to subscribe, but as new features come online that appeal to female users, so that revenue stream will expand.
When starting campaigns, Aarki focuses on more general concepts for ad creative. For dating apps in Japan, we first targeted both female and male users. Through our research, we then found that ad creatives for dating apps should be more targeted towards male users. From then on, we shifted our focus towards that demographic. Clients provided us with creative references, but we were given creative freedom for design and production. We needed to produce ad creatives that suited both the branding of the client, as well as the preferences of their audiences.

With that, Aarki has defined a few specific creative strategies for user acquisition campaigns to scale dating apps in Japan. These strategies include: instructional learning, highlighting users’ preferences, focusing on text and catchy copy, presenting app achievements and credibility, and consistent use of the brand color palette. These were successfully implemented for campaigns for 5 popular dating apps.

Showcase Instructional Learning

This creative strategy provides users with a walkthrough of the app user experience. It showcases the important and unique features of the app in order to gain the attention of users. Presenting functions and special characteristics of the app helps users visualize the benefits that the app can provide to them. Examples include how to search for matches with similar interests, or how to use the messaging service to move a relationship on to the next stage. This creative strategy allows brands to create more credibility for the app and build trust amongst users.
For App A, the client wanted to introduce a new app feature in 2020 to adapt to the "new normal" brought about by COVID-19, and to provide continuous improvement in the user experience of online dating. The creative emphasized the merits of the new feature and provided a breakdown of what the user could expect.

The client gave Aarki creative freedom for the direction of the campaign. For the first creative, we combined instructional learning with features of app achievements to drive more credibility among users.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>App A</th>
<th>App B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For App A, the client wanted to introduce a new app feature in 2020 to adapt to the &quot;new normal&quot; brought about by COVID-19, and to provide continuous improvement in the user experience of online dating. The creative emphasized the merits of the new feature and provided a breakdown of what the user could expect.</td>
<td>The client gave Aarki creative freedom for the direction of the campaign. For the first creative, we combined instructional learning with features of app achievements to drive more credibility among users.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The difference between the campaigns for each app is that App A focused more on promoting the new feature in the app, while for App B, we showcased the look and feel of the app while highlighting new features.

Our creative strategy for both was to immerse the user in a walkthrough of the app with enticing and eye-catching creatives, designed to encourage the user to click on the ad’s call to action (CTA). App A had a click-through rate (CTR) that increased by 98.94%, while App B’s increased by 54.02%.
Highlight Users’ Preferences

Most of our clients want to grow their in-app purchases. In the case of dating apps in Japan, most allow females to join or subscribe for free, and some even enable women to earn a revenue stream from the app. Men, however, are required to pay a subscription fee to access all the features and get matched with a prospective partner. With this in mind, Aarki’s campaign algorithms aim to acquire more male users, not to just download the app, but to spend money on in-app purchases.

With males being the advertiser’s primary target, Aarki gave more focus to their preferences. Pictures of females are effective at drawing the attention of males, so we aimed to give the targeted user an idea of the types of relationships they could expect from the app. Different dating apps use different photos to attract male users. For example, some use conservative images to promote the possibility of building genuine relationships that could lead to marriage. Other apps target users who are looking for more casual relationships.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>App C</th>
<th>App D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The concept of the app’s campaign was to promote casual dating to male users and attract new users to their app. It aimed to show users that they could match with someone local they could meet up with in person.</td>
<td>The client wanted to portray a brand image of an app wherein users could find a serious relationship that would lead to marriage. The ad creative shown in this campaign for App D featured a couple out on a date in a temple, in a positive, romantic setting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The campaigns for both apps featured different photos in order to let male users know what kind of relationship they could potentially foster from the app. App C used more provocative pictures to portray a more casual relationship type, whereas App D featured images of a couple to depict a more serious relationship potential.

The photos utilized by App C for the campaign proved to be the most successful in achieving the desired campaign goals, and saw an increase in CTR by 55.92%. Less successful was App D, which witnessed an increase of 17.27% in their CTR. This gives us the insight that dating app users in Japan find pictures that portray casual relationships more engaging.
Focus on Text and Catchy Copy

This creative strategy focuses on engaging copy directed towards a male audience. There are three ways to approach this:

▶ A female’s perspective of her inviting a male to meet her
▶ A male’s perspective of wanting to get to know a female (illusional seduction)
▶ A general message that promotes being a couple

Aarki has found that simple, impactful copy catches the attention of male users. We like to play around with the copy provided to us, and render it straight to the point while making it eye-catching.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>App B</strong></th>
<th><strong>App A</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ad creative combined the image of a female with copy, with the text as the main focus. We reduced the size of the image to create more room for the headline. This helped bring more attention to the call to action.</td>
<td>In the campaign for App A, we used a combination of images of females along with catchy copy, about the app’s unique selling points, to promote its limited-edition offerings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For App B, we used a combination of catchy copy as headlines and small images of females over a colored background to help the text stand out more. With this strategy, App B had a conversion rate (CR) that increased by 447.60%, and an increased install rate (IR) of 743.41%.

For App A, we used a 50:50 combination of larger images of females along with headlines of the app’s new promotions. App A had a 295.77% increase of CR, an increase of IR by 687.34%.

We can infer that, for this creative strategy, users find it more engaging if there is a focus on the text, and not an equal ratio of text to imagery.
Feature App Achievements and Credibility

Apps that have a good success ratio for matchmaking attract more credibility. We at Aarki have found that showcasing the achievements of the app within the ad creative can ramp up the app’s credibility among new users. Trust can be built by providing information about the success of the matching algorithm, such as how many successful matches have been made, how many years the app has been in operation, and how many users the app has daily.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>App E</th>
<th>App A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With the campaign for App E, we wanted to emphasize keywords relating to app achievements. We used several font styles paired with small images to make the copy stand out more.</td>
<td>For this campaign for App A, we paired different app achievements with corresponding pictures of women. We also added catchy copy and additional information about the app.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit: Photo AC
The campaign for App E was more text-heavy, and the focus was more on the achievements, rather than the photos. With this, their IR increased by 47.39%, and experienced a decrease of CPI by -39.91%, and a D30 ROI increase of 203.39%. Meanwhile, the campaign for App A used the same number of texts and images, but the headlines were bigger and strongly emphasized. Their CPI decreased by -79.75%, while their D30 ROI increased tremendously from 24.02% to 73.12% at the height of the campaign.

Consistent Use of Brand Color Palette

Using the app’s brand colors helps create better brand awareness and gives consistency across the ad creatives for the campaign. This also strengthens the overall branding of the app, and helps to differentiate the brand from its competitors. We used the client’s existing ads as a reference to pick the main and secondary colors to use for the new ad creatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>App E</th>
<th>App A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This brand uses blue as its main brand color. Blue, based on color theory, portrays a sense of trustworthiness and safety. These are qualities that this brand wants to be known for. They want to project themselves as a successful veteran in the industry of matching couples.</td>
<td>The brand of App A wants to be associated with meeting new friends, but also as a more open and passionate way to get to connect. We found that pink helped convey that message well, which is why this color was used throughout the entirety of the campaign.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
App E wants to portray wholesome relationship-building, while App A wants to portray a more casual relationship. Colors help convey these messages and consistent use of colors create a more cohesive ad campaign.

App E had a CTR that increased by 54.10%, a decrease of CPI by -39.91%, and a D30 ROI increase of 203.39%.

We analyzed App A’s LAT and Non-LAT campaigns, and found that LAT campaigns performed better, with a 2.53% and 0.01% higher CR and IR, respectively. As well as a lower CPI by $6.27. Although the CTR was higher for Non-LAT campaigns, they were less cost effective.
Aarki has conducted A/B testing for a dating app to see which are the optimal ad creative variations that would work best for their user acquisition campaign. These were all run in both iOS and Android devices. The ad format used for the A/B tests was banner, considering that it is the most optimal ad format for them based on previous data. The creative elements that were tested were: background color, text, and photos used.

### Background Color

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Creative Variant</th>
<th>CTR</th>
<th>CPI Performance %</th>
<th>D30 ROI Performance %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>iOS</strong></td>
<td>Color 1 (Blue)</td>
<td>Tied as best performing CTR with 0.01% higher CTR than pink</td>
<td>Best Performing CPI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Color 2 (Purple)</td>
<td>Best Performing CPI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Color 3 (Pink)</td>
<td>Least performing, 1.4% higher than blue</td>
<td>Least performing ROI, 79.45% lower than purple</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Android</strong></td>
<td>Color 1 (Blue)</td>
<td>Least performing CTR, 0.09 lower than purple</td>
<td>Best performing CPI</td>
<td>Best performing ROI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Color 2 (Purple)</td>
<td>Best Performing CTR</td>
<td>Least performing CPI, 4% higher than pink</td>
<td>Least performing ROI, 179.90% lower than pink</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Color 3 (Pink)</td>
<td>Best performing CPI</td>
<td>Best performing ROI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is known that colors have an effect on the user’s psychology, and these results prove that to be true. It was seen that cooler shades such as blue and purple showed higher ROI performance on iOS, although purple had a D30 ROI that is 14.58% higher than the blue’s. Blue delivered more installs compared to the other colors. A reason for this good performance is that blue is typically considered as a “masculine” color suiting the majority of the target market for this campaign, but to add to that, it also represents stability - an important trait to portray in a matchmaking app ad. Although pink has a strong female gender association, the warmer shade of the three variants delivered the best CPI and ROI performance for Android. The pink variant was 4% higher than the variant with the lowest CPI performance, making it the most cost-effective variant. Pink and blue had the highest ROIs for Android, but pink had a stronger ROI by 66%. This can be attributed to color psychology in that pink represents romance and sweetness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text 1</th>
<th>Text 2</th>
<th>Text 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Able to meet up quick and easily</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huggable couple</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling in love when we meet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alright to communicate immediately</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roughly 3 out of 4 are able to meet and match</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falling in love when we meet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start your encounters with us</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting with anyone anytime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanna fall in love? Start meeting/encounter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform</td>
<td>Creative Variant</td>
<td>CTR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
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<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iOS</td>
<td>Text 1</td>
<td>All tied with the same CTRv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text 2</td>
<td>Least performing CTR, 0.26% higher than Text 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text 3</td>
<td>Best Performing CTR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Android</td>
<td>Text 1</td>
<td>Least performing CTR, 0.05% lower than Text 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text 2</td>
<td>Least performing CPI, 1.86% higher than Text 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Text 3</td>
<td>Best Performing CTR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Install delivery was very similar among all three text variants across both platforms. Text 2 has generated the most revenue on iOS, while Text 1 delivered the least, with both having an ROI performance gap of 68.78%. On Android, Text 1 also generated the least revenue, while Text 3 had the most with a 42.22% higher ROI.

The success of Text 2 can be contributed to using one of the creative strategies mentioned earlier: featuring app achievements and credibility. Providing a statistic of successful matches helped establish trust that the app is effective in matchmaking.

Text 1 was least effective because it didn’t provide strong features or benefits of the app, when compared to Text 2 and Text 3.
Photos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
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<th>CTR</th>
<th>CPI Performance %</th>
<th>D30 ROI Performance %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iOS</td>
<td>Photo Series 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Best Performing ROI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photo Series 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Best Performing CTR</td>
<td>Best Performing CPI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photo Series 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Least performing CPI, 5.07% higher than Photo Series 2</td>
<td>Least performing D30 ROI, 94.55 lower than Photo Series 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Android</td>
<td>Photo Series 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Best Performing CTR</td>
<td>Best Performing ROI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photo Series 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Least performing CTR, 0.08% lower than Photo Series 1</td>
<td>Least performing CPI, 1.2% higher than Photo Series 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Photo Series 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Best Performing CPI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Credit: Photo AC

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At one end of the strategy, Photo Series 1 is the only variation that features both of the couple’s faces in all the photos. They portray a loving couple enjoying each other’s company on a date in public. On the other end, Photo Series 2 features a single female and a single male who will eventually meet each other in a more private and intimate setting. This shows the polarity of the creative strategy which highlights the preferences of users. Photo Series 1 portrays a more serious relationship, while the latter portrays one that is more casual.

Photo Series 3 combined both creative ideas, singles meeting each other but in a public setting. This could be a reason why it did not prove itself to be as successful, as it stays between the lines of a serious or casual relationship.

The D30 ROI of Photo Series 1 was observed to be the highest out of the rest on both iOS and Android, with a 90.05% and 68.93% higher than the least performing variation respectively. This makes Photo Series 1 the best performing variant. Photo Series 3 was consistent in delivering the lowest revenue.

In terms of CPI, the variant with the best performance overall was Photo Series 2 on Android, with 2.13% better performance than the variant with the lowest.
Ad Format Performance

**Banner**

3 out of 5 apps, specifically Apps A, D, and E, had Banner as their best performing ad format. Among Display, Native, Rewarded, and Video, Banner drew the highest CR for those three apps, as well as the lowest CPI.

Two common strategies that were used for those three apps were: featuring app achievements and utilizing their brand color palette throughout their ads. Considering that the first creative strategy focuses on text, Banner is the optimal ad format because it provides content to users that can be digested at a quick glance. Whereas the second strategy makes use of colors that cements the brand recognition.

We have A/B tested the effectiveness of audio to numerous Display ads to see which was more effective: with sound or no sound. With Audio delivered better performance compared to No Audio. With Audio was ~73% below the CPI goal, while No Audio is just within it with only a ~2% gap.

**Display**

App C had Display as its most optimized ad format, as it yielded the highest D30 ROI out of all the other ad formats. This is because the creative strategy used for this app was to focus on the preference of users through real-life photos. With the dimensions of Display ads, it is known to be one of the best formats to optimize images and texts.

**Video**

For App B, Video had the highest CR, IR, and D30 ROI, while having the lowest CPI. One of the creative strategies used for App B was instructional learning, so Video is perfect for this as it gives a more immersive experience to users for a walkthrough of the app user experience.

**Rewarded Interstitial**

App C’s IR and CR for this ad format was higher than the rest of the ad formats. Delivering the same ratio as Display, Rewarded Interstitial takes up the entire space of the screen, which makes it a great ad format for featuring photos, leading to more conversions and sparking an action from the CTA.
The use of a solid and varied creative strategy led to an overall boost in D7 and D30 ROIs for all the five apps. This shows that when creative strategies are properly executed and are based on actionable learnings, dating apps in Japan can be maximized to their full potential.

The D7 ROI climbed to an increase of 54.68% from 28.53%. For D30 ROI, it rose from 54.74% to 96.59%.

As the overall ROIs increased, the overall CPIs decreased. Because of COVID-19 and the series of lockdowns in Japan, greater numbers of individuals were subject to self-isolation. This drove users to download dating apps to attempt to counter their feelings of loneliness and isolation. With that, we saw a drop in the overall CPI for all 5 apps. We observed a decrease in CPI from $8.97 to $4.17.

The campaigns that ran on Android devices delivered a higher CTR compared to those that ran on iOS devices. Although, iOS campaigns performed better in terms of CR.
Best Practices

Know The Audience
It is important for creatives to be targeted towards the right audience. Data-driven ad creatives are key to knowing who the optimal target market is and a successful campaign. As mentioned earlier, Aarki initially targeted both females and males, but through extensive research found that males make the most cost effective audience for dating apps in Japan, so we optimized creatives for them, which proved to be very successful.

Always Test
Testing is the most crucial role in optimizing ad creative. Once the best performing variation is identified, the media and budget allocation of that variation can then be increased to be able to reach the audience with the highest engagement. Aarki uses our proprietary creative suite, Aarki Studio, which can not only create ads, but also run them. Aarki Studio can test different ad creative and messaging at a high velocity. With multi-variant testing to pinpoint the optimal variant combination that matches the campaign’s KPIs.

Optimize the Right Ad Format
A great ad creative is a waste when put on the wrong ad format. The optimal ad format is sure to bring an ad more conversions, but it is important to take note that the focus of the ad creative must quickly catch the attention of users and spark an action. A way to initially choose an ad format to use is to decide which one would best work with the creative strategy. Just like the creative strategy of using photos to attract the audience, Display worked best for that campaign as it accommodated a larger space in the screen of the phone, which better featured a photo. For instructional ads, Video works best as it allows users to get a more in-depth walkthrough of the app’s features.
Why Programmatic is the Best Platform for Marketing Dating Apps in Japan

Having a great media partner is key to having a successful mobile programmatic campaign. With an unmatched scale, the advertiser will be connected with all the major ad exchanges, ensuring that ads will have a global reach in order to maximize the campaign’s scalability. This provides the capability to target the optimal audience in any location. Look for a demand-side platform (DSP) with an algorithmic approach that pairs machine learning with proprietary data to deliver the best predictions for down-funnel KPIs. Aarki is able to provide all those services to surely scale dating apps in Japan. To add to that, we have our creative optimization, wherein we use our proprietary creative suite to create and run ads, creating multiple variants at a high velocity.
About Aarki

Aarki helps brands grow and re-engage their mobile users, using machine learning (AI), big data, and engaging creative. We strive to deliver performance at scale across different marketing objectives to meet the target return on investment. Our data offer deep insights into user intent and usage habits. To drive performance, we activate our data assets through proprietary machine learning algorithms and engage users in real time with personalized creative.


For more information, please visit www.aarki.com.