

Small Business Developers and App Creators on the App Store in 2022

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Highlights

- More than 90% of all developers on the App Store are small developers.
- Thousands of new small developers from all around the world have continued to join the App Store in 2022.
- Earnings for small developers active in 2020 increased by 71% between 2020 and 2022, proving resilient in a challenging global environment.

A global reach

In 2022, **more than 90% of developers on the App Store were considered small developers**, and the App Store ecosystem continued to attract thousands of new small developers. Similar to 2021, new small developers **joined the App Store from all around the world**, with approximately 25% from Europe, 23% from China, 14% from the United States, 4% from Japan, and 35% from other regions, including South Korea, India, and Brazil.

In 2022, nearly 80% of small developers were active on multiple storefronts and about **40% of total downloads of apps from all small developers came from users outside of each developer's home country**. Moreover, developers that monetize their apps by selling digital goods and services on multiple storefronts have earnings from users on more than 40 storefronts on average.

Definition of Small Developer

Similar to last years, we consider a developer on the App Store to be a small developer in a given year if it had fewer than one million downloads and less than \$1 million in earnings across all its apps in that year. We exclude developers who never had more than 1,000 annual downloads. These criteria are broader than those of the App Store Small Business Program. Our definition includes businesses that do not sell digital goods and services directly on the App Store.

App Store Small Business Program

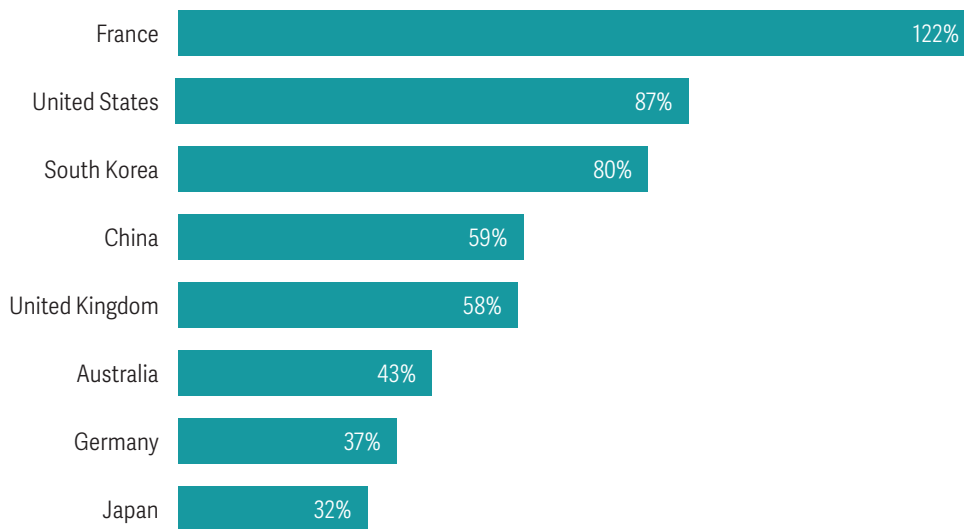
In January 2021, Apple launched the App Store Small Business Program, through which new developers and developers who earned up to \$1 million on the App Store in the prior calendar year can qualify for a reduced commission rate of 15%.

Support for this study and data were provided by Apple. The conclusions and opinions expressed are exclusively those of the authors.

The growth of small developer earnings on the App Store

Total App Store **earnings of small developers who were active in 2020 increased by 71% in 2022**, proving resilient under challenging global economic conditions.¹ In aggregate, small developers in all major regions still saw their earnings increase over this period. For example, in Europe small developers’ earnings increased by 64%.²

Growth in App Store Earnings of Small Developers Active in 2020 Select Countries, 2020-2022



Small developers saw earnings increase across all app categories. In particular, health and fitness, sports, and lifestyle apps from small developers active in 2020 more than doubled their earnings in the last two years. Lifestyle apps such as dating, astrology, and paperless invitation apps are among the examples driving earnings growth in this category.

Like last year, the aggregate **growth rate in earnings of small developers who were active in 2020 continues to exceed that of large developers**. In addition, while over half of all developers’ earnings in 2022 originated from games, small developers’ earnings came from apps across more diverse categories, such as entertainment, social networks and health and fitness apps, with games accounting only for about a quarter of small developers’ earnings.

¹ To limit the effect of a few large-scale successes driving the results, this analysis excludes developers that earned \$10 million or more in any subsequent year.

² The reduced earnings growth in the Eurozone, the UK, Japan, and Korea may at least be partially attributable to a stronger USD in 2022 compared to 2020 – earnings from users from their home regions increased more in local currency than USD.

A dynamic App Store ecosystem offers opportunities for small developers to grow

Many developers who sold digital goods and services on the App Store and earned more than \$1 million in 2022 used to be small developers. **Over 40% were either not on the App Store or had less than \$10,000 in earnings five years before.**

Examples of apps from small developers

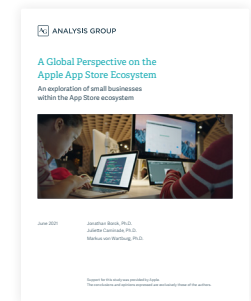


iScape (US, 2018) is an augmented reality app that allows users to design their own gardens and landscaping projects starting from a simple photo. The app relies on ARKit and SpriteKit to give users the ability to work in 2D and 3D. Amateur and professional designers can test different landscaping options by adding plants, trees, and decorative features to their original images to complete their designs. Since launching, the app has been quickly growing with over 2.5 million downloads and a triple-digit percent growth year-to-year.

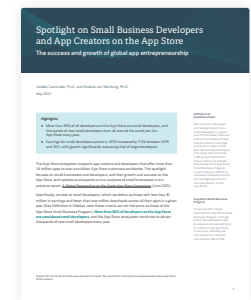


Plane Finder (UK, 2009) is a groundbreaking flight tracking app that allows anyone with an iPhone to easily track flights in real time. With Apple's Metal API, users can visualize 3D maps with thousands of live flights. Plane Finder has benefited from Apple's Small Business Program, and its subscription earnings have grown 60% year-over-year.

This spotlight updates our analyses of small businesses in previous years. For more information on how the App Store ecosystem has supported the growth of small developers, please read:



[A Global Perspective on the Apple App Store Ecosystem](#)
(June 2021)



[A Spotlight on Small Business Developers and App Creators on the App Store](#)
(May 2022)

About the Authors

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