

THE 2016 STATE OF THE U.S. HEALTH & FITNESS APPS ECONOMY

The quality leaders among nearly 8,000 apps and across 4 million consumer reviews.

By Ben Gray

66/100

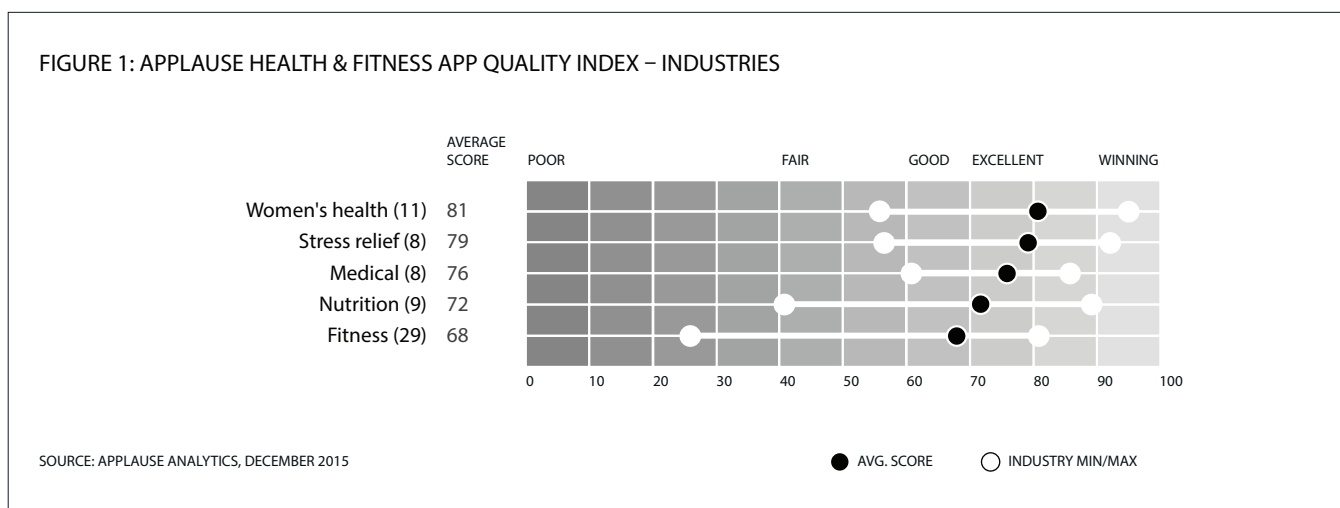
The average app quality score of the nearly 8,000 health & fitness apps in Google Play and Apple App Store, as rated by their U.S. customers.

Monitoring The Health Of Fitness Apps

This is the season to get off the couch, burn calories and eat healthier. Sigh. What better way to track New Year's resolution progress than through health & fitness apps via fitness bands, smart watches, phones and tablets. With nearly 8,000 apps to select from within Google Play and Apple App Store, it's easy to pick an app that is insecure, unstable, inaccurate or just plain ugly. Why use an unfit app when you are trying to be healthy?

ARC from *Applause* studied the health & fitness apps economy to determine which brands deliver the most delightful mobile experiences. *ARC* analyzed how U.S. customers rate the app quality of 65 brands with the most popular apps—including fitness, medical, nutrition, stress relief and women’s health (see Figure 1). What did we discover? The health and fitness industry is insanely competitive with apps that rate better than most *other categories*. Mobile is specifically well-suited to health and fitness, giving brands the opportunity to take advantage of unique phone features.

FIGURE 1



10 Popular Brands Earn High Quality Marks

ARC from *Applause* authored this report to help health & fitness brands understand how U.S. customers perceive their flagship Android and iOS app quality. *ARC* winnowed its initial data pull of nearly 8,000 apps to narrow in on the 65 most popular brands, based on volume of app store feedback (see Figure 2). After crunching approximately 4 million app store reviews, the Applause Health & Fitness App Quality Index is comprised of the brands with more than 10,000 reviews collectively.

FIGURE 2

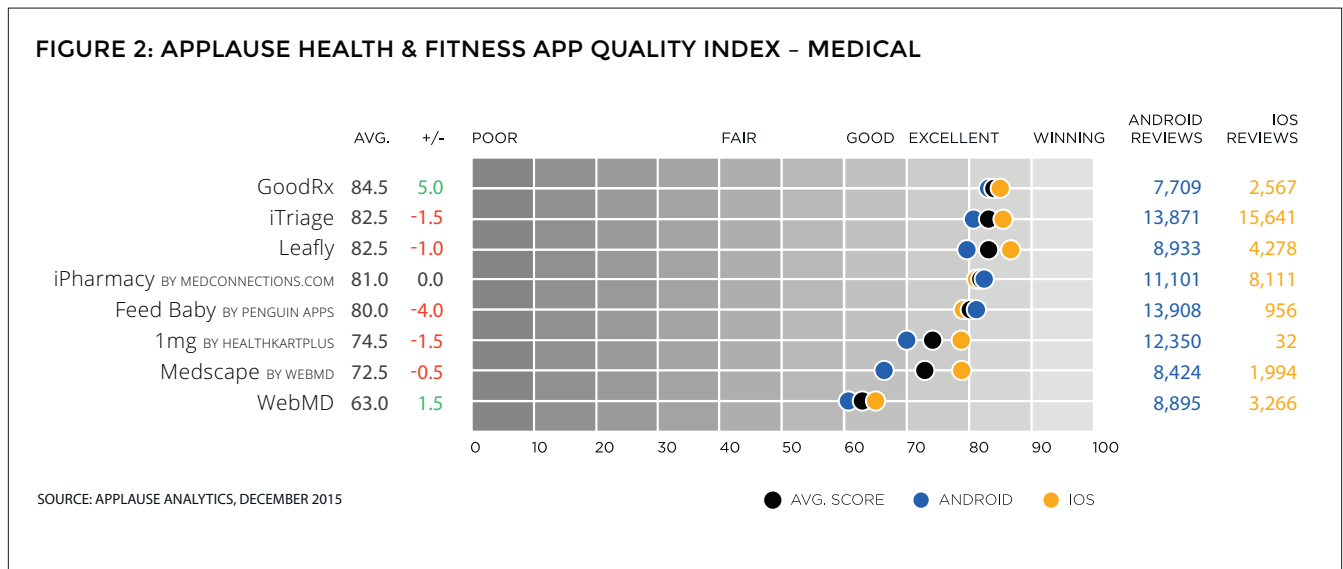
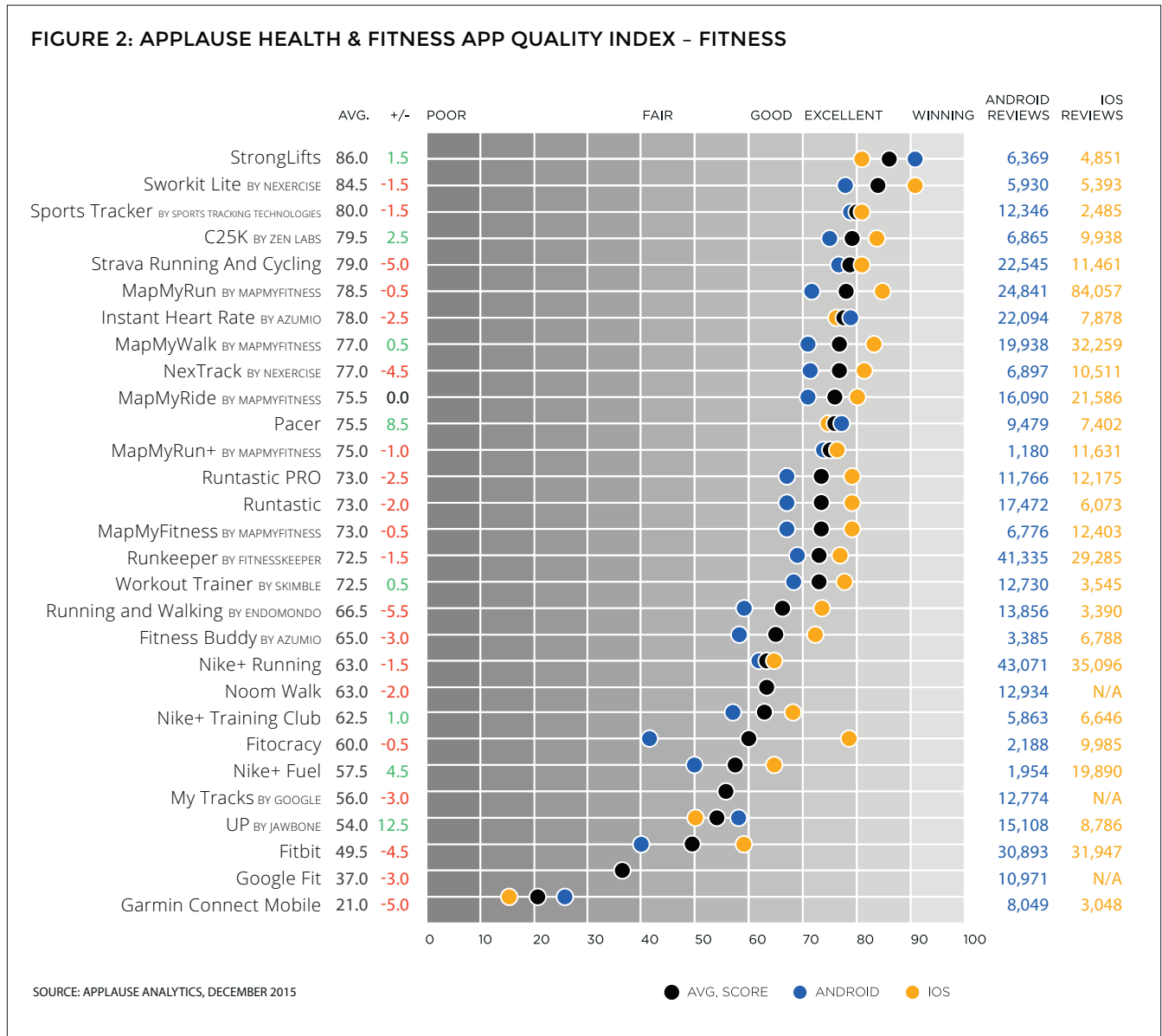


FIGURE 2: APPLAUSE HEALTH & FITNESS APP QUALITY INDEX - NUTRITION

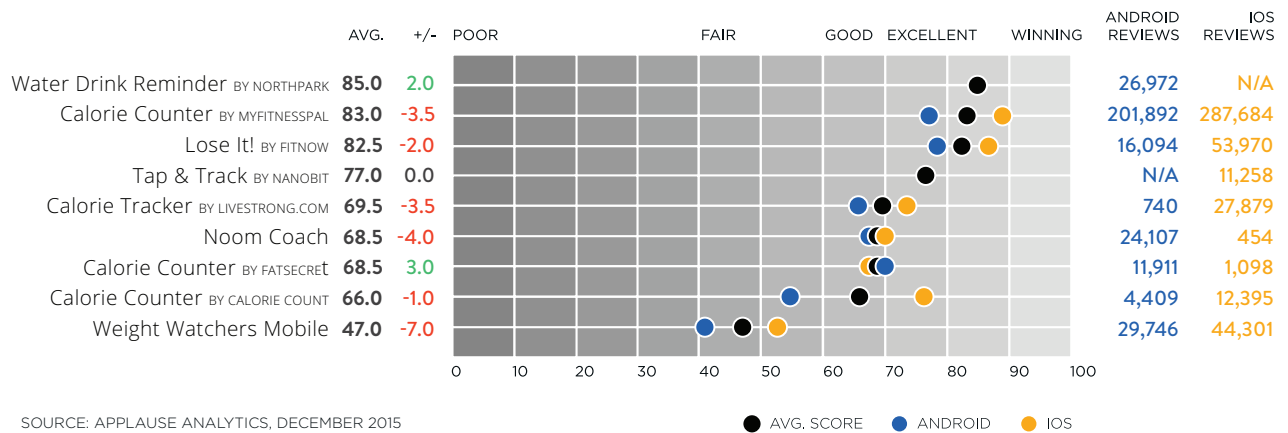


FIGURE 2: APPLAUSE HEALTH & FITNESS APP QUALITY INDEX - STRESS RELIEF

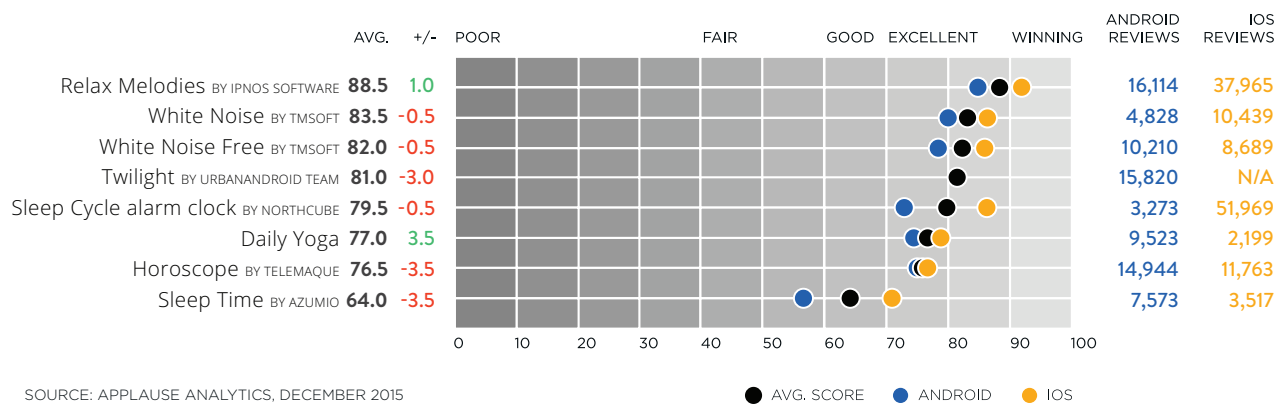
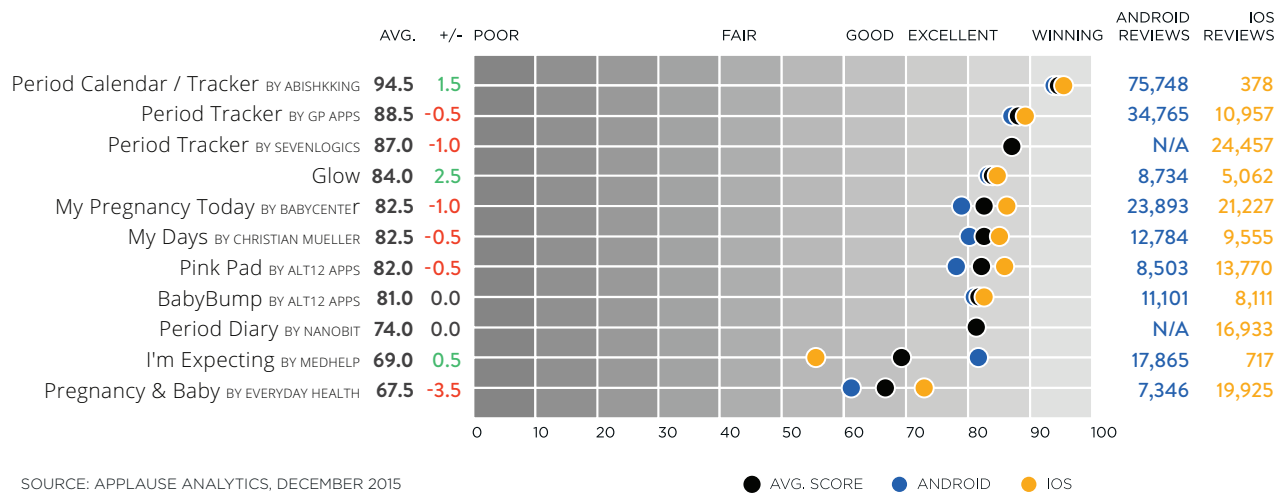


FIGURE 2: APPLAUSE HEALTH & FITNESS APP QUALITY INDEX - WOMEN'S HEALTH



Ten apps earned above average app quality scores of 66 or greater based on more than 40,000 reviews:

- **Period Calendar / Tracker by ABISHKKING (94.5)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Relax Melodies by Ipnos Software (88.5)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Period Tracker by GP Apps (88.5)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Calorie Counter by MyFitnessPal (83.0)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Lose It! by FitNow (82.5)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **My Pregnancy Today by BabyCenter (82.5)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Sleep cycle alarm clock by Northcube (79.5)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **MapMyRun by MapMyFitness (78.5)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **MapMyWalk by MapMyFitness (77.0)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Runkeeper by FitnessKeeper (72.5)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)].

What are commonalities amongst the ten leading brands? Consistent and amazing feedback on attributes such as usability, performance, satisfaction and content. Consumers value apps with elegant user interfaces and simple navigation, quick launch times, fast performance, accurate information, relevant notifications and engaging and fun experiences.

Apparel companies, Under Armour and Nike, have emerged as the true leaders in health & fitness apps. With UA Record, its November 2013 acquisition of MapMyFitness and its February 2015 acquisitions of Endomondo and MyFitnessPal, Under Armour now owns the world's largest digital health and fitness community that numbers more than 150 million. Meanwhile, Nike was the first mover to create a converged

digital strategy. It will be interesting to see how these global brands evolve now that they own such significant user communities.

Apps That Have Room To Improve

When consumers feel well served or underserved, they have a channel in app stores through which to share experiences—good and bad. U.S. consumers rated the strengths and weaknesses of the nearly 8,000 health & fitness apps in Google Play and Apple App Store and identified security, stability, elegance and content as the four primary areas of concern. Just four profiled apps have quality scores less than 50:

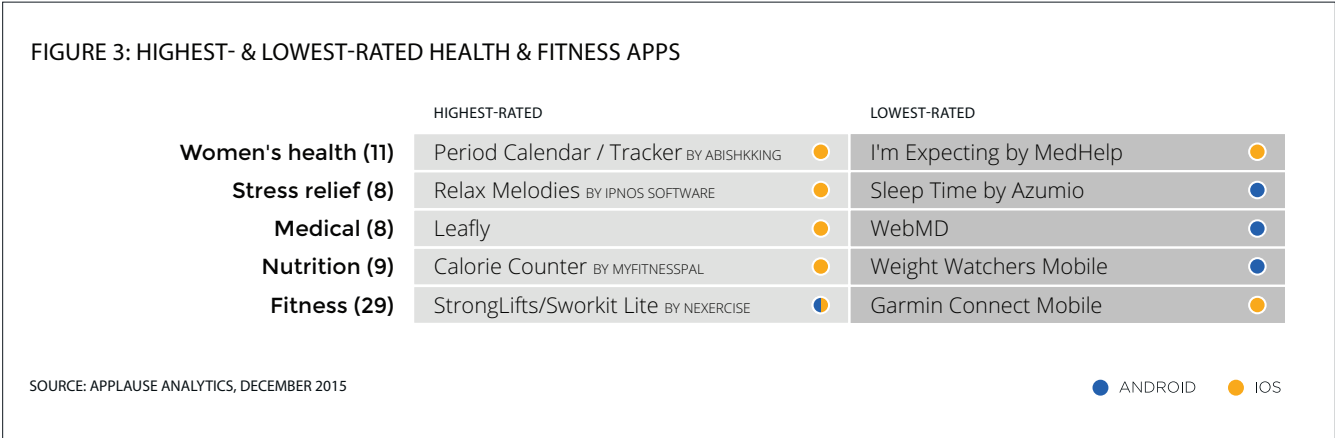
- **FitBit (49.5)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Weight Watchers Mobile (47.0)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Google Fit (37.0)** [[Android](#)]
- **Garmin Connect Mobile (21.0)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)].

Apps that rate poorly tend to not optimize the experience towards mobile moments. Short-term testing efforts (e.g., usability audits with independent experts and actual customers, automated functional testing and security/privacy testing) will flag and fix immediate issues within an app. Evaluating mobile maturity and adapting to more agile development processes and building a world class customer experience program can further close any potential disconnects between customers and their digital experiences.

The Highest- And Lowest-Rated Apps

Some apps emerged from the crowd with amazing reviews, such as StrongLifts for Android and Calorie Counter by MyFitnessPal for iOS (see Figure 3). Others stood out for all the wrong reasons. Five of the six highest-rated apps were on iOS, while three of the five lowest-rated apps were on Android.

FIGURE 3



Some Brands Had Large Satisfaction Swings

ARC analyzed how the flagship app quality scores have evolved over the past year—from December 2014 to December 2015. Ten brands experienced user sentiment swings of four points or greater, with one experiencing a more volatile shift. That brand? UP by Jawbone, which improved 12.5 points on a 100-point scale.

What’s the secret to Jawbone’s success? A combination of product and feature improvements. Jawbone introduced Smart Coach, which serves as a trusted advisor to guide customers toward a healthier lifestyle, and has evolved it into a must-have feature. Jawbone also introduced a new

lineup of fitness bands that deliver longer battery life, improved health & fitness monitoring, timely notifications, stylish designs and enhanced ergonomics.

MOVERS & SHAKERS	
UP by Jawbone	+12.5
Pacer	+8.5
GoodRx	+5.0
Nike+ Fuel	+4.5
NexTrack BY NEXERCISE	-4.5
Fitbit	-4.5
Strava Running And Cycling	-5.0
Garmin Connect Mobile	-5.0
Running and Walking BY ENDOMONDO	-5.5
Weight Watchers Mobile	-7.0

SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, DECEMBER 2015

ergonomics.

With the good, comes the bad. Most of the apps with declining user sentiment scores were vulnerable to buggy releases, an inability to achieve feature parity with faster competition and rising consumer expectations. In today's apps economy, to the victor go the spoils. **arc**



Complimentary Onsite Workshops

Applause is making this report's author available for complimentary onsite workshops that will enhance understanding of touchpoints across your customer journey, determine how your company can get to market faster with a rich digital presence and share insight into the best practices that industry-leading brands have embraced to win.

Interested? Contact bgray@applause.com today.

About ARC

ARC from *Applause* is a research group dedicated to providing insights on the apps economy. ARC leverages data from a variety of sources, including proprietary Applause data, to provide a 360° view of app quality. ARC combines this with analysis into reports to help brands and developers understand what's happening in the apps economy.

Learn more at <http://arc.applause.com>.

About Applause Analytics

Combing through half a billion star ratings and user reviews submitted across more than 30 million apps in the Android and iOS app stores, Applause Analytics closes the gap between mobile developers and their customers, generating actionable insights and quantifiable metrics based on what users are actually saying about their app experiences.

Learn more at www.applause.com/analytics.