

THE 2015 STATE OF THE U.S. HEALTH & FITNESS APPS ECONOMY

Analyzing the state of mobile app quality in the health & fitness and medical industries.

By Ben Gray



Introduction:

People use health & fitness and medical apps because they want to be their best. They want to achieve the best time on a run, the best mile time on a bike ride. People track calories and monitor food and drink consumption so they look and feel their best. And they want the best medical treatments and prices on prescriptions.

So why wouldn't they choose the highest quality health & fitness and medical apps to help them achieve their goals?

It's difficult to know what the best apps are for anything. So many apps populate Google Play and Apple App Store for each category that it is nearly impossible to know what is quality and what is merely mediocre. To help people understand what the best apps are for tracking their health & fitness and medical goals, [*Applause*](#), the 360° app quality



company, introduces the [ARC 360](#) research report on *The 2015 State Of The U.S. Health & Fitness Apps Economy*.

The report also helps companies determine where they stand in terms of quality vis-à-vis their competitors. IT, product and marketing leaders should use this report to understand how customers rate Android and iOS app quality, assess the competitive landscape and set goals for optimizing their app quality management practices in 2015 as they proceed along the path to a winning health & fitness or medical app, as defined by their customers.

Introducing ARC 360's Health Report

[Applause](#), the 360° app quality company, has commissioned this [ARC 360](#) report on the state of the U.S. health & fitness apps economy to help the world's most popular health & fitness and medical brands in the U.S.—and those that compete against them—to understand how customers perceive your app quality and to rapidly improve the experience for your mobile users. We previously launched [Retail](#), [Travel](#) and [Media & Entertainment](#) editions and plan to release updates and additional industry editions in subsequent months.

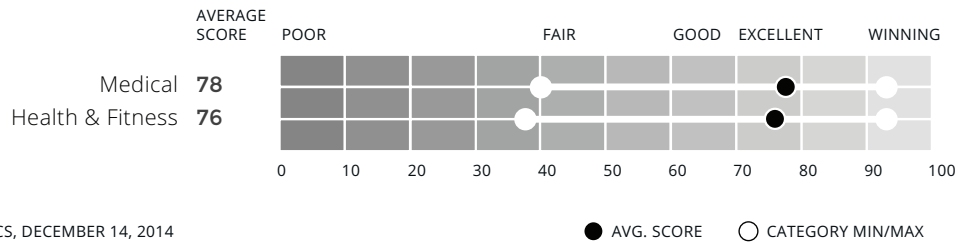
Health & Fitness And Medical Apps Economy

Thirty-nine health & fitness and 28 medical apps qualified for the inaugural Applause health & fitness app quality index. The average

app quality score across the Health & Fitness and Medical categories were remarkably similar (see Figure 1).

FIGURE 1

APPLAUSE HEALTH & FITNESS MOBILE APP QUALITY INDEX - MINIMUM, AVERAGE & MAXIMUM SCORE



SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, DECEMBER 14, 2014

Defining The App Quality Scale

Applause measured the app quality sentiment of Android and iOS users and plotted the resulting app quality scores as defined by customers on a scale of: Poor, Fair, Good, Excellent and Winning. For each of these classifications, health & fitness and medical app quality scores ranged from:

- **Poor:** 0 to 39 (apps with which customers are disappointed)
- **Fair:** 40 to 59 (apps customers tolerate because they serve a purpose)
- **Good:** 60 to 69 (apps that customers like)
- **Excellent:** 70 to 89 (apps that customers love)
- **Winning:** 90 to 100 (apps that win customers' applause)

APP TRENDS:

Did you know that across more than 200 million app store ratings and reviews in the U.S. alone, the average app quality score is 66.5? In other words, a "D" - a passing grade but nothing to write home about.

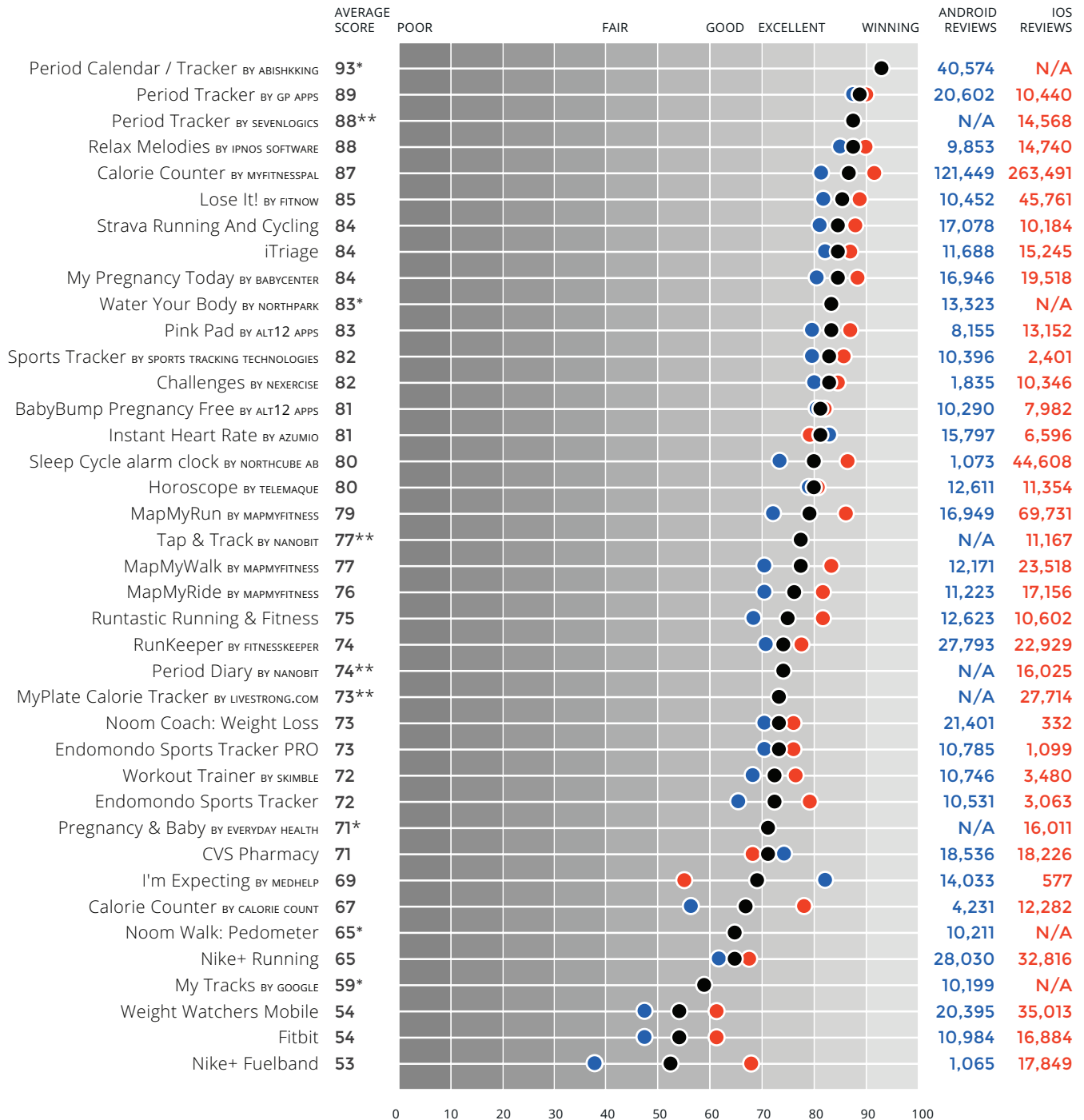
The Good And The Bad (No Ugly Thankfully)

Some customers' ratings of health & fitness and medical apps really stood out, for both good and bad reasons (see Figure 2). The best and below-average health & fitness brands for app quality as defined by their customers include:

- **Four incredibly popular apps achieved elite app quality status:** Calorie Counter by MyFitnessPal [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)], Lose It! by FitNow [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)], MapMyRun by MapMyFitness [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)] and RunKeeper by FitnessKeeper [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]. Each of these apps earned average app quality scores higher than 70 that stood the test of more than 50K user reviews.
- **Three apps achieved Android app quality scores of 80 or higher across more than 20K reviews:** Period Calendar / Tracker by ABISHKING [[Android](#)], Period Tracker by GP Apps [[Android](#)] and Calorie Counter by MyFitnessPal [[Android](#)].
- **Five apps achieved iOS app quality scores of 80 or higher across more than 20K reviews:** Calorie Counter by MyFitnessPal [[iOS](#)], Lose It! by FitNow [[iOS](#)], Sleep Cycle alarm clock by Northcube AB [[iOS](#)], MapMyRun by MapMyFitness [[iOS](#)] and MapMyWalk also by MapMyFitness [[iOS](#)].
- **Two popular fitness brands need to do more for their app users than simply live up to average:** Weight Watchers Mobile [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)] and Fitbit [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]. These brands earned an average app quality score of 54 (vs. 66.7 for the category) from more than 20K reviews per app. Due to their large number of users, both firms can capture new marketshare and mindshare by further refining their apps. If they can advance beyond merely working, and deliver flawless, reliable and intuitive experiences, they have the opportunity to make significant leaps. With disruptors lurking in the space – particularly those mentioned as leaders in elegance and stability – users may hold more established firms to a higher bar than emerging startups.

FIGURE 2

APPLAUSE HEALTH & FITNESS MOBILE APP QUALITY INDEX - HEALTH & FITNESS SCORE



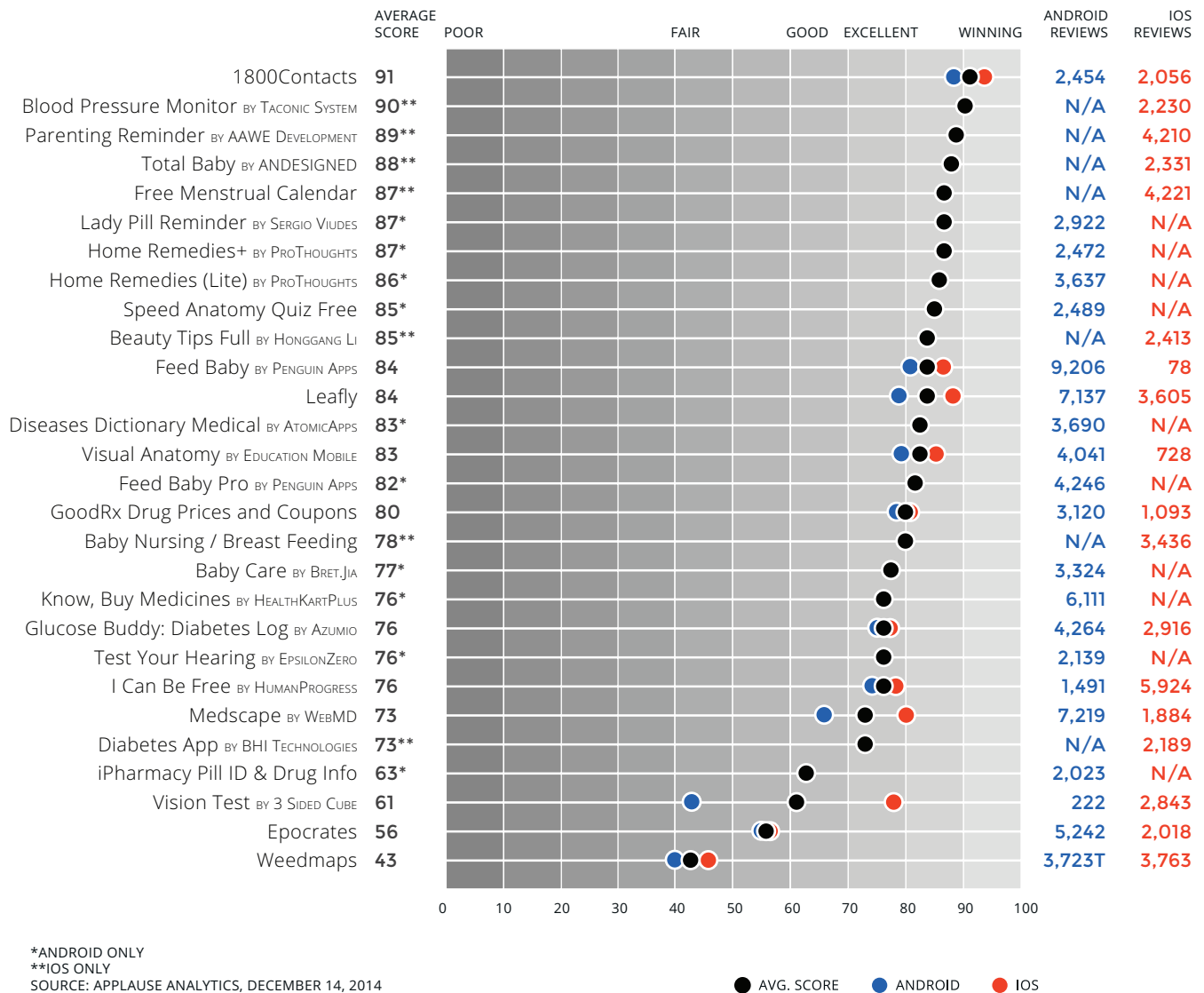
*ANDROID ONLY

**IOS ONLY

SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, DECEMBER 14, 2014

● AVG. SCORE ● ANDROID ● IOS

APPLAUSE HEALTH & FITNESS MOBILE APP QUALITY INDEX - MEDICAL SCORE



Research Methodology

To build the health & fitness mobile app quality index, ARC 360:

- Started with the list of 8,851 health & fitness and medical apps housed within the two most popular U.S. app stores—Google Play and Apple App Store. Google Play and Apple App Store health & fitness and medical app store categories match identically.

- **Sorted the apps by the number of user reviews** and determined a minimum number for inclusion that varied by category. For Health & Fitness we set the minimum bar for inclusion at 10K or more reviews, and for Medical we lowered the bar to 2K or more reviews.
- **Analyzed the quality of the apps using *Applause Analytics***, a mobile app analytics tool that crawls every rating and review from the top apps stores, including Google Play and Apple App Store. Applause Analytics reports a mobile app quality score, as defined by customers, on a scale of 0 to 100.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Path To Winning Apps, As Defined By Customers

Every health & fitness and medical brand with an application in the Applause mobile app quality index is proceeding along its own path to a winning mobile application. But whether they're able to achieve winning status as rated by their customers and at what rate they earn it—not to mention retain that status over time—really depends on where they landed in the mobile app quality index.

- **HEALTH & FITNESS BRANDS WITH APPS RATED AS POOR** need to fundamentally refocus their efforts on serving customers in their mobile moments. Apps have to work every time, for everyone, across every device, OS, network and location.
- **HEALTH & FITNESS BRANDS WITH APPS RATED AS FAIR** need to expand testing out of the lab and into the real world. Winning mobile apps demand additional testing where users naturally interact with your digital experiences.
- **HEALTH & FITNESS BRANDS WITH APPS RATED AS GOOD** should expand the scope of their testing efforts. Today's user expectations are incred-

ibly lofty, your apps have to do more than work. Apps have to be intuitive, offer rock solid stability, perform quickly, shine under pressure and keep customer information secure and private. An app tested for localization, privacy and security can graduate to the excellent category.

- **HEALTH & FITNESS BRANDS WITH APPS RATED AS EXCELLENT** should engage early with users on new builds as a means of identifying issues before your customers do and to narrow future testing efforts on the most urgent issues. As an example, most of the indexed health & fitness and medical apps fared poorly on elegance, security and stability (versus satisfaction, usability, content, interoperability, performance, privacy and pricing).
- **HEALTH & FITNESS BRANDS WITH APPS RATED AS WINNING** must monitor ongoing user feedback to improve over time. There's no clearer voice of the customer than the one that's already shouting at you with app store ratings and reviews from your most passionate fans and critics alike.

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About ARC 360

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

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

About Applause Analytics

Combing through millions of ratings and user reviews submitted across millions of apps in the Android and iOS app stores around the world, Applause Analytics closes the gap between mobile app 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.