HOW CUSTOMERS RATE THE MOBILE RETAIL APP LEADERS

More than one million app reviews reveal the retail industry's mobile leaders.

By Ben Gray, Digital Experience Analyst, Applause

52/100

The average mobile user sentiment score across Android and iOS apps of the 50 retailers with the most sales from mobile apps, as reviewed by 1.2 million global customers.

Retailers Prioritize Mobile Apps In 2016

According to *Internet Retailer 2016 Mobile 500*, app sales are soaring. Mobile sales from apps increased from $35.48 billion in 2014 to $59.86 billion in 2015—a staggering 68.7% growth.

Retailers have taken notice. Today 303 of the top 500 retailers around the world have an app. Internet Retailer *highlighted* 50 retailers that receive approximately half of their sales through mobile apps. These top 50 retailers generated $29.46 billion in 2015 alone or approximately half of the total haul. That makes them the mobile retail app leaders.

ARC from *Applause* analyzed the 1.2 million app store reviews in the App Store and Google Play of these 50 global retailers with the most sales from mobile apps to discover what it takes to not only win new mobile app customers but get them to spend approximately $30 billion in 2015 sales.

Take Inspiration From These Trailblazers

Done right, mobile apps enhance customer journeys. Take for example online ecommerce pioneers like *Groupon* and *LivingSocial*. While each company has dealt with its degree of troubles after the daily deals market fell apart, the companies' mobile apps were not to blame. Whether exploring a new city or just looking to get out of the house, both empowered customers by giving them control over their experiences on their mobile devices to discover food, fun, fashion, wellness and professional services.

Want to buy the latest in designer brands? Look no further than flash sale apps like *Rue La La* or *Gilt*. With boutique launches everyday, new inventory daily and mobile-exclusive offers, millions of customers are flocking to these trendy shopping communities.

Ecommerce and brick and mortar retailers use customer data to individualize customer experiences. *Overstock.com* enables customers to create lists, see flash deals and join its rewards program to easily discover new products. *REI* allows customers to find their nearest store, check product availability, scan barcodes to add items to their wish lists and read customer reviews so they can shop with confidence.

Still somewhat concerned about the fit of a pair of pants or shirt? Don't pay for anything until you've had a chance to try it on at home. Simply pay for what you decide to keep, courtesy of *TryOuts* from *JackThreads*.

The 2016 Retail App Sales Leaders

ARC analyzed the mobile user sentiment of the native Android and iOS apps among the 50 retailers with the most mobile app sales in 2015. To qualify for inclusion, individual retailers needed to transact 40% or more of their total 2015 sales via their mobile apps.

We analyzed mobile user sentiment via Applause *Mobile Sentiment Analysis*, a subscription-based SaaS tool that continuously crawls app store star ratings and user reviews and measures on a 100-point scale how users perceive the quality of mobile apps.

In total, we were able to analyze 43 of the top 50 retailers. Apps from Cheaper Than Dirt and overstockArt.com didn't generate enough reviews for statistical significance (i.e., 150+), Google Play doesn't allow users to rate it or leave feedback, JustFab and SkyMall don't have native apps, and Dangdang and VIPShop Holdings are China-based and the tool doesn't crawl China.

ARC stack ranked the 43 retailers based on a weighted average of their Android and iOS mobile user sentiment scores (see Figure 1).
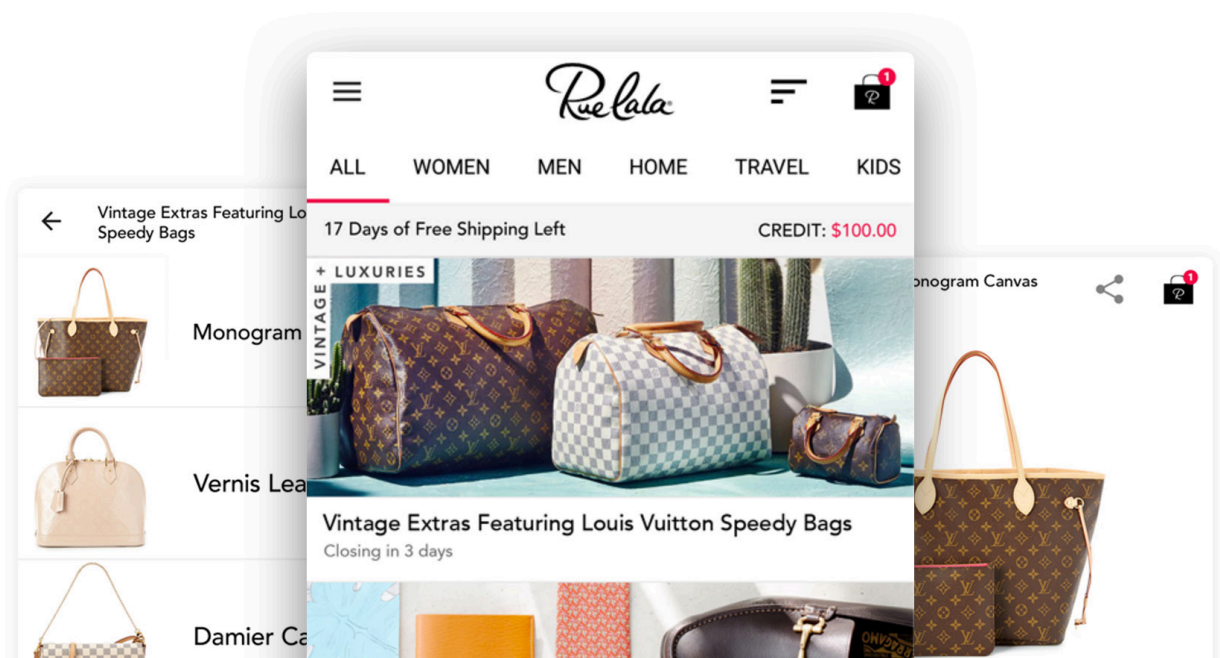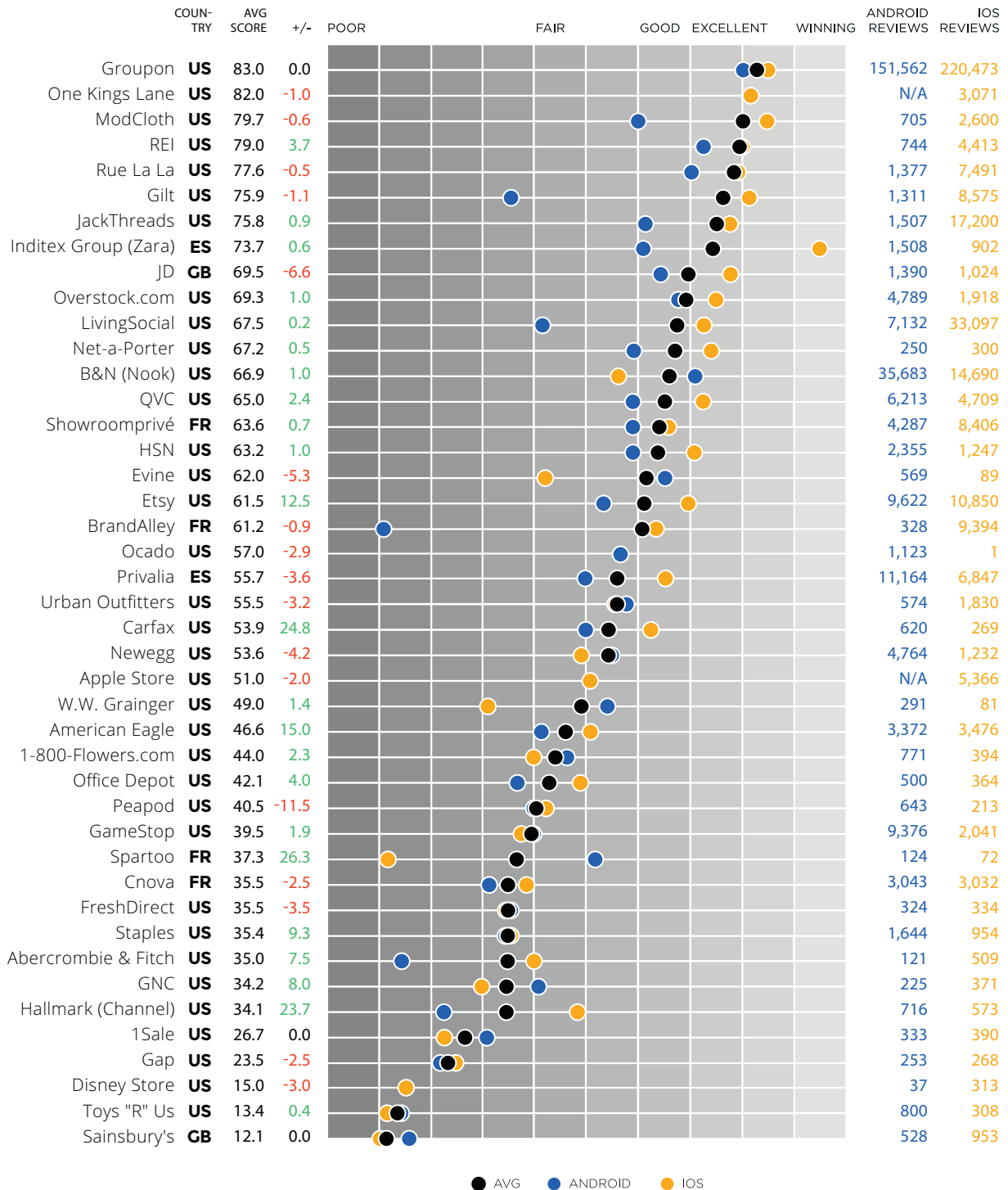
FIGURE 1: APPLAUSE RETAILERS WITH THE MOST SALES FROM MOBILE APPS SENTIMENT INDEX

	COUNTRY	AVG SCORE	+/-	POOR · FAIR · GOOD · EXCELLENT · WINNING	ANDROID REVIEWS	IOS REVIEWS
Groupon	US	83.0	0.0		151,562	220,473
One Kings Lane	US	82.0	-1.0		N/A	3,071
ModCloth	US	79.7	-0.6		705	2,600
REI	US	79.0	3.7		744	4,413
Rue La La	US	77.6	-0.5		1,377	7,491
Gilt	US	75.9	-1.1		1,311	8,575
JackThreads	US	75.8	0.9		1,507	17,200
Inditex Group (Zara)	ES	73.7	0.6		1,508	902
JD	GB	69.5	-6.6		1,390	1,024
Overstock.com	US	69.3	1.0		4,789	1,918
LivingSocial	US	67.5	0.2		7,132	33,097
Net-a-Porter	US	67.2	0.5		250	300
B&N (Nook)	US	66.9	1.0		35,683	14,690
QVC	US	65.0	2.4		6,213	4,709
Showroomprivé	FR	63.6	0.7		4,287	8,406
HSN	US	63.2	1.0		2,355	1,247
Evine	US	62.0	-5.3		569	89
Etsy	US	61.5	12.5		9,622	10,850
BrandAlley	FR	61.2	-0.9		328	9,394
Ocado	US	57.0	-2.9		1,123	1
Privalia	ES	55.7	-3.6		11,164	6,847
Urban Outfitters	US	55.5	-3.2		574	1,830
Carfax	US	53.9	24.8		620	269
Newegg	US	53.6	-4.2		4,764	1,232
Apple Store	US	51.0	-2.0		N/A	5,366
W.W. Grainger	US	49.0	1.4		291	81
American Eagle	US	46.6	15.0		3,372	3,476
1-800-Flowers.com	US	44.0	2.3		771	394
Office Depot	US	42.1	4.0		500	364
Peapod	US	40.5	-11.5		643	213
GameStop	US	39.5	1.9		9,376	2,041
Spartoo	FR	37.3	26.3		124	72
Cnova	FR	35.5	-2.5		3,043	3,032
FreshDirect	US	35.5	-3.5		324	334
Staples	US	35.4	9.3		1,644	954
Abercrombie & Fitch	US	35.0	7.5		121	509
GNC	US	34.2	8.0		225	371
Hallmark (Channel)	US	34.1	23.7		716	573
1Sale	US	26.7	0.0		333	390
Gap	US	23.5	-2.5		253	268
Disney Store	US	15.0	-3.0		37	313
Toys "R" Us	US	13.4	0.4		800	308
Sainsbury's	GB	12.1	0.0		528	953

● AVG ● ANDROID ● IOS

Seven Popular Apps Earn Top Quality Marks

Across the more than 30 million apps Applause Mobile Sentiment Analysis crawls in real time, the average score is a _67.3_. The retailers with the most sales from retail apps trail this global benchmark, coming in with a 52.3 weighted average. This is superior, however, to _last year's study of the 95 most popular retail apps_ with an average of 43. And further superior to _the top 100 restaurants_ that average just a 38.

It's time that retailers reset the expectations their customers have in them by launching and sustaining high-quality digital experiences across Web, mobile and in-store. Seven popular retailers earned weighted averages of 67.3 or greater based on more than 5,000 reviews:

- **Groupon (83.0, ~372K reviews)** [_Android_ | _iOS_]

- **REI (79.0, ~5K reviews)** [_Android_ | _iOS_]

- **Rue La La (77.6, ~9K reviews)** [_Android_ | _iOS_]

- **Gilt (75.9, ~10K reviews)** [_Android_ | _iOS_]

- **JackThreads (75.8, ~19K reviews)** [_Android_ | _iOS_]

- **Overstock.com (69.3, ~7K reviews)** [_Android_ | _iOS_]

- **LivingSocial (67.5, ~40K reviews)** [_Android_ | _iOS_].

Eleven Retailers Had Big Sentiment Swings

Your standing in the retail apps economy isn't just impacted by your own operational decisions. It's impacted by competitive and market insight. If a competing retailer's app gets better and resets the industry benchmark, your app looks poorer in comparison.

MOVERS & SHAKERS	
Spartoo	+26.3
Carfax	+24.8
Hallmark (Channel)	+23.7
American Eagle Outfitters	+15.0
Etsy	+12.5
Staples	+9.3
GNC	+8.0
Abercrombie & Fitch	+7.5
Evine	-5.3
JD	-6.6
Peapod	-11.5

SOURCE: APPLAUSE MOBILE SENTIMENT ANALYSIS, AUGUST 2016

ARC analyzed how the mobile user sentiment of the retailers with the most sales from mobile apps evolved over the previous year. Eleven retailers experienced mobile user sentiment swings of five points or greater, with six experiencing more volatile shifts of 10 points or greater (see Movers & Shakers).

Spartoo, the French retailer, launched its well-received Android app that features a widget to access the latest fashionable shoes. *Carfax* launched Android v2.1.1 in December 2015 and, since its release, approximately 84% of its reviews are four- or five-stars—an impressive feat!

With the good comes the bad. *Peapod's* Android and iOS feedback is riddled with one- and two-star reviews that complain of freezes, slow performance, blank screens, error messages, disruptive ads, limited payment support options and new updates that seemingly weren't tested prior to release.

No matter the company's industry, geography or reputation, app users are vocal about their experiences. It's time for retailers to embrace digital-first strategies that raise the bar for quality to ultimately deliver richer customer experiences that accelerate growth. We hope this report serves as a shortcut to understanding what the leading retailers with the most sales from mobile apps are doing to sustain their mobile leadership positions. arc

Complementary Onsite Workshops

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

Interested? Contact *bgray@applause.com*.

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 comprehensive view of app quality. ARC combines this with analysis into reports to help brands understand what's happening in the apps economy.

Learn more at *http://arc.applause.com*.

About Applause

Applause is a digital quality and testing company, empowering companies to deliver great digital experiences - from web to mobile to wearables to IoT and beyond. By combining in-the-wild testing services, a robust platform and an extensive global community, Applause helps companies achieve the quality they need to thrive in the digital economy. Thousands of companies - including Google, Fox, Amazon, Concur and Runkeeper - rely on Applause.

Learn more at *www.applause.com* and follow *@applause* on Twitter.