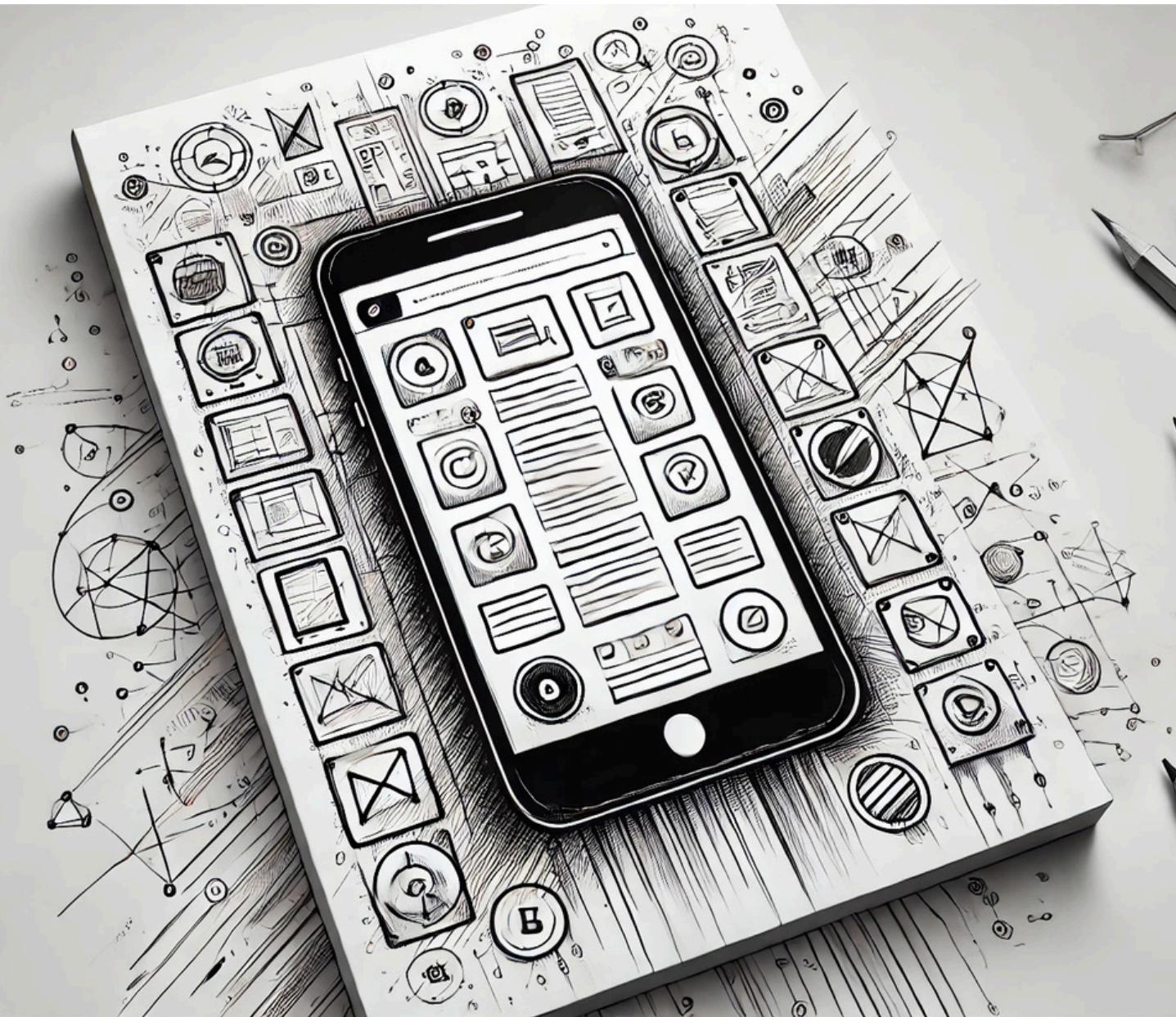


JMG



Mobile App Launch Checklist

A guide and checklist for navigating the account registrations, legal documents, annual costs, and marketing materials needed to launch apps into the App Store and Play Store.

Welcome to app ownership!

Congratulations!

You hired a software development team that is busy handling the technical aspects of building your app.

As the team progresses through the development process, they will request several things from you to publish your app.

(Haven't hired a team yet? Our guide on [20 Questions to Ask a Software Development Team](#) can help.)

This guide will help you check off the following administrative tasks related to app development:

- How to set up developer accounts on the app stores
- When and how to register for a D-U-N-S number
- What marketing materials are needed for app store listings
- What hosting plan to sign up for
- Which legal documents are required and suggested
- How to prepare for testing your app

Even if you wait for your development team to ask you for these things (which is recommended in some instances), reading this guide will help you understand what your team asks of you and make the launch process smoother and quicker.

Your proactiveness might even impress your development team and make you their favorite client!

Let's dive in!



Developer Accounts

To list an app on the App Store and/or Google Play, you must register for a developer account. Your development team will use these accounts to set up your app listing, prepare the testing suite, and send builds of your app to the app stores.

The Apple Developer Program has two annual fee options that auto-renew until canceled:

- Individual and sole proprietors/single-person businesses: \$99 / year
- Apple Developer Enterprise Program: \$299 / year

The Google Play Developer account registration fee is a one-time payment of \$25.

Where to create accounts:

App Store Connect: <https://developer.apple.com/app-store-connect/>

Google Play Developer: <https://play.google.com/console/signup>

If you already have an Apple ID, we recommend creating your developer account with a new email address. One trick is to append "+projectname" to your email so it is seen as unique to Apple.

Your developers will need your login credentials for the developer accounts. Please use a unique password that you don't use for any other account.

For example, if we're building an app for an ice cream parlor, we might use info+icecreamparlor@jedmahonisgroup.com as our email address. Most big email hosting providers support this. Check with your email provider to see if this trick is supported.



App Store Listings

An app whose developer account will be registered using a company name must provide a D-U-N-S number (a unique identifier for businesses) to be listed on the App Store and Play Store.

Registering for a D-U-N-S number can be lengthy, so if your company doesn't already have one, it's vital to get the process rolling before your app is ready for launch.

If the app will be associated with a personal name, you don't need to worry about a D-U-N-S number.

Register for a D-U-N-S Number through Dun & Bradstreet www.dnb.com/duns-number.html

In addition to the D-U-N-S number, you must provide your development team with marketing materials for your app store listing:

- Short description (80 characters)
- Long description
- 1-10 screenshots of the app
- A marketing URL (typically your website)
- A privacy policy URL (typically hosted on your website)
- A list of keywords (100 characters)
- A high-resolution version of your app icon (1024x1024px PNG)
- A banner image for Google Play (512x1024px PNG)

If you need assistance creating any of these items, your development team would be happy to help. However, if design and marketing weren't included in your original project cost, creating these materials could be an additional charge.



Hosting

Unless you already have infrastructure in place, you will need servers to store and sync your app's data. Some of this could require your involvement.

Staging server: Your development team will advise you on setting up a staging server, likely with Linode, AWS, or Rackspace. Prices vary widely, starting at \$10 and up per month. You'll either set up the account and give your development team access, or they will manage the account directly and bill you.

Domain name: You'll need a domain name for your server if you don't already have one, which ranges in cost from \$10-40/year and can increase depending on which Top-Level Domain (TLD) you choose. The common ones (like .com and .net) are generally cheaper than the more exotic ones (like .fm or .beer).

These are the essential items needed to launch your app. Depending on your application's needs, your development team may suggest additional services like server monitoring, content delivery networks (CDN), etc.



Legal Requirements

Your development team will need a privacy policy before submitting your app to the App Store or Google Play.

Some online services can help you draft a privacy policy for free. We strongly encourage our clients to seek the advice of a lawyer to have a policy drafted that meets the guidelines of GDPR, CalOPPA, and others.

You may also wish to have terms of service drafted for your app. The Terms of Service is a contract between you and your users. Like any contract, having some terms in place with your users can help protect you if you need to kick out a nefarious user or if a user later sues you. We encourage you to talk to your lawyer about whether a Terms of Service contract and any others are necessary.

Account deletion information is now also required for all apps. Your developers will put this within your app, but your website must also include a place for users to request their accounts be deleted; otherwise, Apple and Google will reject your app during launch.



Testing your app

Before your app goes live in either app store, you will want to test it to see progress. This is done by sending out builds (periodic versions of the app) through different services, depending on the platform.

You will provide your development team with a list of internal and external testers. The primary difference between internal and external testing is that Apple and Google periodically review builds that are made available to external testers. This review process takes around 24 hours to complete. Internal test builds are not subject to these reviews.

There are two ways to test an Android app:

APK: The development team can quickly send you a link to an APK, a file type that Android phones recognize as an app. This will enable you to open the file on your phone.

Beta Distribution: The best practice is distributing your app in beta through the Google Play Store. You'll opt in to download the app from the Play Store using a link your development team sends you.

For iOS apps, builds are distributed through Apple's TestFlight app.

Once your development team sets you up in App Store Connect, you'll download the TestFlight app from the App Store and sign in using your Apple ID.

You'll receive an email when your iOS app is ready for testing. The link within it will open your app in TestFlight.

As new builds become available, you will receive an email and a push notification on your device letting you know that a new build is ready for download.

And that's it!

Except not really.

Mobile app development involves a lot of nuance; therefore, no two app launches are precisely the same.

The checklist on the next page covers everything discussed previously, which are the necessities for launching most iOS and Android apps. It doesn't cover exceptional circumstances or additional platforms, but that's one way your development team will add value.

Seasoned developers have experience with the roadblocks that inevitably pop up when launching an app and will be able to guide your team through the process expertly, so please reach out to your project manager with any questions.



Mobile App Launch Checklist

- Create Developer Accounts on all platforms where your app will launch
- Register for a D-U-N-S number
- Create marketing assets for your listing
- Discuss hosting plans with developers
- Create a domain name for your server
- Write a privacy policy and consult with your lawyer regarding any other contracts
- Add user account deletion information to your website
- Send your developers a list of internal and external users
- Download the Testflight app from the App Store



About the creators of this guide

JMG was formed during the early days of the App Store when having an app was the “cool new thing.”

During that time, everyone wanted an app for the sake of having an app, but over a decade later, the market is much different. Every company is now a technology company, and businesses are leveraging digital tools like mobile apps and custom software in order to be agile, innovative, and responsive to market trends.

Since 2012, JMG has been the go-to partner for companies that recognize the need to improve their bottom line with technology. Our reputation is bound to the success of our clients, and we focus on meeting companies where they are to inform and facilitate the creation of the digital tools they need to grow their business.

This includes being an educational resource for the community. We aim to dispel the myth that you need an engineering degree to understand technology.

You can find our blog, podcast, newsletter, and other resources at <https://jmg.mn>.

The views reflected in this guide are based on the experiences of the JMG team. We recognize that the software industry is constantly changing and strive to provide accurate information with as much bias removed as possible. Feel free to reach out to us with any questions or feedback.

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