

Apple Has Developers (Mostly) Convinced That iOS 7 Will Make Them More Money

Ask designers what they think about iOS 7 and [you'll get an earful](#), a lot of it negative. But if you query developers about whether they think [Apple](#)'s new mobile OS will make them richer, the answers are decidedly more positive. Heroku's Matt Thompson told [VentureBeat](#), "In the short term, there will be a mad rush to retrofit all of the existing apps out there. Apple essentially wrote a \$100 million check to agencies and contractors with iOS 7."

And beyond the initial rush to update apps, several structural improvements will have a marked impact on developers' bottom lines. First and foremost, the auto update feature will make it much easier for developers to assure that users have the current versions of their apps which should improve customer satisfaction and sales. Multitasking should create a livelier experience for users and also increase satisfaction and help promote more in-app purchases.

On a larger level, the new procedure for app transfers in the app store, explained [here](#) by Apptopia's Jonathan Kay, will increase the liquidity of the app market by allowing the sale of the entire accounts of individual developers or companies including leaderboard rankings and users.

For a broader sense of the developer reaction to iOS 7, I talked to Satjot Sawhney, co-founder and CEO of [TapFame](#), a community of talent behind almost 15,000 mobile apps. Sawhney sent a survey out to 1,000 iOS Developers on TapFame yesterday and received 223 responses.

78% of respondents described themselves as "Very Excited" with the new design of iOS 7. For developers working in the current "flat" style, the new OS will be easier to integrate with. "Standard iOS controls such as buttons and alerts will be much less likely to clash with beautifully designed apps," wrote developer [Christopher Garrett](#). "In iOS6, if I am developing an app that uses a flat design, then I will typically have to create custom alerts and navigation elements to make it look good. This will be less necessary with iOS7."

82% of respondents reported being "Very Excited" by multitasking. The ability to fetch new content for users while they are away from the app and use it to drive them back to the app and boost engagement will prove very powerful for developers.

Less encouraging for Apple is the 71% of game developer respondents who reported being "Disappointed" about the new Game Center. Getting rid of the green felt is great and all, but what developers really want is the ability to drive more downloads.

There are as well things that developers wanted to see that did not make it into this release. 61 respondents want better App Store discoverability, a problem that was not really addressed beyond the grouping of age related games for kids. Increasing the find-ability of niche or "long tail" apps should be job #1 for Apple as far as independent developers are concerned. 57 people want more access into Siri and Maps. A choice of genders for Siri's voice is great, but being able to do more with those voices is better. And 34 respondents brought up the problem of organizing lots of apps, which has not been thoroughly re-imagined in iOS 7 beyond making the contents of folders easier to swipe through.

Finally, the TapFame developers do not seem overly troubled by Apple's incursion into some of their turf. Yes, there will be a thousand useless flashlight apps on the App Store once iOS 7 comes out, but as developer Daniel Amitay explains, "Apple integrating a flashlight feature into iOS7 is a significant

net gain for consumers. A few developers will lose a revenue stream, but it wasn't an innovation that was suddenly stolen from them."

iOS 7 is partially a curation of successful UI elements, features and built-in apps that debuted elsewhere, and developers accept that the best of their ideas may someday be incorporated into the mothership. Growing a large user base or writing hard to imitate code are the ways to make it more likely that you will be acquired rather than stepped on, but developers work that into their calculations of the benefits of dealing with a colossus like Apple. Still, Bump must feel bumped by AirDrop, Pandora may well be in a panic about iTunes Radio and panoramic apps just had their aspect ratio trimmed by the new built-in Panorama feature in the iOS Camera.

The bottom line for developers is that iOS gives them new tools for innovation of the mobile experience, an updated set of user interface elements, a "wow" factor for iPhone users and more means to monetize their labors. The case that Tim Cook made at WWDC about iOS users' outsize shopping and browsing activities relative to Android users (in particular) is a compelling reason for developers to stay on board.

For diehard Android developers, though, this refresh is probably not enough to make them jump ship. "iOS 7 was mostly a front-end overhaul for end users," says [Devendra Laulkar](#), co-founder at Vessel.io (and formerly Android Developer at Pulse.) "As an Android developer there some changes that bring feature parity to iOS. True multitasking and rich notifications will be greatly appreciated."

TapFame will win either way, since it connects companies and "app directors" to experienced developers on both iOS and Android platforms who have the chops to get apps built, tested and deployed on the app stores. CEO Sawhney refers to TapFame as the "IMDB for mobile apps—a place where developers and designers get credit for the apps they've worked on." In this way, it is similar to what [Behance](#) does for designers, illustrators, videographers and photographers. But where Behance works the dual benefits of informal discovery through searchable portfolios on the one hand and [full-time job listings](#) on the other, TapFame is focused squarely on the freelance project business, which corresponds more closely with the realities of app development.

It continues to be a good time to be a developer, particularly for native mobile apps. If everyone is not universally thrilled with iOS 7, it is undeniable that Apple's core developers just got a needed shot of mojo to carry on—despite the growing numbers of Android users. In the end, they respond to [Bill Clinton](#)'s immortal words, "It's the economy, stupid!"

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