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Apple Developer Account: From DUNS to the App Store

A Complete Guide to Registering, Publishing, and Monetizing Apps

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CHAPTER 1

The Apple Developer Ecosystem: What to Know from Day One

The Apple App Store is the largest mobile app marketplace in the world. There are 1.8 billion active iPhones worldwide. $1.1 trillion in transactions in 2022 (including app sales, subscriptions, and In-App Purchases). For a developer or entrepreneur, this is one of the highest-converting markets.

Two types of Apple Developer Program: the Apple Developer Program ($99/year): for individuals and companies. Publishing to the App Store (public). Basic development tools. The Apple Developer Enterprise Program ($299/year): for large organizations (usually 100+ employees). Distribution of apps inside the organization without the App Store. No publishing to the public App Store.

What membership gives you: Xcode developer beta builds. TestFlight for beta testing. App Store Connect for managing apps. Analytics and Sales reports. CloudKit, Sign in with Apple, StoreKit (In-App Purchases). Access to WWDC sessions and documentation.

Registering as an organization vs. an individual: an Individual account is faster and needs no DUNS, but the app is published under your personal name. There is no corporate protection. An Organization account requires a DUNS Number and D-U-N-S verification. The app is published under the company name. Users trust it more. You can work as a team through App Store Connect.

Why an organization account is better: it looks professional in the App Store. Team—several developers can have different roles. Legal protection—the app belongs to the company. If you ever want to sell the app or bring in an investor, that is much easier to do through a company.

Apple Developer limitations: you cannot have several accounts with one Apple ID. If an account is banned, getting back is very

hard (some people cannot at all). Reasons for a ban: violating the App Store Guidelines. Fraud. An abnormally high refund rate. Fake ratings. Apple reserves the right to remove any app at any time.

App Store business models: Paid (selling the app directly)—rarely used for new apps. Freemium + In-App Purchases—the most popular. Subscription—the fastest-growing. Advertising (in the app)—for apps with a large audience. Enterprise/B2B—not in the public App Store. Apple takes 30% (standard) or 15% (for small developers with revenue <$1M/year, and for subscriptions after the first year).

CHAPTER 2

DUNS Number for Apple: Getting and Verifying It

To register a corporate Apple Developer Account, an organization must have a D-U-N-S Number—a 9-digit identifier from Dun & Bradstreet. Apple uses D&B to verify that your company exists. Without a DUNS, you cannot register an organization account.

Why Apple requires a DUNS: Apple does not simply trust the documents you upload. The D-U-N-S Number lets Apple independently verify that the company exists through the D&B database, which contains data from government registries. This reduces the registration of fraudulent accounts.

Getting a DUNS for Apple: D&B provides a free DUNS specifically for Apple Developer (through Apple's vendor page on the D&B site). The path: developer.apple.com → Membership → Organization registration → the link to D&B. The D&B verification process: they check your data in government registries. They may call the business phone to verify. Timeline: 5 business days (standard), 1–2 days (expedited through the Apple-D&B portal).

Critical data requirements: the company name MUST match the government registration EXACTLY. A physical address (not a PO Box). The phone number must be answered and give information about the company. These are the same requirements as for a credit rating—consistency of data is critical.

Typical DUNS problems with Apple: the company was registered recently and has not yet made it into the D&B databases. Solution: wait 30–60 days or actively request a DUNS through the portal. The name in the government registry differs from what you enter in the Apple form. Solution: use the EXACT legal name. The address is not found in the D&B database. Solution: check that the address is physical and correct.

After you get the DUNS: a DUNS Number does not expire. But Apple sometimes re-verifies data—make sure the data in D&B stays current. If the company has changed its address or name, update it in D&B BEFORE trying to create an Apple Developer account.

DUNS for the Apple Enterprise Program ($299): similar requirements, but Apple additionally verifies that the company really has 100+ employees. The Enterprise Program cannot be used to publish to the public App Store. It is exclusively for internal distribution.

How Apple uses the DUNS after registration: Apple may periodically verify that your company still exists. If the company has closed or the data differ substantially, there is a risk of the account being temporarily blocked. Keep your D&B profile up to date.

CHAPTER 3

Registering an Apple Developer Account: Step by Step

Once you have a DUNS Number, you are ready to register an Apple Developer account. The process takes from 24 hours to 2 weeks, depending on how correct your data is.

Step 1: create an Apple ID for the organization. Use a corporate email (not a personal Gmail). The Apple ID will be the account "owner"—this email cannot be changed after registration. Turn on two-factor authentication—it is mandatory.

Step 2: go to developer.apple.com. Choose "Enroll." Choose "Company/Organization." Accept the license agreement.

Step 3: fill in the organization data. Legal Entity Name: exactly as in the government registry. DUNS Number: 9 digits, in the format without hyphens. Headquarters Address: a physical address. Phone: a corporate number. Name and title: you must be an authorized representative of the company (CEO, Director).

Step 4: Apple verifies the data. Apple compares the data you entered with the D&B database. If the data match, approval is automatic (24–48 hours). If there are discrepancies, Apple may: call your corporate phone to verify. Request additional documents (Certificate of Incorporation, Government ID). This takes 5–14 days.

Step 5: pay for membership. $99/year (AED 365 in the UAE, CAD 129 in Canada, and so on). A credit card linked to your Apple ID. Payment is not confirmed immediately while verification is pending.

Step 6: App Store Connect. After activation, you get access to App Store Connect (appstoreconnect.apple.com). Add team members (you need their Apple IDs). Roles: Admin, Finance, App Manager, Developer, Customer Support, Marketer.

Banking information: to receive sales revenue, you need to add bank details in App Store Connect. Payments & Financial Reports. The bank account must match the jurisdiction (a Canadian account for a Canadian company). Tax forms: W-8BEN-E for foreign companies (non-US entities)—filled out online. Without a W-8BEN-E, Apple will withhold 30% in tax.

Apple ID security: if you lose access to the Owner Apple ID, it is extremely hard to recover. 2FA via a physical device or trusted phone number. Trusted Recovery Contacts. Never use one Apple ID for both personal purchases and the Developer Account.

CHAPTER 4

Building the App: From Idea to First Version

Creating a quality iOS app takes more than the ability to code. You need a product strategy, an understanding of the App Store Guidelines, a sound architecture, and knowledge of the Apple Human Interface Guidelines.

Choosing a development language: Swift is Apple's modern language. If you are a new developer, learn Swift. SwiftUI is a declarative UI framework (iOS 13+). It is the future of iOS development. UIKit is the older UI framework. It has a huge body of existing code and documentation. Objective-C is legacy; do not use it for new projects. React Native / Flutter are cross-platform. One codebase for iOS and Android. A compromise on performance and native feel.

Xcode is Apple's IDE: the only official IDE for iOS development. It requires a Mac (not necessarily a new one—Xcode runs on any Mac with macOS Ventura+). Simulator—testing without a physical device. TestFlight—beta testing on real devices. Instruments—a profiler and debugger.

The App Store Guidelines—the main principles to know before development: 4.2 Minimum Functionality—the app must do something genuinely useful. It cannot be just a wrapper around a website. 5.1.1 Data Collection and Storage—a Privacy Policy is mandatory. 3.1 Payments—all In-App Purchases must use Apple IAP, and external payment systems are not allowed (Epic vs Apple). 4.0 Design—follow the Human Interface Guidelines.

TestFlight beta testing: free for all Apple Developer members. Internal testers: up to 100 (with App Store Connect access). External testers: up to 10,000 (anyone with an iOS device). Test duration: 90 days. A TestFlight build does not go through the full App Review—only a basic check. It is an excellent way to collect

feedback before publishing.

Team size for a first app: a solo developer is possible but slow. You need to be able to do development, UI design, writing a Privacy Policy, and ASO (App Store Optimization). A minimal team: a developer + a designer + a QA tester. Outsourcing: inexpensive developers on Upwork ($20–$40/hour from Ukraine, $100–$200 from the US). For a first version of an app, the budget is $5,000–$20,000.

Monetization strategy before development starts: choose the model before writing code, because it affects the architecture. Free + Ads: you need large volumes (1M+ active users for significant income). Freemium + IAP: you need "premium" functionality that people really want. Subscription: the best LTV, but you need continuous value. Paid upfront: only if you have a very strong brand or a niche audience.

CHAPTER 5

App Review: How to Pass the First Time

App Store Review is the process of checking an app before publication. Apple reviews every update. The average time is 24–48 hours for a standard review. A rejection means a delay of anywhere from several days to several weeks (if serious changes are needed).

The #1 rejection reasons, according to App Review: Guideline 4.0 Design—HIG violations. The app looks sloppy, has placeholder content, or has broken functionality. Solution: test thoroughly on several devices before submitting. Guideline 5.1.1—a missing or incomplete Privacy Policy. Solution: create a Privacy Policy (you can do it through Termly.io for $10/month) and be sure to give the URL in App Store Connect. Guideline 2.1—App Completeness. The app is submitted with a Demo/Test account but the reviewer cannot log in. Solution: always include demo credentials in the "Notes to App Review" field. Guideline 4.2—low value. An app that is too simple, with no real utility. Solution: make sure the app does something meaningful.

What to do after a rejection: read the rejection reason CAREFULLY. They cite a specific Guideline. Resolve the issue—fix only what the rejection points out. Do not accidentally introduce new violations. Reply in the Resolution Center—if you disagree with the rejection, you can write a developer appeal with an explanation. Sometimes the reviewer is wrong. Resubmit—after the fixes.

App Review Test Account: if your app requires sign-in, you MUST provide a test account login and password in the Notes. The reviewer will not create an account on their own—they will reject the app immediately. The test account should have enough data to show all the app's features.

App Store Connect Screenshots: required for every supported screen size. At minimum: a 6.7-inch iPhone and iPad (if you

support iPad). Quality screenshots drive download conversion. Use device frames (in tools like AppLaunchpad or Fastlane Snapshot).

App Privacy Labels (Privacy Nutrition Labels): since iOS 14, Apple requires a declaration of all the data the app collects. In App Store Connect: the App Privacy section. State: what data you collect. What you use it for. Whether it is linked to the user's identity. False or misleading privacy labels mean an immediate rejection.

Expedited Review: Apple offers Expedited Review in critical cases: a security vulnerability in the current version. A critical bug that prevents use. A change tied to a legal requirement. You request it through the Resolution Center—it is not guaranteed but is often approved.

CHAPTER 6

In-App Purchase and Subscriptions: Monetizing the Right Way

In-App Purchase (IAP) is the App Store's main monetization tool. In 2024, 92% of App Store revenue was generated through IAP and subscriptions rather than direct sales. Understanding StoreKit and implementing IAP correctly is critical for any monetized app.

Types of IAP: Consumable—it is used up. Virtual currency, extra lives in a game. It can be bought several times. Non-Consumable—it is not used up. It "unlocks" functionality permanently. If the user deletes and reinstalls the app, it must be restored. Auto-Renewable Subscription—renews automatically. The best LTV. Non-Renewing Subscription—does not renew automatically. Suitable for time-limited content.

StoreKit 2 (iOS 15+): the modern API for IAP. async/await syntax. Built-in transaction verification (cryptographically signed). Better subscription management. Transaction.currentEntitlement to determine the user's current rights. If you target iOS 15+, use StoreKit 2. For backward compatibility with iOS 14, use StoreKit 1.

Pricing: Apple provides 200+ price tiers. You choose a tier for each country or let Apple convert the rate automatically. Introductory offers—a discount for new subscribers (a free trial, a discount for the first month). Promotional offers—for existing subscribers (win-back, upgrade). Family Sharing—the subscription is shared with the family group.

Revenue Share: 30% is the standard Apple commission. 15% (Small Business Program)—if your annualized App Store revenue is <$1M. You must apply every year. 15%—for subscriptions after the first year (retention rate). A real calculation: an app with $100,000/year gross revenue, under the <$1M threshold, nets $85,000.

Subscription Best Practices: Onboarding with a paywall—show the value BEFORE the paywall. Free trial: 7 days works better than 14 or 30 (fewer churners without real intent). Annual vs Monthly: an annual subscription cuts churn radically. Price: annual = ~10× monthly (which implies 2 months free). Win-back campaigns: Apple allows promotional offers for churned subscribers.

Server-side validation: never trust IAP on the client side alone. Verify receipts on your backend through Apple's /verifyReceipt endpoint. This prevents fraud (fake "purchased" IAP). StoreKit 2 simplifies this through signed transactions.

App Store optimization for monetization: the right pricing affects conversion. A/B test the paywall through RevenueCat or adapty.io ($100–$500/month). These platforms give you analytics for every pricing experiment. The typical uplift from an optimized paywall: 30–80% higher conversion.

CHAPTER 7

App Store Optimization (ASO): Visibility Without Ads

App Store Optimization (ASO) is SEO for mobile apps. Done right, ASO can double or triple organic downloads without a single dollar of advertising budget.

The App Store ranking algorithm: Apple does not fully disclose the algorithm, but the key factors are: Relevance (title, subtitle, keywords field). Conversion rate (the percentage of people who download the app after seeing it in search). Ratings and Reviews (the count and the average score). Engagement (DAU, retention). Revenue (paid apps often rank higher). Recency (fresh updates get a temporary boost).

Title and Subtitle: Title (30 characters): the main keyword + the brand name. “Medito: Meditation & Sleep” is better than just “Medito.” Subtitle (30 characters): additional keywords. Keywords field (100 characters): do NOT repeat words from the title or subtitle. Separate with commas, no spaces. Use all 100 characters. Keyword research: AppFollow, AppTweak, Sensor Tower. Look for high volume, low difficulty, and relevance to your app.

Visual elements = conversion: Icon: the most influential element. Different icons can make a 30–50% difference in conversion. Test through Search Ads (Apple’s ad platform allows an A/B icon test). Screenshots: the first 2–3 screenshots are visible without scrolling. They must explain the app’s value BEFORE the text is read. Use callout text over the screenshot. Preview Video: autoplays without sound in the App Store. The first 6 seconds determine retention.

Ratings & Reviews: the ranking algorithm takes both count and quality into account. Ask for a review through SKStoreReviewRequest.requestReview() after a positive event (the first completed task, an achievement). Do not ask “if you like the app”—Apple prohibits conditional review prompts. Reply to all

negative reviews—it is publicly visible that you are active.

Localization for ASO: if the app is available in different countries, localize not only the UI but also the ASO metadata. Different keywords work differently in US English vs UK English vs Canadian English. This matters especially for Spanish (Spain vs Latin America) and Portuguese (Brazil vs Portugal).

In-App Events and Product Page Optimization: Apple’s In-App Events are time-limited events inside the app, visible right in the App Store. They increase visibility without additional downloads. Product Page Optimization: A/B tests of the icon, screenshots, and text for different audiences. Custom Product Pages: up to 35 different product pages for different ad campaigns.

Competitive analysis: AppFollow and AppTweak let you see competitors’ keywords, their ranking, update history, and reviews. Study the top 10 apps in your category: which keywords they use. What their paywall looks like. What people write in reviews about their shortcomings. This is your roadmap.

CHAPTER 8

Apple Developer Enterprise and B2B Apps

Not all iOS apps are meant for consumers. The enterprise sector is a growing, high-revenue market for iOS developers. B2B apps, internal corporate tools, and kiosk applications all require a special approach.

Apple Developer Enterprise Program ($299/year): for internal distribution of apps. The apps are not published in the App Store. They are distributed through MDM (Mobile Device Management) or a direct install link. Purpose: corporate apps for your own employees. Requirements: an organization with 100+ employees (Apple verifies this). A D-U-N-S Number is mandatory. An authorized representative of the company.

Enterprise Program limitations: it categorically cannot be used for distribution to third-party companies or the public. Apple regularly detects abuse (for example, distributing unapproved games). A violation means an immediate account ban. High-profile cases: Facebook and Google were temporarily banned for distributing research apps through the Enterprise Program.

MDM Solutions: for corporate management of iOS devices: Jamf Pro (the market leader). Microsoft Intune (good integration with Azure AD). VMware Workspace ONE. Apple Business Manager—centralized management of devices and apps for organizations. Through ABM you can: manage company devices. Distribute VPP (Volume Purchase Program) apps. Assign roles in App Store Connect.

B2B apps in the App Store: Custom Apps (formerly B2B Apps): published in the App Store but available only to selected organizations. The client buys through Apple Business Manager. You see them as a buyer in App Store Connect. This is a legitimate way to sell specialized B2B solutions through the Apple ecosystem.

B2B pricing: B2B apps are sold on different logic than consumer apps. A lifetime license ($200–$2,000) or a subscription ($20–$200/month per seat). Enterprise contracts: an annual contract for 100–1000 licenses. SLA and support commitments. MDM managed licensing.

Kiosk Mode: for retail, hospitality, and trade show applications. Guided Access (an accessibility setting) or MDM-managed single-app mode. The device runs only one app. It does not require the Enterprise Program—the standard Developer Program is enough. Popular in restaurants (menu ordering), hotels (check-in), and medical facilities (patient intake).

Apple Configurator 2: a free tool for mass deployment of iOS devices. Set up one or many devices with the same settings and apps. Useful for retail companies with many points of sale.

CHAPTER 9

Monetization and Growth: The Path to $10K MRR

Most apps earn little. But those who build the product, ASO, and marketing right reach significant income. $10,000 Monthly Recurring Revenue ($120,000/year) is a realistic goal for a well-built subscription app within 18–24 months.

The math of $10K MRR through subscription: Option 1: $9.99/month × 1,001 active subscribers = $10,000 (minus Apple's 15% = $8,500 net). Option 2: $4.99/month × 2,004 subscribers. Option 3: $99/year × 1,213 subscribers (÷12 for MRR). Key metrics: Trial Conversion Rate (benchmark: 20–40%). Monthly Churn Rate (benchmark for a health app: 5–10%). LTV (12-month subscription × (1/monthly churn)).

The path to the first 1,000 subscribers: organic through ASO—slow but free. Apple Search Ads—the most effective paid channel. CPT (Cost per Tap) of $0.50–$5.00 depending on competition. Acquisition cost is usually $3–$20. Content marketing (YouTube, TikTok, Instagram)—you show how to use the app. It influences branded search. PR (TechCrunch, Product Hunt, App of the Day)—one feature can bring 5,000–50,000 organic downloads. Product Hunt—each year, Product of the Day for mobile apps brings thousands of downloads.

Apple Search Ads: Apple's official ad platform. It shows ads in App Store search. The best targeting in the world for an iOS audience. Formats: Search Match (automatic keywords). Exact Match (specific keywords). Browse Ads (on the pages of similar apps). Average ROAS for subscription apps: 3:1 to 8:1.

Analytics stack: RevenueCat ($0–$100+/month)—subscription analytics, A/B tests, cross-platform. Mixpanel or Amplitude—user behavior analytics. AppsFlyer or Adjust—attribution (where users came from). Crashlytics (Firebase)—crash reporting for free.

Product velocity: the best apps ship updates every 2–4 weeks. Every new feature = an In-App Event = extra visibility in the App Store. The changelog should be readable and promotional. “The new dark theme you asked for”—not “bug fixes and improvements.”

Scaling beyond $10K MRR: a web version (through a web app with Stripe—you avoid the 30% Apple tax). An Android version (React Native simplifies cross-platform). B2B Corporate plans. Partnerships with other apps (cross-promotion). Acquisition: strong MRR makes your app attractive for an acquihire or a direct sale. The multiple for SaaS and subscription apps: 2–5× ARR.

What next

Thank you for reading “Apple Developer Account: From DUNS to the App Store”.

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