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Is there a future for iPhone apps?

I've owned nearly half of these devices....and have never bought a single smartphone or tablet app. Not one.

Dave McClure • Mar. 18, 2011

They are tres cool. The future of business and pleasure applications. The fastest, most amazing, most useful little gadgets on the planet, delivered directly to your iPhone, iPad or iPod. Or Blackberry, Android, or Windows Mobile 7 device. Or any of the tablets based on these. But before we bet the farm on these things, I have four basic questions: 1) Do these really represent value, or are they simply a flash in the pan worshipping at the altar of 20-something coolness? 2) How many people actually buy them. No, wait. How many people actually use the things two months after they install them? 3) Is it feasible for programmers to create and support good applications across four or more different platforms? 5) Are any programmers actually making money selling new apps for tablets and/or smartphones? And I'm not the only one wondering. App developer Alex Ahlund, in a blog post over at Techcrunch, notes that the average total number of units sold was 101,024 copies within an average period of 261 days. The average price was \$5.49, although the data skews due to the \$49.99 outlier. In most cases, the price point was \$0.99. But when the top 10% of the most successful apps are removed from the data set, the numbers skew much lower, giving a far better impression of what the iPhone industry looks like for most developers. In this scenario, the average sales were 11,625 total units, averaging 44 copies/day. Approximately 23% of apps sold less than 1000 units from launch. Wow. Call me a curmudgeon, a spoilsport and a grinch, but that is pretty underwhelming. Granted, the marketplace is young, and many device owners are just hitting their stride. Still and all, I've owned nearly half of these devices, use them

for business, and live in the business and accounting worlds. And I have never bought a single smartphone or tablet app. Not one.

Blog

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