

**Field Agent-the iPhone app that pays you: Unlocking the door behind attracting,
retaining, and bringing back past agents**

By:

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Introduction

“To survive and prosper today, Consumer Products manufactures and suppliers must be ready to win when it matters- in that first moment of truth when a shopper enters a store or stands at the shelf ready to make a purchase. Success in this brief moment, repeated hundreds and thousands of times every day, rests on having the right product, in the right place, with the right price or the right promotion, at the right time” (Fogel, 2010). Because that first moment of truth is so crucial, it is important for retailers, suppliers, and manufacturers to find innovative ways of gaining field intelligence that will contribute to the consumer’s decision to purchase. With this goal in mind, the research that I have conducted thus far as well as future research will examine: (1) a brief overview of characteristics that make up today’s consumer, (2) advancements in mobile technology specifically in the area of iPhones and iPhone applications, (3) Field Agent- an iPhone app created for gaining field intelligence as well as providing income to consumers, and finally, (4) problems facing field agent including why the app user is ceasing to use the app over time as well as uncovering various ways to keep users engaged with the app and to bring back previous agents.

Theme 1: Today’s Consumer

“The onset of the Information Age and the emergence of the New Consumer have stepped up the speed with which events occur” (Lewis and Bridger, 2001). According to Social Technologies, a leading research and consulting firm dedicated to helping organizations understand and shape the future of their business, the lifestyles of consumers in the world’s most advanced markets are evolving as well, driving interest in ethical consumption and products that relieve time pressure (2006). Bottom line, consumers are pressed for time. Therefore, consumers expect more to be done in a shorter amount of time, while still being provided with higher quality products and services. However, not only are consumers pressed for time, but today’s consumer is pressed for money (Calder, 2006). Since the recession, “a new frugality, characterized by a strong value consciousness that dictates trade-offs in price, brand, and convenience has become the dominant mind-set among consumer in the United States” (Egol, Clyde, Rangan, 2010). Because of this mindset, consumers have been engaging in activities such as, comparing prices online, shopping at discount stores, research products before buying, and have switched to private labels. So how will these time and money pressures affect various manufacturers, retailers, and suppliers? According to Tom Pirovano, Director of Industry Insights for Nielsen Company, the products and services likely to succeed will be those that appeal to the sensible consumer looking for a rational benefit (2009). A few examples of these trends likely to occur include national brands offering innovation to win back store brand business, the expansion of cutting edge wireless devices, and an increase in online activities which will continue to climb (Pirovano, 2009). A final characteristic that is becoming even more evident among new consumers is the immense amount of trust they place upon the opinions of friends and family (2000). Today’s consumers are clinging to products, brands, and ideas that have been recommended by those they trust. It is imperative that I understand today’s complicated, time-starved, consumer before I can understand how mobile technology might play a role in their everyday lives, and even more so, how Field Agent can be something the new consumer trusts.

Theme 2: Advancements in Mobile Technology- iPhones and iPhone apps

In 2009, Nielson industry predicted that we would see an expansion in the cutting edge of wireless devices. This prediction could not have been more accurate. According to Gartner, Inc., worldwide mobile device sales totaled 325.6 million units during quarter 2 of 2010 which was a 13.8% increase from quarter 2 in 2009. Smartphones accounted for 19% of those worldwide mobile device sales and had a significant increase of 50.5% (2010). In fact, by the year 2013, it is estimated that half of all handsets sold will be “smart” and by the year 2015 almost all will incorporate smart technology (The Economist, 2009). What is even more eye opening than the rapid growth in mobile technology, is the increase in use of iPhone apps. Crook of Mobile Marketer states that “the iPhone is relentlessly dominating the Smartphone market with more than 65,000 applications in its Apple App Store arsenal, along with some of the most robust features of any phone to date” (2009). As mobile technology continues to advance and the use of iPhone applications continues to grow, more and more business are beginning to use this statistic to their advantage. Now, iPhone apps are not just dominating the Smartphone market, but the majority of these apps are dominating our business market as well. What once was a 50/50 split between business applications and consumer applications is now a 70/30 split in favor of business applications (Crook, 2009). Gregg Weiss founder of iPhoneAppQuotes.com, says “Business apps are proving to be the most popular category of apps as entrepreneurs and small businesses realize that marketing and additional revenue stream potential the iPhone creates” (2009). For example, the convergence of mobile sales force automation software, handheld devices, and wireless technologies are changing the way companies manage their retail execution operations by leveraging these apps in order to gain field intelligence (Fogel, 2010). I believe that this is only the beginning of ways in which business will begin to use advancements in mobile technology to their advantage.

Theme 3: Field Agent- the app that pays you!

Instant Field Intelligence is defined as “the harvesting and transmission back to head office of real word data from the field” and is constantly being sought after by top executives (Fogel, 2010). Field Agent, known as “the app that pays you”, is an iPhone application that seeks to provide that much coveted instant field intelligence. Field Agent is an app that begins with a Client (who needs information) creating a job requesting specific information via the field agent website (PR Newswire, 2010). Field Agent then reviews and broadcasts a request to Agents (iPhone users in the field) who have installed the Field Agent app who in turn use their iPhones to collect and return information and get paid for the service. Kelly Miller, cofounder of Field Agent states, “Now more than ever, companies are looking for ways to efficiently gain field intelligence on products and services, and in an economy where unemployment is near record levels, it’s rewarding to be part of an idea that can create income for thousands of people.”

Theme 4: Problems facing Field Agent

According to Spear of AppleInsider, the vast majority of apps downloaded from the App Store are in use by less than 5% of users after one month has passed since the download (2009). Unfortunately, this is the exact problem facing Field Agent. As of mid-march, Field Agent has 93,993 total agents that have created a Field Agent account. Of those agents however, only 14.9% of those agents have completed more than one job and are considered active agents, and an even fewer amount, 6.95% have completed more than three jobs and are considered engaged agents. This data leads Field Agent to believe that somewhere along the way, agents are

becoming disengaged or inactive with the app. Within this section I plan to survey current and pass users of the Field Agent app, as well as conduct in-depth interviews with brand new Field Agent users to hopefully uncover how Field Agent might address this issue. By conducting this research I hope to determine why app users, in general, cease in using apps after a month's time, but even more specifically, why agents cease using the Field Agent app after a certain period of time and what can be done to remedy that. While there is some literature related to "drops out", "losing customers", and "retention", there is little to no research pertaining to this new world of emerging media.

However, not only are the vast majority of apps downloaded from the App Store used by less than 5% of users after a month's time, but only 20% of users return to run a free application again the day after it is downloaded (Spear, 2009). My research will also attempt to explore this statistic and determine ways in which Field Agent can keep users engaged with the app for more than just days after the download.

Research Methods

Using a three-tiered study involving a complete and exhausted literature search, survey research, and in-depth interview research, I explored the aforementioned themes. First, I used an exhaustive literature search, focusing on popular business, technology, and general press sources as well as data previously collected by Field Agent managers. The information gleaned from various sources helped to develop my second research method-a survey targeted to specific groups of Field Agents: agents who have downloaded the app, but not completed any jobs, agents who have downloaded the app, but have only completed one job, and finally, agents that are active users and who have completed at least 2 or more jobs. This survey encompassed agent's thoughts and opinions on relevant issues concerning Field Agent. The first survey was administered to only those that completed at least two or more jobs and were considered active agents in order to better understand why these agents continue to remain active with the Field Agent app. The second survey was directed at agents who had only completed one job since downloading the app. The motivation in targeting this group of users was to try to better understand why they had downloaded the app, completed a job, but since then, had failed to remain active with the app. Finally, the third survey was targeted to those that had downloaded the app, but had not yet completed any jobs.

These surveys were completed by one-hundred and twenty five agents from various locations around the U.S. Those that completed the survey encompassed a wide range of demographics including, gender, age, ethnicity, employment, and income. 67% of those that responded were male while the remaining 33% were female. The majority of those that took the survey, 37%, were in the 25-34 year old age range. However, the 35-44 year old age group and the 18-24 year old age group made up the largest portion of the respondents, totaling 50%. I also desired to hear from agents of different ethnic backgrounds. While Caucasians did consume about 79% of the surveys, I was also able to get feedback from those that were African America, Latino/Hispanic, Asian American, or American Indian. A fourth demographic factor that I took an interest in was employment status. Seeing as that Field Agent is a means to making a little extra income, I was curious to see how many of the agents were either employed full-time, part-time, or not at all. Although 61% are employed full time, 22% are not employed at all indicating that money made by completing Field Agent jobs could possibly be their only source of income. It was also interesting to see that even though the majority of the agents are employed full-time,

77% of all the respondents said that their primary reason for downloading the Field Agent app was to make extra money. The final demographic factor I examined was total family household income. I broke income levels down into the following categories: under \$30,000, \$30,000-\$45,000, \$45,001-\$75,000, \$75,001- \$100,000, and above \$100,000. Surprisingly, the distribution of income levels among those that participated in the survey was almost equal. Using these survey results I hoped to discover why iPhone users were downloading the app, but neglecting to get involved with the app.

Following my survey data collection, I also performed a series of in-depth interviews with five participants of various genders, ages, ethnic background, employment status and income levels, all of which had never downloaded or even used the Field Agent app before. My motivation in using participants that lacked experience with Field Agent was to gain a fresh perspective on a user's initial thoughts and impressions when attempting to complete a Field Agent job. For the purpose of my research, I entitled these in-depth interviews "Field Agent Job-a-Longs." These "Job-a-Longs" were similar to a shop-a-long in that I walked a long side the participants as they completed a job and observed any behaviors and comments made as they attempted to complete a Field Agent job. These jobs were real jobs administered by Field Agent in which the participants were asked to travel to the desired location in order to complete the job. The participants were also compensated for completing the job as well as for participating in the research activity. Following the "Job-a-Long", I asked them a series of questions related to their first time experience with Field agent. Observing and interviewing these "new born" Field Agent users allowed me to gain insight into exactly what problems agents might be experiencing with the iPhone app and how Field Agent might be able to solve these problems

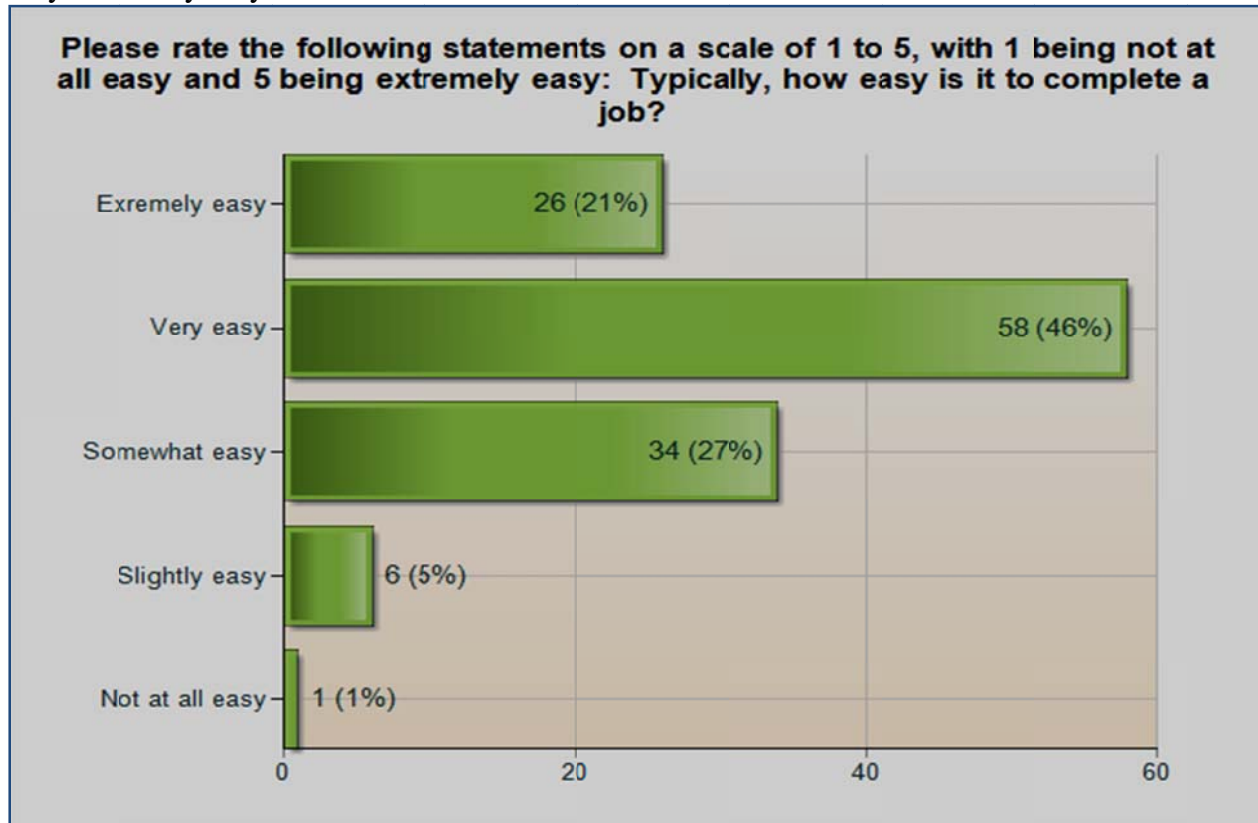
Using a research matrix, I was able to categorize my data in order to ensure that the questions I used and the information I had gathered specifically addressed each of my research themes. Based on my findings from both the surveys as well as the job-a-longs, I have made and will present both insights and recommendations gathered from my research.

Research Results

Theme 1: The New Consumer

Previously we learned of three main characteristics regarding the new consumer: the new consumer is time-starved, pressed for money, and heavily influenced by those they trust—friends and family. With this in mind, I explored each of these characteristics using both my survey and job-a-longs. In order to better understand just how important time is to the new consumer, I asked a series of questions which measured the agent's attitude towards various aspects of a Field Agent job involving time. Using a five point scale, with one being not at all satisfied, and five being extremely satisfied, I was able to measure the agents' attitudes regarding the amount of time it took to complete a Field Agent job. Those that participated in the job-a-long gave the amount of time it took to complete the job an overall rating of 4.4, indicating that most all of the participants were very satisfied. The results from the job-a-long indicated that the majority of agents (60%) felt that the amount of time it usually takes to complete a Field Agent job was excellent. In fact, when I interviewed the participants after they had completed their job, each participant stated at some point in the interview that they liked how quick and easy completing a field agent job was. Supporting the thoughts of those that took part in the job-a-long, I also asked our current agents to rate on a scale of one to five, with one being not at all easy and five

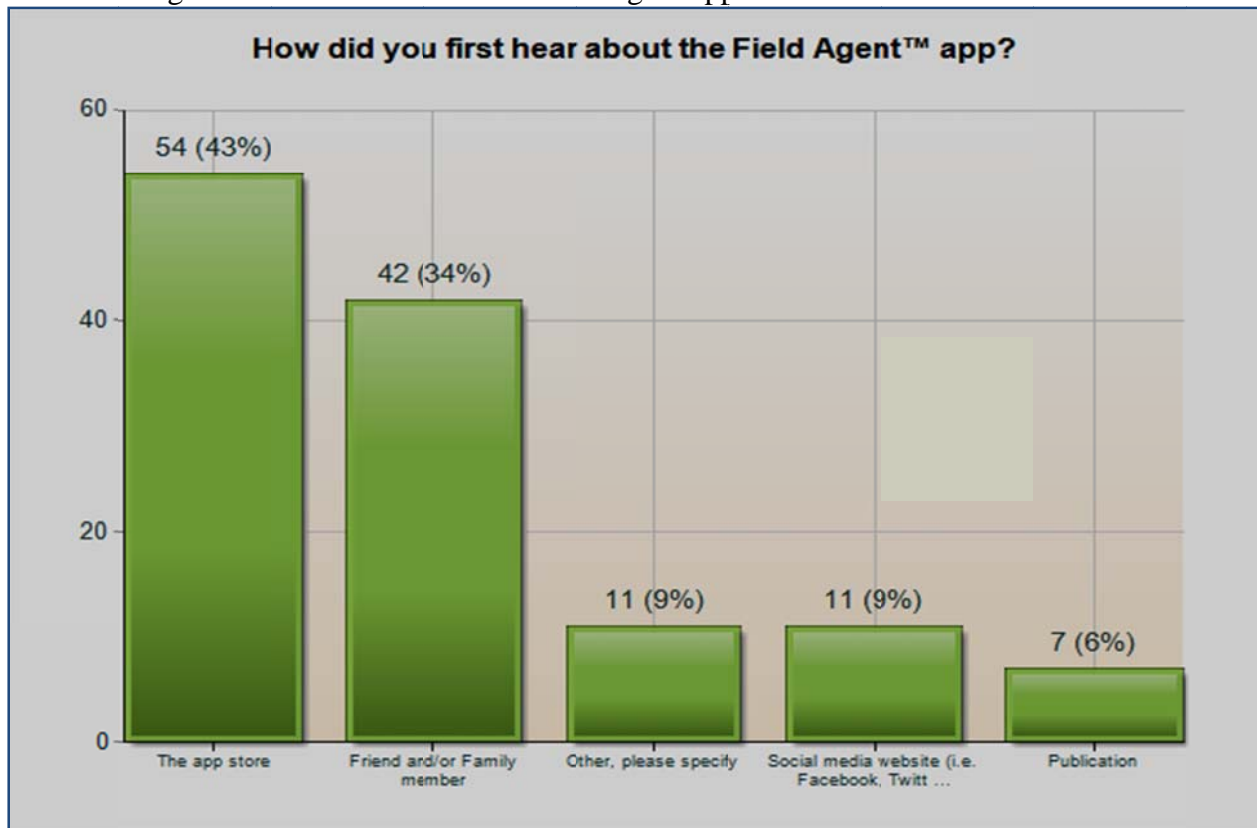
being extremely easy, how easy it typically was to complete a Field Agent job. The chart below indicates that two-thirds of the agents consider the completion of a Field Agent job to be very/extremely easy.



Knowing that the new consumer is not only time-starved and pressed for money, I formulated a question that measured a combination of both characteristics. Once again, using a five point scale with one being very poor and five being excellent, I measured the agents' attitudes towards the amount of time it took to receive payment for completing a job. According to the survey results, 74% felt that the amount of time it took to receive payment for completing a job was either good or excellent.

The next scale question I asked focused solely on the "pressed for money" characteristic of the new consumer. Using a five point scale I asked the agents to rate their attitude toward the amount they are usually paid for successfully completing a Field Agent Job. While the overall majority did not feel that the amount they were paid for successfully completing a job was excellent, 41 out of the 125 respondents considered the amount they were paid to be good. Using a five point scale with 1 being not at all satisfied and 5 being extremely satisfied, I asked the same question to those that participated in the job-a-longs. The average rating given by the participants was a 3.8 indicating that they were between somewhat and very satisfied with the amount they were being paid to complete a job. Those that failed to give this question a rating of 5 explained to me that they did not do so because they either felt that it cost them more money in gas in order to complete the job, or that they felt that the amount of time it took to travel to the store and then complete the job was not worth the two dollars they were paid for completing the job.

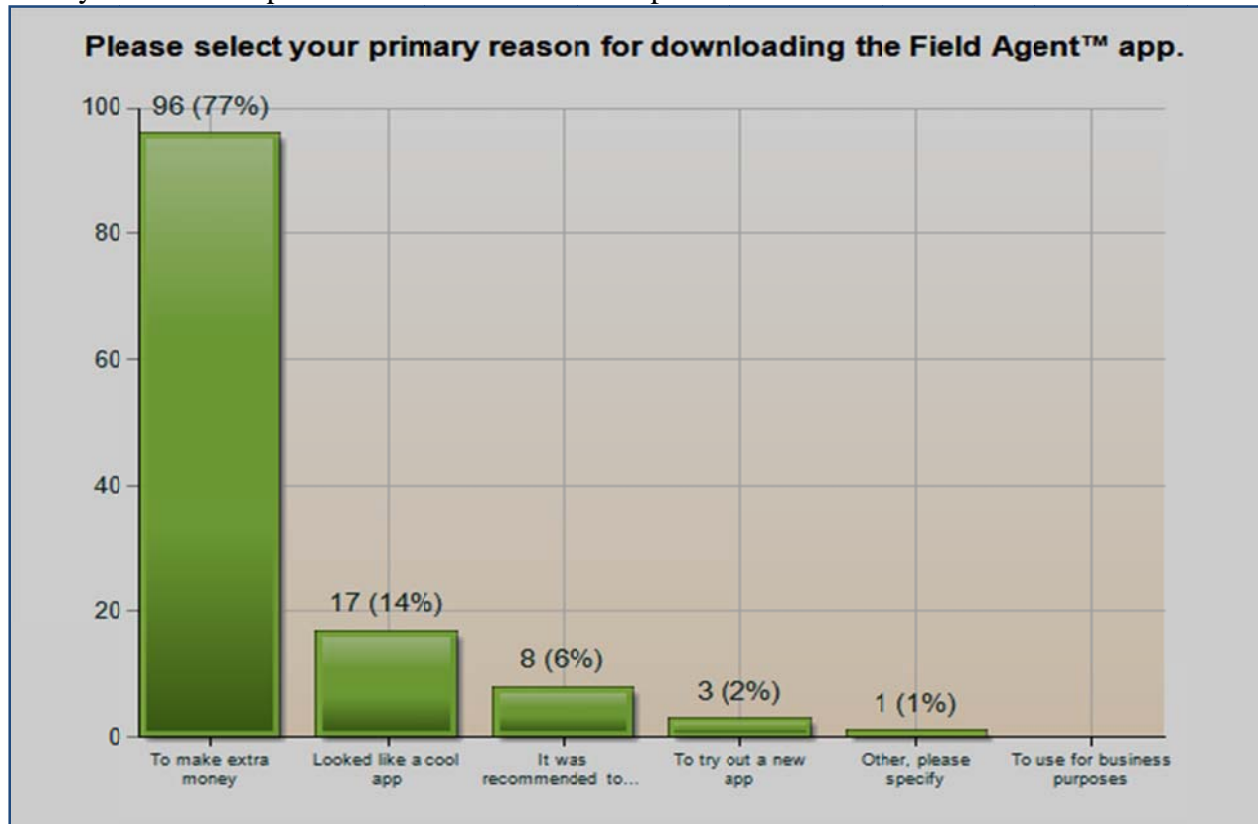
Tapping into the idea that the new consumer places a great amount of trust in the recommendations of others, especially friends and family members, I was curious to know how agents first heard about the Field Agent app. The chart below highlights the primary channels in which new agents first learned about the Field Agent app.



More than three-fourths of the agents indicated that they first heard about Field Agent via the app store which can be accessed on their iPhone or a friend and/or family member.

Finally, I was interested in determining the primary reason that agents had downloaded the Field Agent app. In asking this question, I discovered that much like today's consumer, the large majority of the agents had chosen to download the Field Agent app in order to make extra

money. A visual representation of the results are pictured in the chart below.



A vast majority of the agents indicated that their primary reason for downloading the Field Agent app was to make extra money.

Theme 2: Advancements in Mobile Technology-iPhones and iPhone apps

While the majority of my research did not focus as much on iPhone apps in general, but more specifically on Field Agent, I still felt that it was important to understand the iPhone users' behaviors and usage regarding iPhone apps. This knowledge was able to provide more insight as to why one might desire to download the field agent app and continue to remain active with the app.

In order to learn more about the behaviors and usage of iPhone users that were not Field Agents, I decided to take on what I would like to think of as a "Participant Approach." I signed up to be a part of a community with 164 other members in which we took a short survey (four questions) pertaining to our app usage and then proceeded to participate in open discussion about why or why not we choose to download certain apps. Insights that I took away from the survey results, which were displayed at the conclusion of the survey, were as follows (Consumer Village, 2010):

- 83% said that they use apps (beyond phone, text and contacts) on their smart device several times per day.

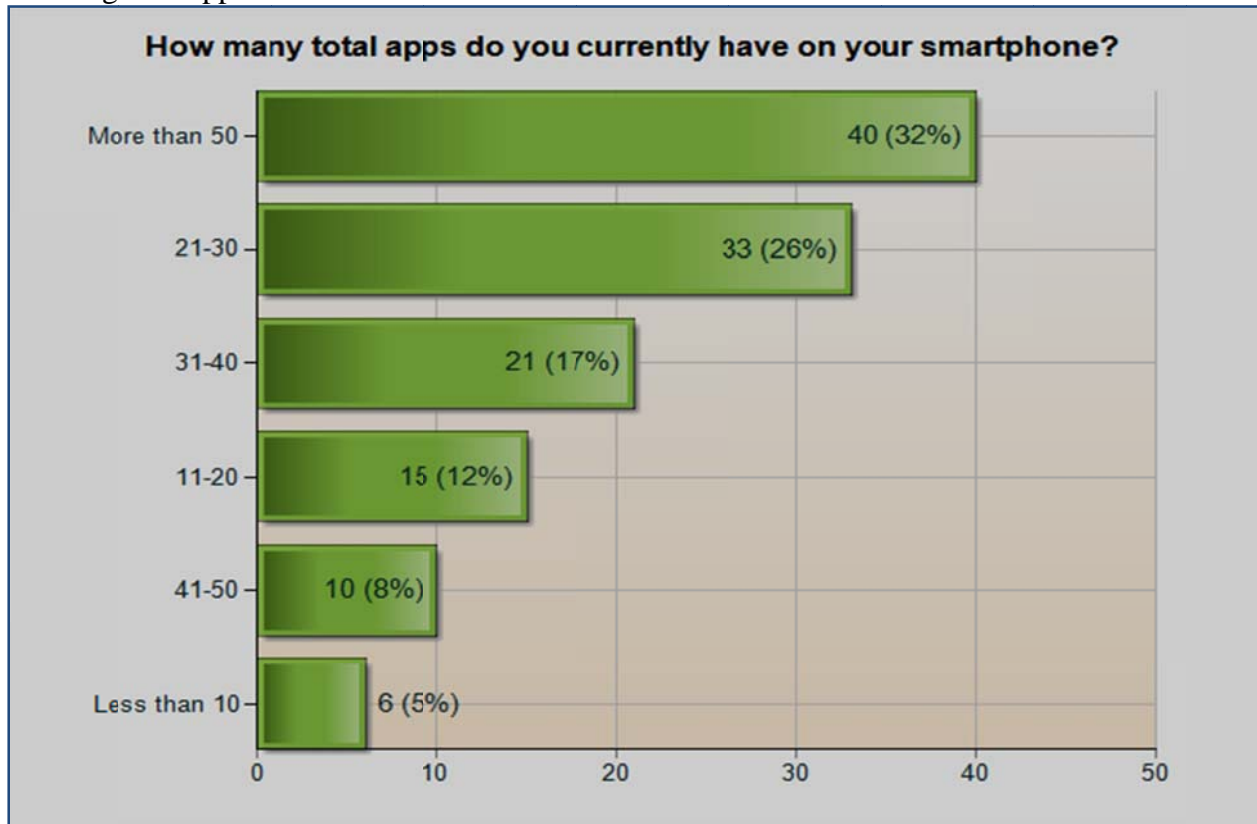
- Only about 18% of the members had 79-100 or more apps on their iPhone. The remaining members with the exception of about 17%, said they had anywhere from 20-69 apps currently on their iPhone.
- About 42% of the members download apps a few times a month while about 32% of the members download new apps a few times per week.
- 78% of the members indicated that they *have* paid for an app.

Following the four survey questions was a discussion question that explored why the iPhone user chose to download apps to his or her smart phone. After reading all of the statements made by those that participated in the online community, I determined that there are two main reasons why iPhone users download apps: either a friend or family member recommended it, or they read about different apps after searching the app store and download it if they felt that it would be useful to them. This finding strongly paralleled with the results of a previous question I had asked inquiring how agents first heard about Field Agent. Below are some statements made by those in the community that emphasize these two factors (2010):

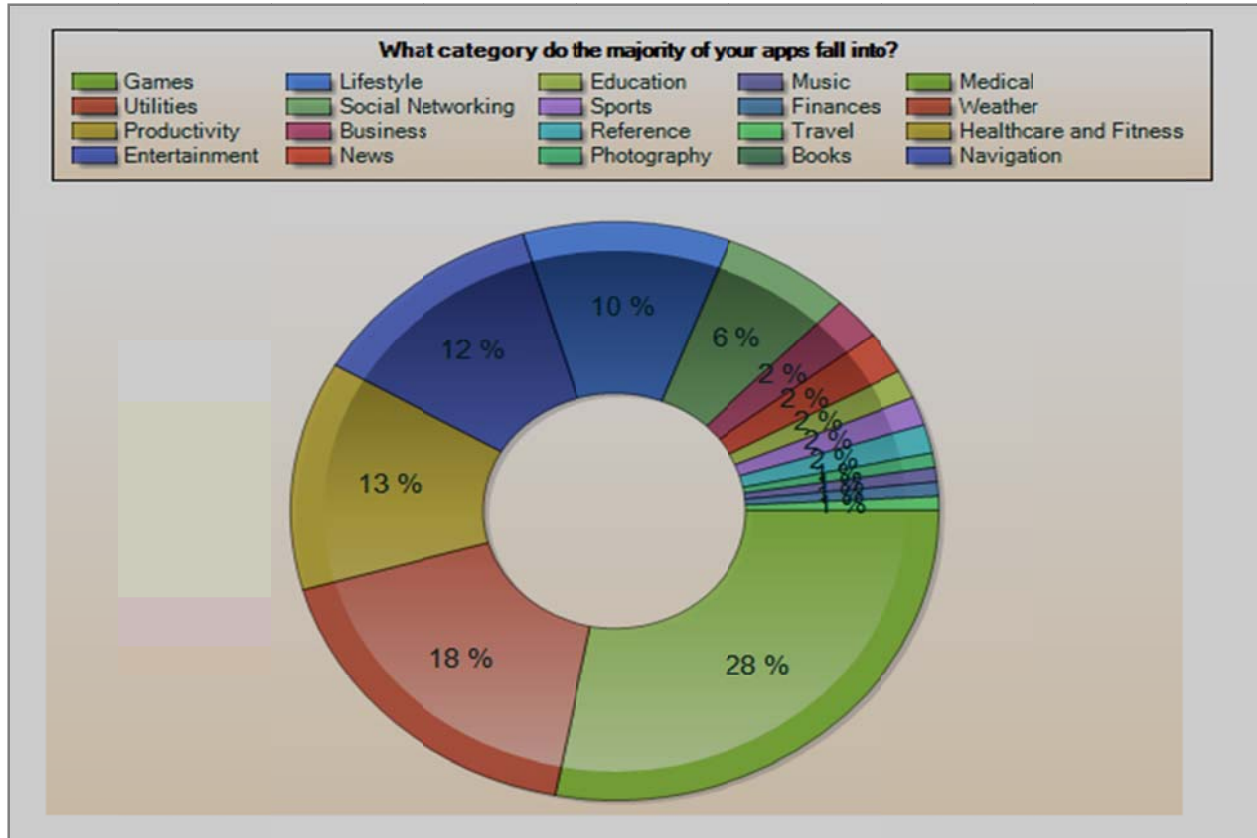
- *“I find out about new ones from my friends/family and by looking at the Top 25 lists in the app store.”*
- *“I use Apps that are recommended or from word of mouth.”*
- *I choose to download an app if it interests me, has good reviews overall, and/or is recommended by others I know.”*
- *“I’m interested in something that will be used over and over in the long run...They have to be useful or they are gone.”*
- *“I select apps based on the likelihood that I will use them.”*
- *“I download apps and try them out. If I don’t use them, I delete them.”*

While it was exceptionally helpful to learn about the number and types of apps iPhone users were downloading, I was also curious to know the number and types of apps that were being used by the agents. Below are charts indicating how many and into what categories the majority

of the agents' apps fall into.



Similar to those that participated in the online community, the majority of agents have more than fifty apps currently on their iPhone. Because iPhone users and those that have downloaded the Field Agent app have so many apps on their iPhone, it is important for the company that created the app to keep users engaged or that particular company could risk getting lost in the sea of apps.

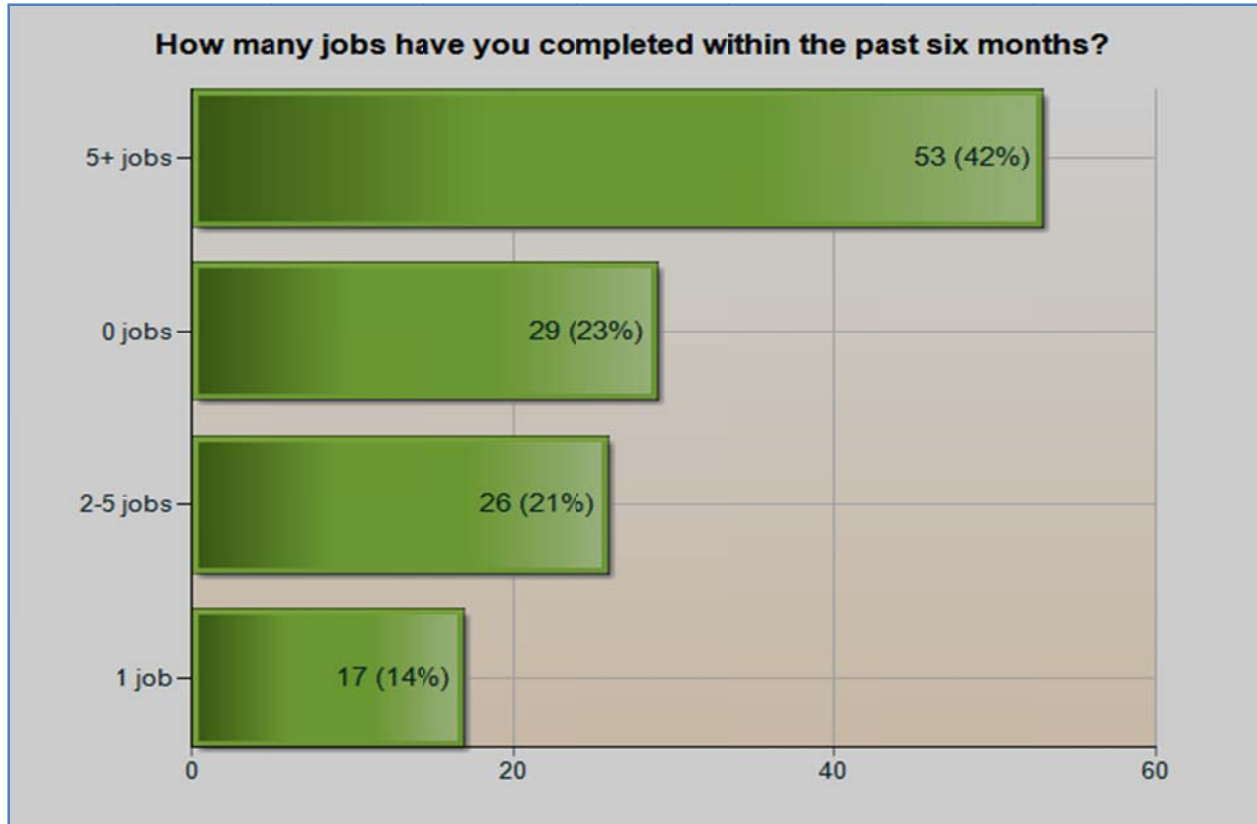


As depicted in the graph above, 81% of agents declared that the majority of their apps fall into the categories of games, utilities, productivity, entertainment, or lifestyle. Seeing that utilities, productivity, and lifestyle categories are among the top categories that iPhone users' apps fall into, this supports the finding from the online community, that iPhone users desire apps that are useful to them. Once again, if companies desire to keep users engaged with their app, it is important that the app user feels as though that company's app is beneficial to them.

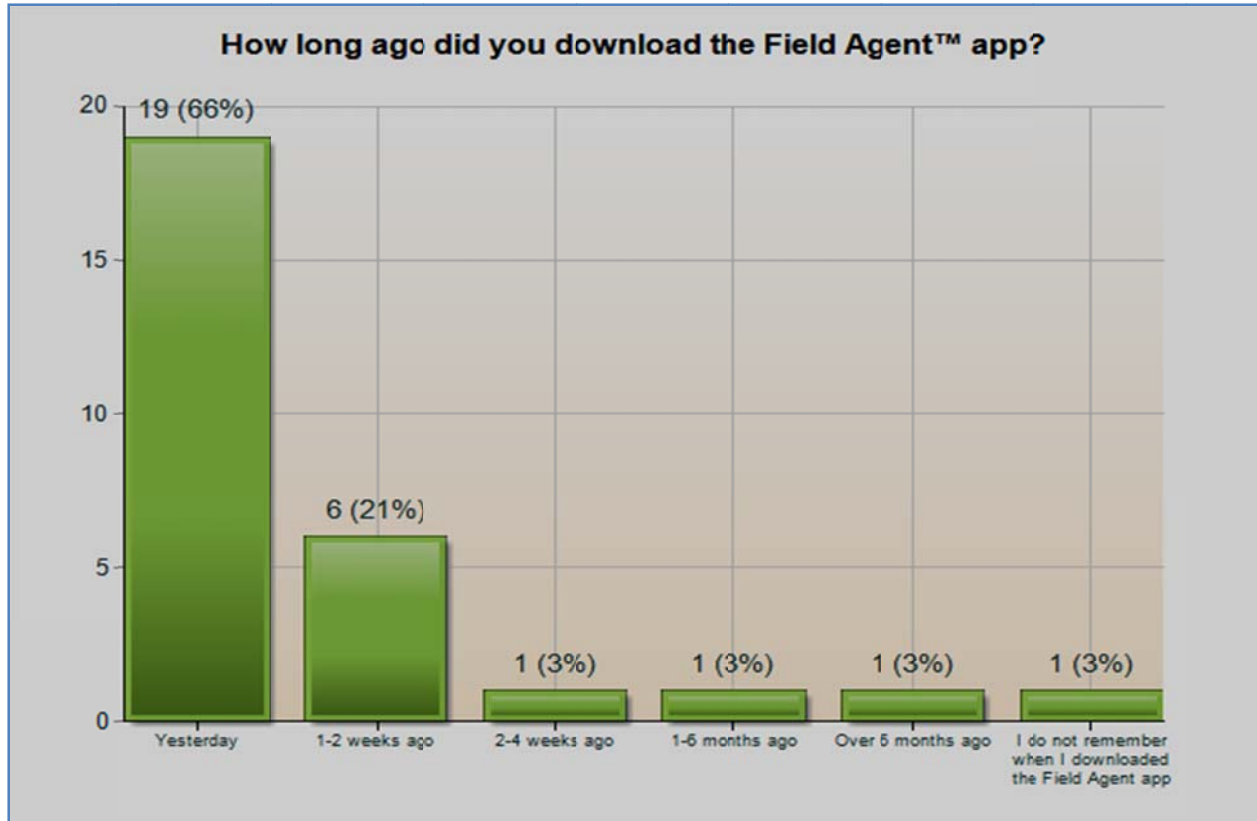
Theme 3: Field Agent- the app that pays you!

Previously I introduced you to the main topic of my research, Field Agent- the app that pays you, followed by several problems facing Field Agent. However, before addressing those issues, it was essential for me to know and understand the activity levels of current agents as well as their knowledge of and involvement with any other apps similar to field agent.

Using my survey, I measured the activity level of the agents using three questions fixating on the number of jobs they had completed within the past six months, how long ago they had downloaded the Field Agent app, and how long ago they completed their last job. Based on their response, I was able to separate the agents into three groups using a quantitative tool known as skip logic. Below is the graph that highlights the various categories each agent fell into based on his or her response.



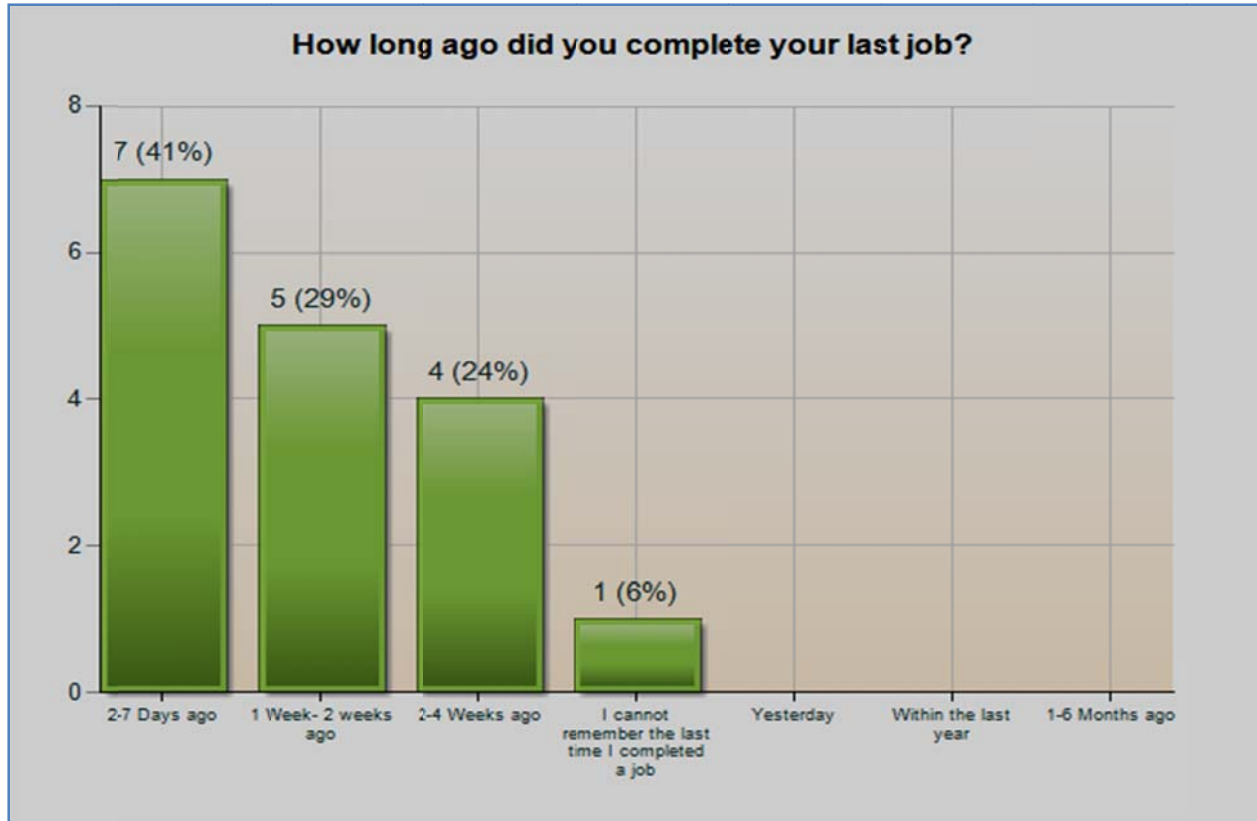
If an agent reported that they had not completed any jobs within the past six months, skip logic directed them to a new page of the survey asking how long ago they had downloaded the Field Agent app and why they had not completed any jobs since downloading the Field Agent app. Displayed below is the graph indicating how long ago those that had not completed any jobs had downloaded Field Agent, as well as a few of their most stated open response answers.



Two-thirds of those that fell into the category of zero job agents indicated that they had downloaded the job yesterday and also stated that that was their main reason for having not completed any jobs. However, the remaining 33% gave several reasons as to why they had not completed any jobs. The following responses are in order of most stated to least stated.

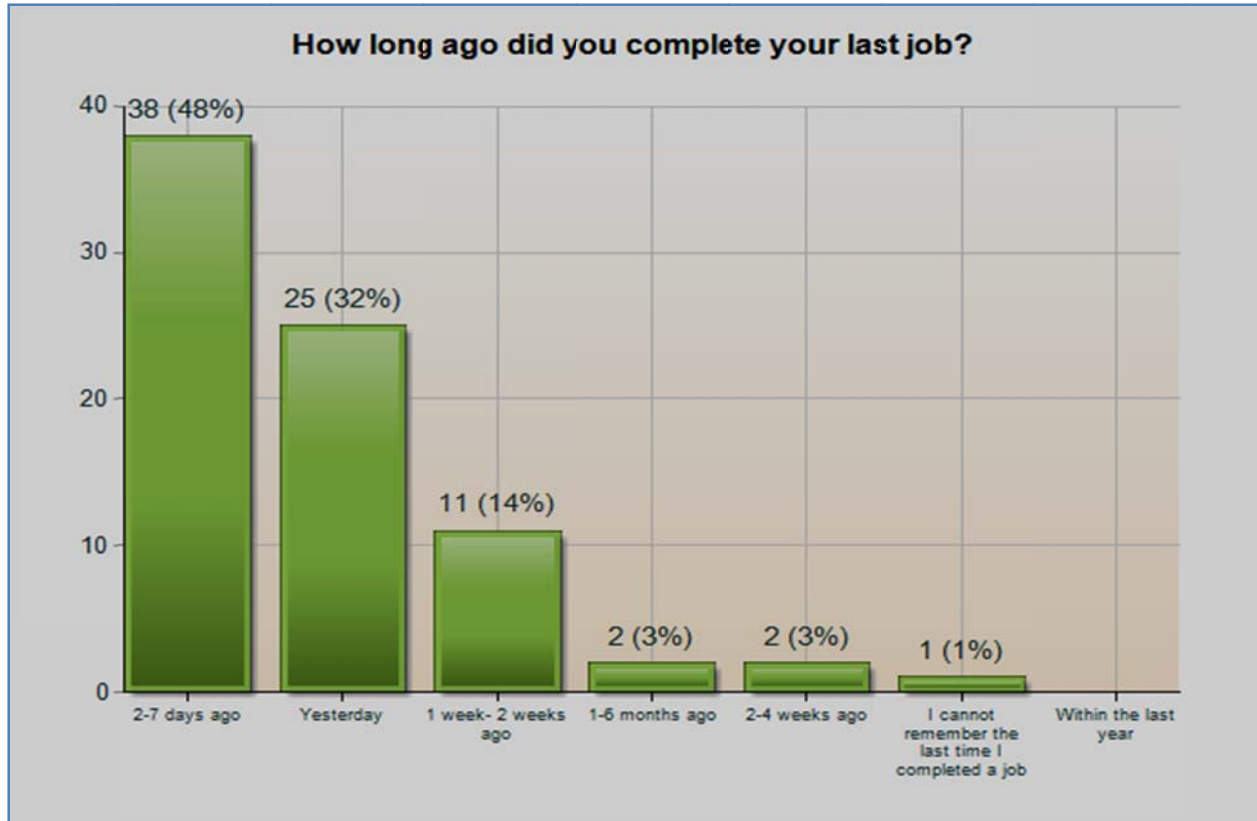
- Lack of jobs available
- Lack of jobs available in their area
- No jobs have been available in their preferred driving range

Agents who answered that they had only completed one job were also sent to a different page in which they were asked to state how long ago they had completed their last job as well as their primary reason for only completing one job. Below is a chart that captures about how long ago agents that had only completed one job were able to complete that job. Following the data are answers to the open response questions asking agents why they had only completed one job.



While the majority of one job agents (41%) indicated that the last time they completed a job was two-to-seven days ago, 29% said that the last time they completed a job was one to two weeks ago. With the exception of one respondent, the remaining one job agents said that the last time they completed a job was two to four weeks ago. None of the one job agents had completed a job yesterday or within the last six months or last year. These results lead me to believe that the longer an agent goes without being able to complete a job, the less likely he or she is to continue to stay involved with the app. Similar to the responses I received from agents that had not completed any jobs, most of these one job agents explained that the main reason they had only completed one job was that there were not enough jobs, not enough jobs located in their area, or that it had only been convenient for them to complete one job.

The third group consisted of agents that had either completed 2 to 5 jobs or 5 or more jobs. This group of agents was asked to also state how long ago they had completed their last job as well as their primary reason for remaining active with the Field Agent app. Pictured below is a graph displaying the amount of time it had been since they had completed a job.



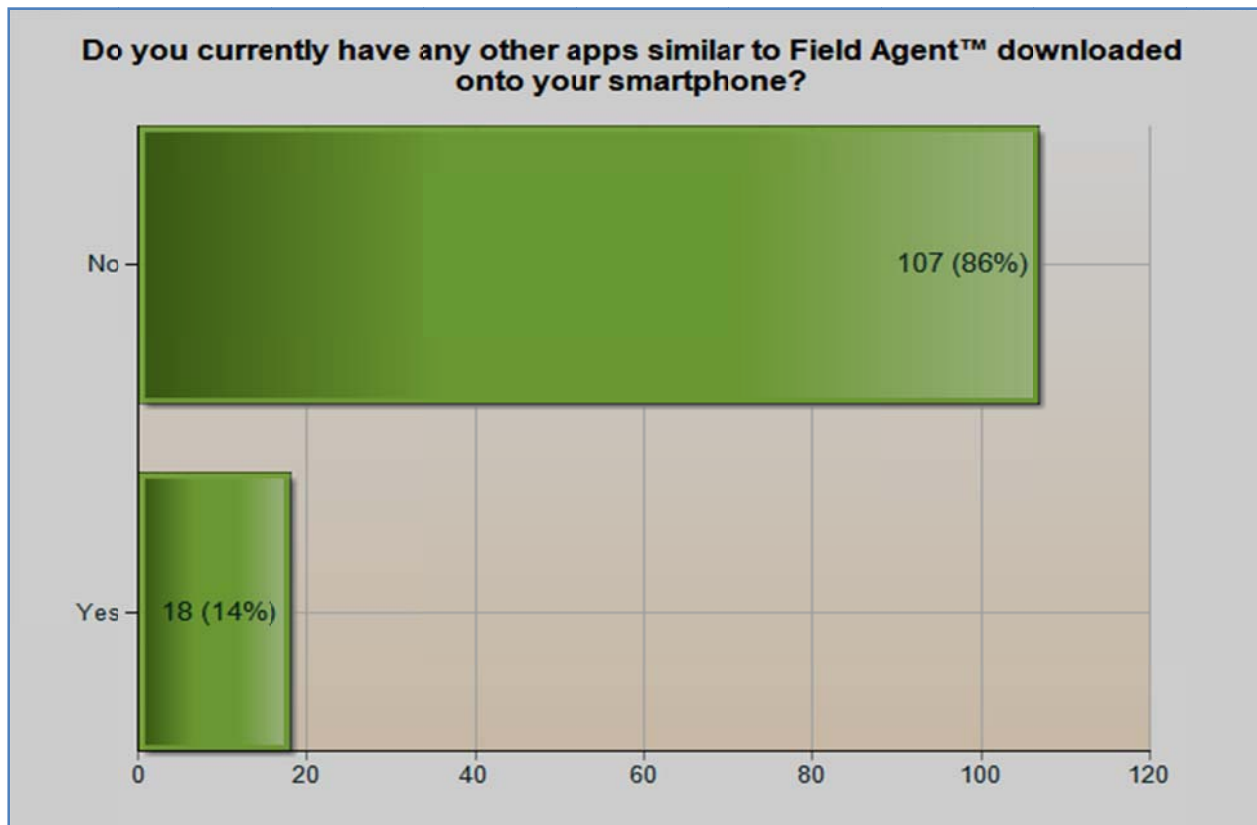
The majority of active agents (94%) completed a job either yesterday, within the last two to seven days, or within the last one to two weeks. With the exception of one agent who could not remember when the last time he or she had completed a job, the remaining 6% had completed their last job either two to four weeks ago, or one to five months ago. None of the active agents stated that they had completed their last job sometime within the last year. This evidence gives me further reason to believe that the longer an agent goes without being able to complete a job, the less involved they he or she becomes with the app. Just as the zero and one job agents were asked to explain the reason behind the amount of jobs they had completed, those that had completed two or more jobs were also asked to state why they continued to remain active with the app.

The open response question answered by each group of agents was key in indentifying why agents had downloaded the app and still had not used it, were downloading the app using it once and then never using it again, and why agents were continuing to remain active with the Field Agent app. A few of the reasons given by active agents (in order of most stated to least stated) included: they enjoyed making extra money, it is easy, it is fun, and that there are jobs available in their area. Below are a few quotes made by agents that support these findings.

- *“I am able to make some side money for recreation with my family.”*
- *“The app is really easy to use. The jobs are easy and it’s actually fun!”*
- *“It’s fun! I like the adventure. I drove halfway across the country for vacation and stopped about fifteen times doing little jobs. It was neat.”*
- *“At first I was intrigued to the reality of the app, and did not really believe that I could get paid to go places I usually go on a regular basis. Now I have found it to*

be fun to make sure I get the job before someone else, and it seems like a scavenger hunt.”

Secondly I desired to explore whether or not the agents were involved with any other apps similar to Field Agent. Using a Yes/No combined with an open response option, I was able to determine if agents had any other apps similar to Field Agent downloaded onto their iPhone and if so, which ones. The graph below displays the percentage of people that currently have an app similar to Field Agent downloaded onto their iPhone.



Only 14% of the agents had an app similar to Field Agent downloaded onto their Smartphone. The following is a list of those apps that agents used that might be similar to Field Agent:

- We Reward
- Loopstar
- I Seceret Shop
- Shopkick
- Checkpoints
- Seed

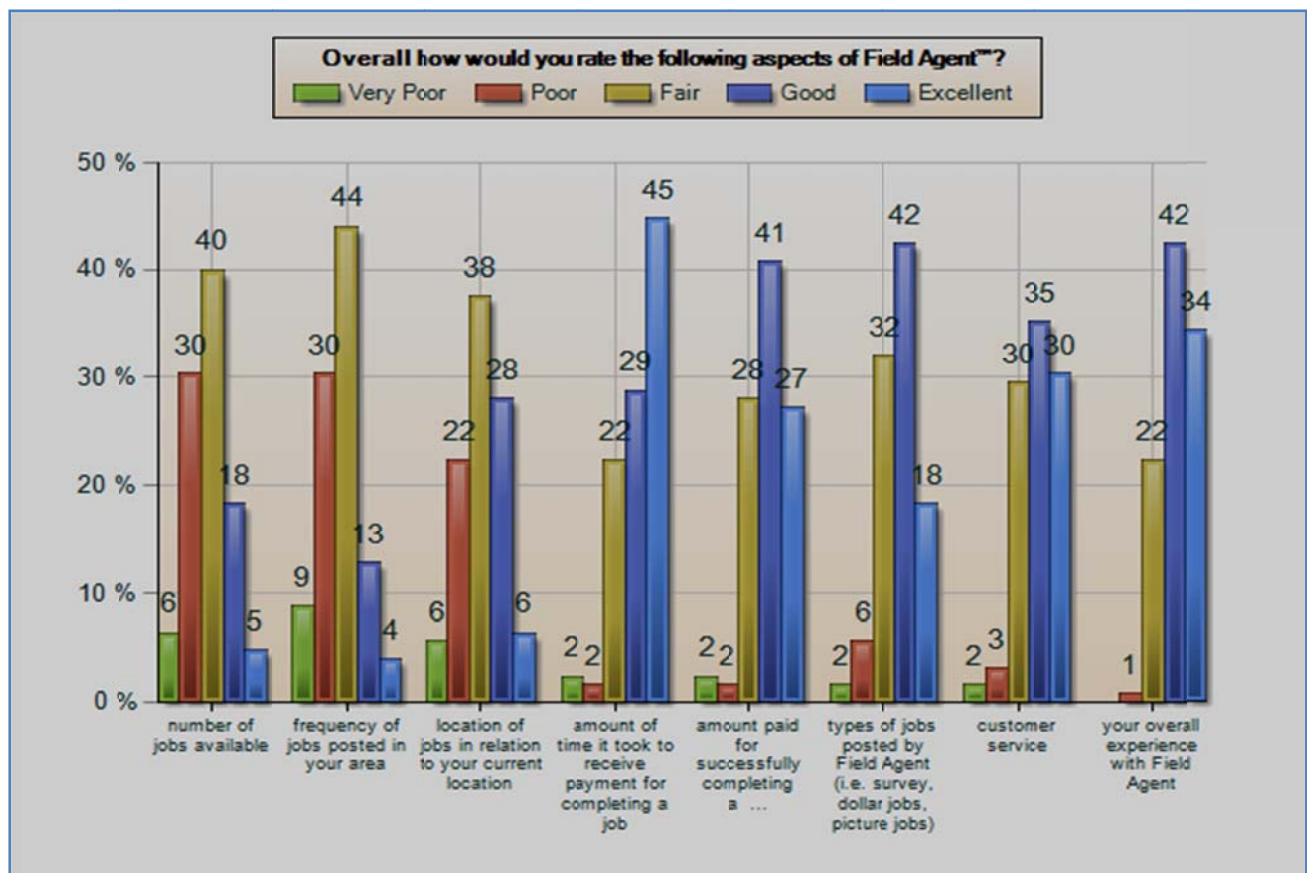
I asked this same question to those that participated in the job-a-long and each participant stated that they did not have, and were not aware of any app similar to Field Agent.

Theme 4: Problems Facing Field Agent

Although the open ended responses given by the three groups of agents provided great insight into several current and potential problems facing field agent, I also used a five point scale which measured the agents' attitudes toward various aspects of Field Agent. Several of the factors measured using the five point scale were the same factors mentioned by agents in answering the open ended response questions. The factors that were measured included the following:

- Number of jobs available
- Frequency of jobs posted in your area
- Location of jobs in relation to your current location
- Amount of time it took to receive payment for completing a job
- Amount paid for successfully completing a job
- Types of jobs posted by Field Agent (i.e. survey, dollar jobs, picture jobs)
- Customer service
- Your overall experience with Field Agent

The graph below gives a clear depiction of the agents' attitudes toward various factors of Field Agent.



The results indicate that the only quality in which the majority of agents found to be excellent was the amount of time it took to receive payment for completing a job. Even though this was the only quality in which the agents rated as excellent, the majority of the agents did feel

that the amount paid for successfully completing a job, the types of jobs posted by Field Agent, customer service, and their overall experience with Field Agent was good. There were however several factors that the majority rated as fair, signifying that there are a number of possible improvements Field Agent can make in each area. Those factors included the numbers of jobs available, the frequency of jobs posted in their area, and the location of jobs in relation to their current location. None of the factors measured using the five point scale received a majority rating of poor or very poor.

Following this scale question I posed an open ended response question in which I asked all agents to please describe any changes they might make to the Field Agent app. The desire for more job availability in their area was by far the most prevalent response that occurred. Sixty-seven out of one-hundred and twenty-five agents stated that they either wanted more jobs or more jobs available in their area. Other changes mentioned by several of the agents included a better variety of jobs, more money per job; more push notifications so that agents know when jobs are available, more time to complete a job, a map showing all available jobs, and more feedback given by Field Agent if a job they completed was denied.

While these results as well as the open responses gathered from the agent survey were helpful in determining problems facing Field Agent, observation and discussion with those that participated in the job-a-longs was most beneficial in pin pointing some specific problems facing Field Agent. By observing the participants as they downloaded the app and completed the job, and subsequently combining those observations with the responses given by current agents, I was able to target four major desires that agents have for Field Agent. In my research I discovered that agents desire communication, a challenge, ease and speed, and visual instruction. Being aware of these desires will be a key player in Field Agent's attempts to solve its problems and will allow Field Agent to continue to attract, maintain, and bring back agents.

1. Agents desire communication

Whether it is receiving the latest updates from Field Agent, feedback from Field Agent about why a job was not accepted, instant push notifications that new jobs are available, encouragement from Field Agent to continue to remain involved with the app even if job availability is low, or simply having the ability to give feedback to and seek help from Field Agent, agents desire communication. For instance, Jalynn Thomas, one of the job-a-long participants said that it would have been helpful to have had more information on the front end when she first downloaded the app. She said that she was not aware of how PayPal works, what a few of the attributes of Field Agent were, and she did not know if, when you accepted a job, whether or not someone else could steal it before she had a chance to complete it. She also said that it would have been helpful to have had a more detailed explanation in the instructions about the job she was doing. Another participant Ben, had the job of taking a picture of the milk section and said that he was not exactly sure what all to capture in the photo. A third participant, Alex, commented to me that one of her favorite apps was MyFitnessPal because it stayed in constant communication with her. She said that the app is great about sending her emails when she has not used it in a while and provides a way for her to stay in contact with others that are also involved with MyFitnessPal. By staying in constant communication with agents, increasing communication on the front end of downloading the app, and giving agents a better explanation of how to complete the job, Field Agent will hopefully be able to eliminate agent frustrations and in turn will most likely increase agents' involvement with the app.

2. Agents desire a challenge

A second major insight that I was able to take away from each of my research methods was that many of the current agents as well as app users in general enjoy a challenge. Previously I discussed the various and leading categories that the majority of agent's apps fall into. Games seemed to be the category in which the majority (28%) of the agent's apps fell. This statistic provides strong evidence that app users do, in fact, enjoy and desire to operate apps that will challenge them. In the survey given to the job-a-long participants upon completing their job, I asked each participant to please tell me about their favorite app and why they considered it to be their favorite app. Two out of the five participants said that their favorite app was a game because they enjoyed beating the different levels. While Field Agent does offer a point system known as the Agent Rep Score in which agents are rewarded with points and prizes for successfully completing jobs, several agents indicated that there were a few changes they would make to this "game-like" aspect of Field Agent. For example, with the Agent Rep Score, the maximum amount of points an agent can earn is 100. One agent stated that he or she desired point values over 100 in order to be more recognized and to receive more "perks". This agent also thought that those with the highest points should be the first ones that are given the opportunity to accept the highest paying jobs. Another agent also stated that he or she felt the points system should not be capped at 100 and that agents with the highest number of points should be the first to receive push notifications that jobs are available in their area. Equipping Field Agent with more "game-like" qualities as well as furthering the rewards of those who obtain a high number of points for completing jobs is a great way to keep agents actively using and engaging with Field Agent.

3. Agents desire ease and speed

One of the most popular responses when asking new and current agents what they liked about Field Agent was how quick and easy it is to use. In fact, agents and app users do not only desire ease and speed from Field Agent, but from other apps as well. When I asked those that participated in my job-a-longs what their favorite app was and why, two out of the five participants indicated that their favorite apps were apps that were easy to access and that provided them with instant information. A few of these apps included The Weather Channel, ESPN, Flixster, and AroundMe. While most agents feel that Field Agent is extremely quick and easy to use, some agents did provide some feedback indicating a few changes they would make that might help improve the ease and speed of Field Agent. Several agents mentioned that they wished Field Agent had a map function that would allow them to view all available jobs regardless of whether or not those jobs were in their area. Agents that enjoy completing jobs as they travel said that it would be neat to be able to flag and accept jobs along their path. Another change a number of agents mentioned that might improve the ease and speed in which agents are paid is the ability to send money to PayPal directly from the iPhone. One agent mentioned that he or she would like to see a sort function for jobs making it easier to transfer the money through the app instead of the website. Finally, the most common suggestion made by agents of how jobs might be easier and quicker to complete was for improvements to be made to the push notification system. Field Agent currently has a push notification system that allows agents to be notified when jobs are in their area. However, a number of agents indicated that they wished the push notification system worked quicker and that they were able to receive more push notifications. Several of the agents stated that there have been times when they have received a

push notification saying that a job is available, but when they went to click on the job it had already been taken. Agents also made several comments about not receiving enough push notifications or sometimes not any at all even when a job was in their area. By eliminating these potential frustrations for agents and improving already existing easy to use functions, agents will be more apt to stay involved with Field Agent and to complete jobs.

4. Agents desire visual instruction

Those that took part in the job-a-longs were given the choice between two jobs. The first option was a job involving hair products in which the participants were asked to take a picture of the shampoo aisle in Walmart. Those that chose this job were given a “help image” in the instructions portion of the job which provided an exact replica of what the picture that was to be taken by the agent should look like. The second option was a job involving the milk aisle in which participants were asked to take a picture of a certain section of the milk aisle located in the designated Walmart store. Those that chose this option were not given a “help image” of how the picture should be taken, and were only given written instructions. One of the most preeminent observations I made when observing those that participated in the job-a-longs as they completed a job, was that those that had a visual example of how the picture should be taken completed the job flawlessly and were sure to receive approval for completing the job. On the other hand, every participant that chose the milk job which lacked the help image did not take the picture correctly and therefore would have not received approval nor money for completing the job. It was from this observation that I discovered that the help image is key in insuring that agents successfully complete a job and are able to be paid. Receiving approval and monetary reward for successfully completing a job instead of denial will most likely breed satisfaction within the agent and, in turn, create in them the desire to complete more jobs in the future.

Limitations

The main limitation of this study was the ability to obtain a large portion of responses from agents that had not yet completed any jobs or that had only completed one job. Because these two groups have not completed any or only one job, there was a good chance that they were not actively checking their app everyday and therefore missed out on the opportunity to take the survey. Since these two groups are not as involved with the app as those that had completed two or more jobs, it was difficult to obtain completed surveys from these two groups, and therefore the majority of the surveys completed were by agents that are extremely active agents. In order to gain responses from those that would provide the best insight as to why agents were downloading the app and never completing a job, or completing a job and never using it again, I was forced to target the survey at random agents falling into these two categories using email.

Another limitation that I encountered was that the majority of those that took the survey that had not yet completed any jobs had not done so because they had only had the Field Agent app for one day. Because these agents were so new to Field Agent, they were not able to offer much advice on how Field Agent might be improved, or what changes they would like to see occur.

Conclusion

After thoroughly examining each original theme, a few highlights stand out in each section. For theme one, we learned that the new consumer is time-starved, pressed for money, and heavily influenced by those they trust. When evaluating various aspects of the Field Agent app, it is important that Field Agent meet the needs and expectations of the new consumer if it wishes to attract, retain, and bring back past agents. Data collected from my research showed that Field Agent did meet the majority of the needs of the time-starved, pressed for money, new consumer. Results also supported the theory that the new consumer is heavily influenced by friends and family given that a large majority of agents first heard of Field Agent from a friend, a family member, or the app store.

In theme two we uncovered several behaviors that were most commonly seen across agents and among app users in general. Derived from the sample of iPhone users that participated in the Gongos community discussion, we learned that the majority of iPhone users use apps several times per day. We also learned that most iPhone users have between twenty and sixty-nine apps currently on their Smartphone. In relation to downloading iPhone apps, we found that about forty-two percent download apps a few times a month, that seventy-eight percent of users have paid for an app, and that there are two main reasons why most users download apps: either a friend or family member recommended it, or they read about different apps after searching the app store. These statistics continue to emphasize the finding that iPhone users place a great deal of trust in the opinions of others, especially a friend or family member. Shifting our focus from general iPhone users to only field agent users, we learned that the most agents had more than fifty apps currently on their iPhone and that the majority of those apps fell into three main categories: games, utilities, and productivity. These numbers may indicate that agents enjoy apps that provide them with a challenge or that will be of specific benefit to them.

Using theme three I was able to determine the varying activity levels of agents by examining the number of jobs each agent had completed within the past six months. Based on their responses I segmented the agents into three groups: agents that had not yet completed any jobs, agents that had only completed one job, and agents that had completed two or more jobs. From these agents I received various responses as well as extremely beneficial feedback to help me uncover why zero and one job agents were losing interest in the Field Agent app, and why 2 or more job agents were continuing to remain active. After analyzing the data I was able to determine a few primary reasons why agents were either engaging or disengaging with the Field Agent app. The main reason agents seem to be losing interest in the app was that there are consistently no jobs available at all, no jobs available within their area, or no jobs were available of which felt were worth the drive. The principal reason agents seemed to continue to remain involved and were actively engaging with the app was that they were receiving some sort of reward, either monetarily or psychologically. While the majority of active agents said that they liked the app because it allowed them to make some extra money on the side, many agents also stated that completing the jobs was fun and challenging. The reward factor, whether it be positive or negative seem to be the primary influencer for agents.

Finally, in the last theme I further examined potential problems facing Field Agent, but more importantly I addressed four major desires most commonly found among agents. The first desire agents have is the desire for communication. Whether it is receiving the latest updates from Field Agent, feedback from Field Agent about why a job was not accepted, instant push

notifications that new jobs are available, encouragement from Field Agent to continue to remain involved with the app even if job availability is low, or simply having the ability to give feedback to and seek help from Field Agent, agents desire communication. The second desire agents have is the desire to be challenged. Users enjoy and desire to operate apps that will challenge them and provide them with that sense of accomplishment when accepting and successfully completing the challenge. Thirdly, agents desire ease and speed. Agents as well as app users in general are constantly in search of apps and other technologies that allow them to accomplish everyday tasks faster and easier. A common attraction found between Field Agent and its user was that the app was easy to use, jobs were easy to complete, and the amount of time it took to complete a job was minimal. The fourth desire I uncovered from my research was that agents desired visual instruction. Agents attempting to complete a job with the help of the visual aid during the job-a-longs each stated that the visual aid was helpful in instructing them how to take the picture. Those that did not receive a visual aid when completing the job not only had difficulty in determining what to include in the photo, but also completed the job incorrectly. The frustration of those that completed the job incorrectly combined with comments made by those that completed the job correctly with the aid of the help image indicated to me a strong desire agents have for more visual instruction.

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