



The best of mobile platforms: three things award-winning apps have in common

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As buzz surrounding the Grammys, Oscars, and Golden Globes celebrate the best in entertainment, The [Mobile Excellence Awards \(MEA\)](#), highlight the best in mobile app development. The MEA's which celebrate "innovators and leaders in mobile technology, entertainment and lifestyle", announced their winners on January 9, 2016.

The MEAs were founded by top industry professionals in 2007. Current awards include Best Mobile Innovator, Best Mobile Analytics, Best User Experience for Mobile, and many more. The Spiegel Research Center has proven that an app's quality is key. [An app that does not provide a flawless user experience damages its brand more than an app that does not exist.](#) Considering these significant dangers, companies can benefit from the insights the 2015 MEA winners can provide as strong examples of successful apps.

The winners share 3 three common aspects:

1. They Remain Focused on Improving the User Mobile Experience

MEA winners uniquely innovate systems for users' benefit. InterContinental Hotels Group, which has produced translation software for frequent travelers, is responsible for this year's Best Mobile App for Wearable Technology. The winning Translator App optimizes the existing translation software for the Apple Watch, allowing users to speak phrases into their watch and have it instantly translated into phonetically spelled text. [As IHG states on the description page](#), this app takes a "casual and fun approach" to "help you learn essential foreign phrases, translate your voice, understand the local culture and more."

The key innovation here is in their combination of existing software, an existing operating platform, and a company's special brand promise. The app's breakthrough makes translation hassle-free for loyal customers, offering features like slang phrase recognition that enhance customers' frequently travelling lifestyles. . While innovating, this successful app also addresses an existing problem in a simple and very friendly way. This speaks to the second quality shared by all MEA winners.

2. They Serve Users, Not Metrics

The awards, chosen by judges who look at entrants' creativity and technology innovation, are not given to mobile systems with the most Likes, downloads, or followers. Instead, they reward focus on users as people, who seek mobile functions to fulfill specific needs. Marketers can follow these examples of

dedication to serving real users, before growing user volume.

[Self-named “App of Shopping” Hopi](#), winner of the Best Mobile Analytics/Big Data category, exemplifies this. Customers who download Hopi can use the app to track what they buy in offline venues, receive news about sales in local stores and discounts on products they will like, and, when they buy a product from a participating brand, earn exclusive Hopi reward points (“paracik”) to use toward further discounts. In its description, Hopi acknowledges that “*everybody* wants to buy more and pay less.” Instead of targeting “everybody”, however, Hopi is designed to serve *one* person—an individual user. Hopi recognizes that individual seek benefits that are especially relevant to themselves, their locations and their preferences.

Hopi does not collect mass from retailers and consumers, then using mass algorithms to match them. Instead, Hopi differentiates itself by allowing individual consumers to decide what they need, and empowering them to pursue it. As a self-optimizable app, Hopi remains focused on real user’s needs, which has led to its marketing and mobile success.

Hopi’s user-driven flexibility also shows the third element common to all MEA winners.

3. They Bring Enchantment to Users’ Lives

MEA winners’ generally make users’ lives or businesses easier to manage, but functionality alone may not capture user attention. The MEA’s Best Innovator, tech builder [Synaptics](#), has updated its touchscreen experience to makes screens recognize their users and respond to gloved fingertips. Many users will find these changes

innovative, convenient--and, essentially, magical. Other winners captivate and engage users through less technological means.

FunMobility's Best Branded Experience "[Minions Love Bananas](#)" sponsored by Chiquita, uses its beloved character brand to bring enchantment to grocery shoppers. Subscribers to "Minions Love Bananas" use mobile devices to track Minion characters featured on Chiquita banana stickers. When they collect all six characters, they earn a prize. Customers are also rewarded for engaging with FunMobility's site, which presents branded games, recipes, and other content.

"Minions Love Bananas" gamifies a common daily chore-grocery shopping—in a way that users of all ages can enjoy. It also presents established brands in a unique way, encapsulating the three elements common to winners of the Mobile Excellence Awards.

These winners are not only new, popular, or engaging, but combine innovation and user experience to create whole experiences that attract followings organically. Mobile developers can look to these as examples of what to value in creation, achieving the same possible recognition, [as well as the success Spiegel has found is key.](#)

Key takeaways:

All winners of the Mobile Excellence Awards share three common points. These mobile platforms

1. Remain focused on improving the mobile user experience, innovating technology and combining existing platforms for optimal user benefit.

2. Serve users, not metrics, understanding that users are individuals who will naturally adopt a platform that suits their needs.

3. Bring enchantment to users' lives, fulfilling users' needs in surprising ways that users enjoy.