

UNITED

<http://united.jp/>

AT A GLANCE

About United

- united.jp
- Tokyo, Japan
- Smartphone media and advertising business
- Smartphone customization app CocoPPa launched in July 2012

Goals

- Grow user base and revenues in international markets
- Ensure new ad formats do not compromise user experience

Approach

- Data-driven expansion strategy based on Google Analytics
- Gradual roll-out of interstitial ads on AdMob platform

Results

- Advertising revenue up 20% in 3 months after launch of interstitials
- No decline in retention rate
- International markets now account for 80%+ of total downloads

COCOPPA INCREASES ITS AD REVENUE BY 20% AS A RESULT OF GOING GLOBAL WITH ADMOB

Introducing CocoPPa

Created by Japanese company United, CocoPPa is an app that allows smartphone owners to customize their home screens with user-created content. It has a strong community aspect, letting users share the wallpapers and icons they have created and follow other users whose designs they like. As of February 2015, the app had been downloaded more than 35 million times, with users outside Japan accounting for more than 80% of the total number of downloads. It is now available in 8 languages besides Japanese and English.

Foundations for global success

The app was designed with certain features that made it suitable for international audiences, as Shigeru Chishima, Manager of United's CocoPPa Division, explains. "Firstly, we made the user interface as intuitive as possible by using a visual design," he says. Secondly, the social aspect was crucial. "Tastes in design differ from country to country – we didn't try to impose a Japanese style on overseas users, but focused on user-generated content."

The app's global expansion was based on a data-driven strategy. Instead of targeting specific countries from the outset, United used Google Analytics to identify where downloads were strongest and then focused on these markets. The first languages the app and its support pages were translated into were English and Simplified Chinese, and it soon started to gain significant traction, first in Taiwan, then in the USA.



"Analyzing traffic enables us to see where our app is gaining traction."
Chishima Shigeru,
Manager, CocoPPa Division,
United, Inc. Smartphone Media Company

AdMob, the perfect partner

Having a hit app with a large user base is one thing, but turning that into a profitable business requires a ready supply of high-quality, well-funded advertisers. "AdMob was the best fit for us as its ad inventory is global," says Shigeru. "So even if the app became a hit in a country we hadn't envisaged, the platform could instantly deliver suitable ads for these new local users – meaning we could monetize effectively."



ABOUT ADMOB

AdMob is one of the world's leading mobile advertising networks, specializing in providing various solutions for app promotion, maximizing ad revenue, and increasing brand awareness on mobile networks. One type of ad it offers are interstitials – rich HTML5 experiences delivered in-app at natural transition points in the user experience.

- For more information, go to: <http://www.google.com/ads/admob/>



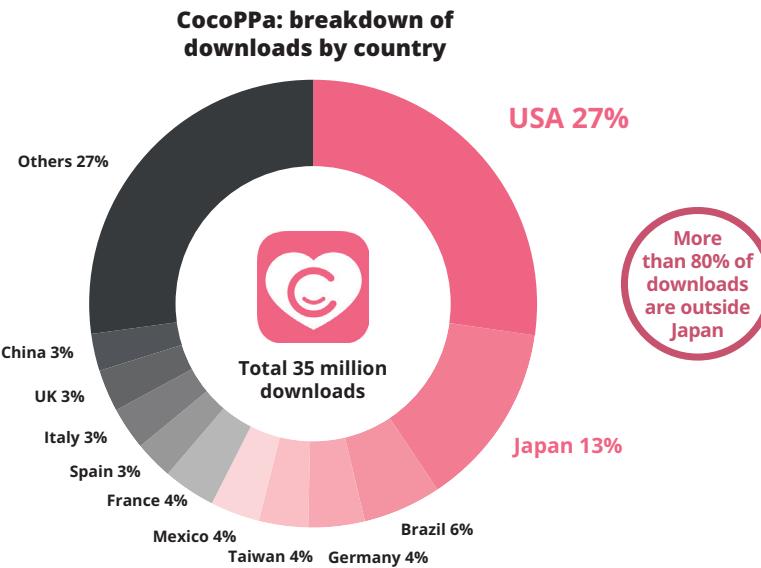
Revenue gain with interstitial advertising

At first, CocoPPa only featured banner ads, but in November 2014, United started rolling out interstitial ads as well. The company proceeded cautiously at first as they wanted to be sure that these full-screen ads would not disrupt the user experience. They used Google Analytics to refine display timings for interstitials so that they did not adversely affect usage patterns. "In our first 3 months of serving interstitial

ads on a wide scale, overall ad revenue from the app increased by 20%," Shigeru says.

Advertising made simple

"AdMob makes our business easier to run and more profitable too," Shigeru concludes. He cites the mediation feature, which automatically scans various ad networks and serves the highest-revenue units from these, as a great example. "The ease of use of Google products and the great technical support also lowers the psychological barriers to implementing new technologies," he reveals. "We hope that this will help us create a virtuous circle whereby increasing ad revenues will help fund continued investment in new and better apps and services."



NOTE: As of February 2015, CocoPPa was available in Japanese, English, Chinese (Traditional & Simplified), Korean, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese and Indonesian.