

3 trends that will dominate African mobile apps in 2022

Last year the mobile industry in Sub-Saharan Africa continued to show incredible resilience against the impacts of Covid-19 and experienced high growth. Digital solutions have provided instrumental support for communities and businesses, boosting their transition into adopting a mobile-first approach to tackle most of the daily challenges across the continent, with fintech applications dominating this surge.



Source: [Unsplash](#)

According to the *Mobile Economy Report*, 615 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa will subscribe to mobile services by 2025, that's equivalent to 50% of the region's population.

As we enter into a new year, Daniel Junowicz, RVP EMEA and Strategic Projects, at mobile marketing analytics platform AppsFlyer, explores three key trends for mobile apps in Africa this year.

Investment into mobile applications will increase

A previous report launched by AppsFlyer and Google revealed a booming African mobile app market, propelled by a growing fintech space, a rise in 'super apps', and the Covid-19 pandemic amongst other factors.

Having analysed over 6,000 apps and two billion installs across South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya, between Q1 2020 and Q1 2021, the report found that the African mobile app market showed strong growth, with overall installs increasing by 41%. Nigeria showed the highest growth, with a 43% uplift, followed by 37% in South Africa, and 29% in Kenya.



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Nick Durrant 5 Jan 2022



Africa's opportunity to transform itself into a digitally focussed continent has been boosted by the digitalisation demands of the global pandemic. The momentum that many companies, most notably in the retail and finance industries, have carried on their digital transformation journeys shows no signs of slowing as we head into 2022. With Africa being hampered on the road to recovery from the pandemic by low vaccine rates, businesses will increasingly look to capitalise on a growing digitally conscious audience.

According to Briter Bridges, African startups raised \$4.65bn in disclosed funding last year, with 62% flowing towards fintech companies. Increasing web and in-person traffic towards mobile experiences will be a primary focus for traditional businesses as they expand their investment into mobile applications and mobile app marketing which is likely to account for more than half of the overall marketing budget.

Growth in mobile commerce will drive customer experience and brand loyalty

Industries like mobile commerce will continue to experience exponential growth going into 2022 in Africa as more consumers, especially previously non-tech-savvy shoppers, become increasingly familiar with shopping online via mobile applications. Social commerce is predicted to take up more space in the overall mobile marketing space, therefore, developing an engaging user experience to enhance brand loyalty is highly important.

The growth that e-commerce apps experienced last year in Africa is showing no signs of slowing down. According to AppsFlyer's [State of eCommerce app marketing](#) report, the African mobile app market continues to show strong growth with more people accessing goods and services online than ever before, with an increase of 55% on Android and 32% on iOS in 2021, and consumer spend climbing 55% overall.

The more consumers become familiar with mobile applications, the more they will respond to innovation and improvements in the UX, which in turn will drive a positive engagement with the brand. Enhancing the UX will be a critical focus for app developers and marketers as they pivot their improvements around more impactful copy, eliminating distractions and maximising creative design within the limited space of a mobile screen.

Intense competition for attention should push the market towards innovative mobile applications, which will certainly appeal to consumers and maintain a higher brand loyalty.

Fintech and social super apps will become more common

Super apps emerged from China, a country with a huge population, significant consumer purchasing power and underserved industries, not so dissimilar to Africa.

Apps such as We Chat, a messaging app quickly expanded into other activities such as shopping, gaming, video sharing. This is a model that various social media companies in the West including Meta are looking to replicate by rolling out more and more features under their single apps.

Africa has the potential to be a significant market for super apps, especially fintech. By the end of 2021, there were 548 million registered accounts in the Sub-Saharan Africa region, over 150 million of which were active monthly; that's 43% of

the total active mobile money accounts in the world.

These apps offer convenience to consumers, as they provide the basic infrastructure needed by the unbanked population and easy access to a wide range of services.

Kenya's M-Pesa and Nigeria's Opay have served as good examples in East and West Africa with at least another few emerging from last year, as well as Uber and Bolt's expansions from car-hailing apps into food delivery.

So, as we move into 2022 the race to dominate the digital retail and consumer landscape for super apps is on! Expect to see businesses grow and diversify the capabilities of their apps through embedding their suite of features into people's everyday lives.

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