



Feature Adoption 101:

The Product Manager's Guide



experience the infinite

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Did you know ?

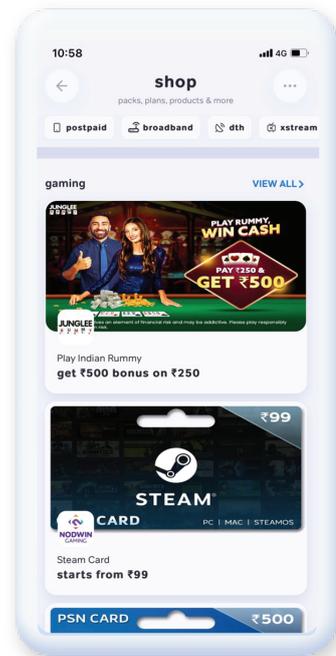
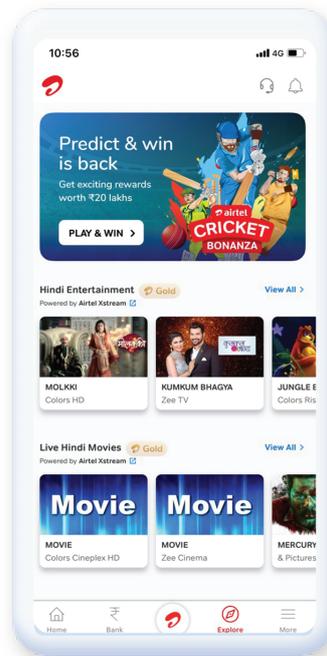
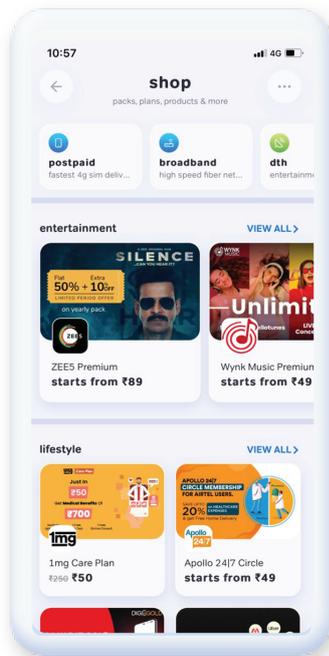
The App Usage Statistics across industries show that only 20% of users make full use of the app and its features. This means that 80% of the app capabilities are either under utilized or go completely unrealized, taking the app user so much far from realizing their 'aha moment'.

This has been an eternal nightmare for Product managers for ages. In this guide, we try to deep dive into the What, When, Why and How of Feature Discovery and Adoption.

Defining feature adoption for you

So, a good number of months have been spent building an app. Then there's the long hours of research, design, development and coding that goes behind building new features that address multiple customer pain points.

For instance, telecom apps today are no more limited to the basic functionalities of recharging phones. They are the super apps, power packed with access to OTT platforms, live entertainment channels, subscription of online music streaming apps, e-commerce, e-wallets, payment banks and a lot more.



All of these efforts are to meet the ever-changing needs of your customers and be relevant to them at all times.

It seems like it's finally over and done with but it's really not! The game has only just begun!

Developing features is only half the battle. What good will these features do you, if your customers aren't even aware about them in the first place.



You need to inform your users about the new features you've rolled out, communicate how your users can reap maximum benefit out of it and encourage them to actually use and re-use those features, towards forming habits around them. That's exactly what feature adoption means.

It's what decides the fate of your new features and the app success largely.

While you are exploring and finding ways to make feature adoption your forte, we're happy to help you, with this guide that has the simplest answers and some actionable tips to the most seemingly difficult questions.

Why should feature adoption matter to you?

With tons of apps and notifications and all the noise on our smartphones, grabbing that small attention span of your users and engaging them on your app for more than just a few seconds is becoming more and more difficult. Even more with the release of thousands of new apps every single day.

To beat all of this, data is the ammo we all resort to. You've got all the data around your customers - their likes and dislikes, needs and the value they are looking for, from your app. And then there's so much that goes behind the scenes before you introduce a new feature, addressing those exact needs.



Do these efforts make any sense if your customers aren't making any use of these features, or worse they aren't even aware of these features.

And it's also not just about a new feature. What about all those existing features that many of your users aren't yet aware of?

Are we still looking for answers on why feature adoption should matter?

The more your users use your features, the more value they receive from your app and lesser the chances of them uninstalling your app.

It is the one shot that kills all the devils that bother us - App churn worries, lesser conversions, Lack of user engagement and more such.

To put this simply, when your app user feels that they're getting much more in return, than what they are giving, this is when they experience the 'Aha Moment'.

And one of the best ways to do that is drive the discovery of the right features, to the right audience, at the right time and promote their adoption.

We spoke about the **what** and **why!** The next question for us is **when!**

The biggest hurdle in a user's app journey is getting them to the app. And we did that! This means, they are

- » High on intent
- » Looking for value
- » Trust you with their time

When your customer is on the app, that's your chance to engage them with a delightful experience **by nudging them to use relevant features** that would solve their problems in the best manner possible and take them closer to the 'Aha Moment!

When we do that successfully, we are in the right direction of winning loyal customers and becoming a favourite brand.

Related Read: [Product Experience](#)

| The feature adoption funnel

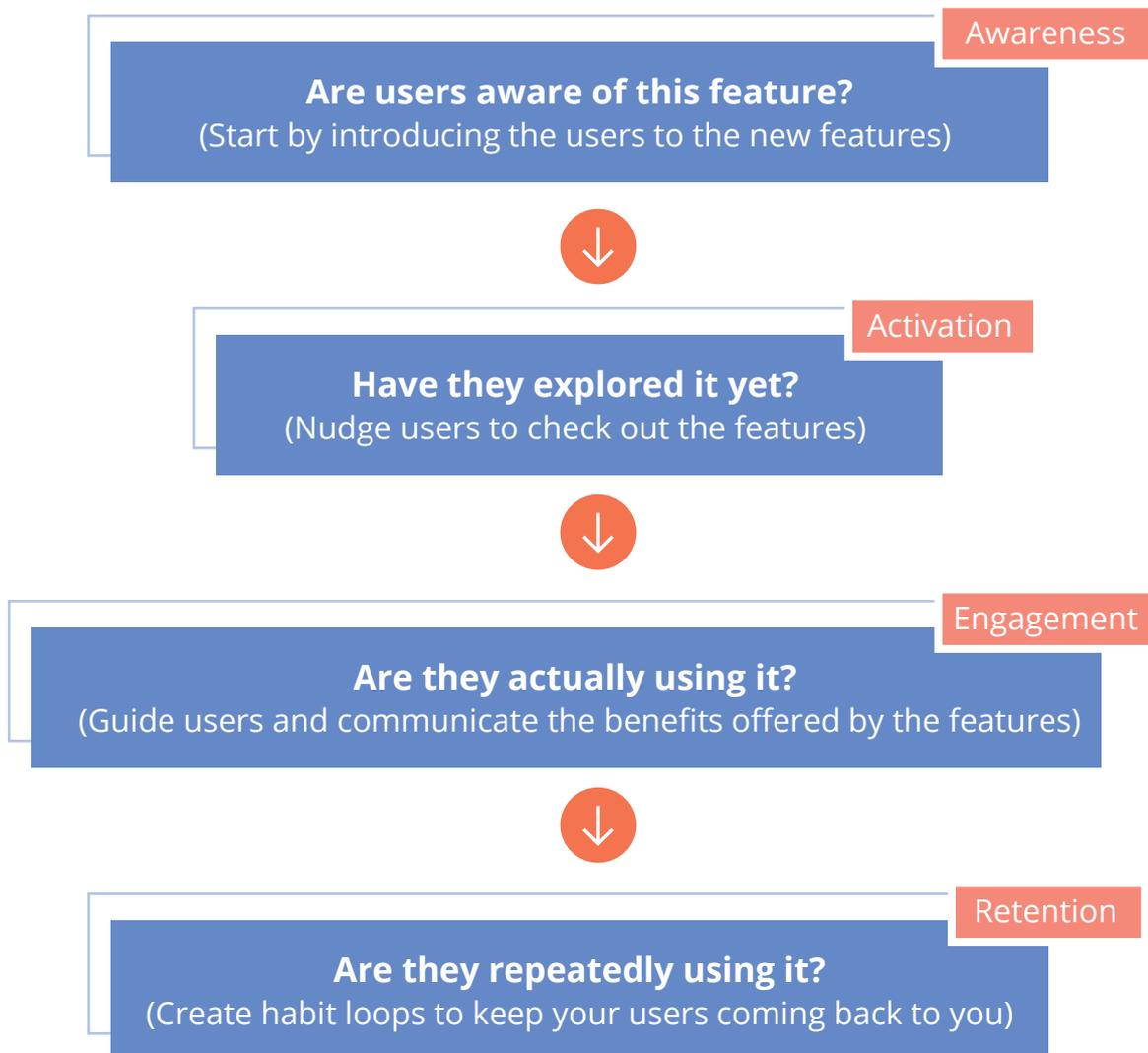
We humans are more often than not resistant to change. We tend to repel anything that is beyond our comfort zone. This psychology sticks to us in our day to day life as well. It's hard-coded in us to keep using a select few features of an app without wanting to tap into what's more in the app.

*Heard of nudge theory and how it helps users make better choices on apps?
Read here : [The what, why and how of nudges: Your roadmap to delivering delightful user experience](#)*

As product managers, the onus is on you to address the relevant pain points of your customers, and nudge them to start using the features that are most relevant to different user cohorts. And this certainly isn't a one step process.

Just like a first time user, your regular customers go through multiple stages starting right from getting introduced to a new feature to repeatedly coming back to it.

When you roll-out a feature, mapping out these questions makes it easier for you to understand a user's journey in feature adoption, which you will see is nothing but a mini representation of the user journey funnel.



Pinning this funnel to your feature adoption efforts is what will help you engage the right set of users with the right features with the right communication and at the right time, always!

Cracked this cycle ? You've successfully found a loyal user for your app.

How to drive feature adoption?

Let us now talk about 'how!' Is this not the most critical one in the cycle?

The key to unlocking feature adoption is making the usage of the relevant features, a daily activity for your users. Here's how you can do that!

Nudges

When users launch an app, most of the time it's with the intent to take some specific action. So why not leverage the time your users are spending on the app? This is your cue to make your users aware of new features, grab their attention, and direct them towards features they're yet to explore.

Now, to drive feature adoption, you need to drive feature discovery. And that has to be smooth, relevant, contextual, personalized and convenient at all touch-points across the app. And what makes all of this possible is the right use of nudges.

Get deeper insights into for feature adoption here:

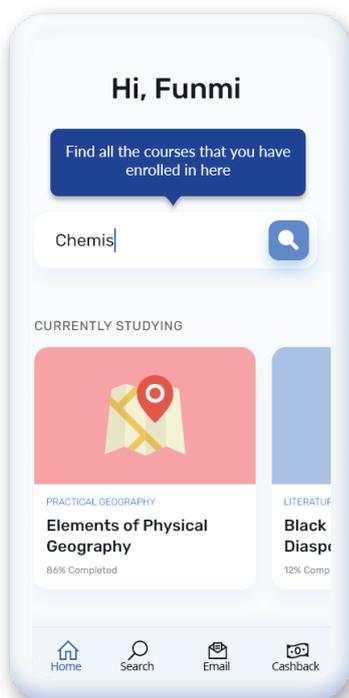
<https://netcorecloud.com/ebook/nudges-for-feature-adoption-in-2020-an-observational-study/>

Nudges act like your users' guiding light, indicating the next best step/action to your users while they're on the app. Take a look at these nudging instances:

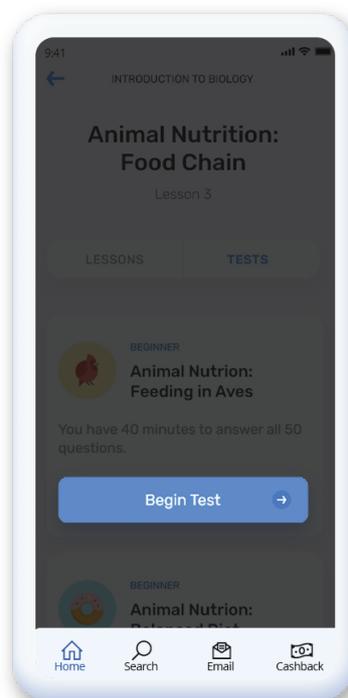
- » You're scrolling through Facebook and you stop to like a post. While you're about to click a reaction emoji, a reminder notification about a new feature (new reaction emoji) pops up.
- » While you're wondering which series/movie you want to watch next, Netflix will give you the option of adding a reminder to watch an upcoming series/movie based on your binge watch history.
- » There are messages that pop on your screen saying, 'Hey, have you tried out these new features' or 'Check out what's new with this'

Similar to these instances and many more that we see in our everyday lives, nudges come in the form of tooltips, coach-marks, beacons, spotlight and many more types that enable feature discovery and eventually drive feature adoption.

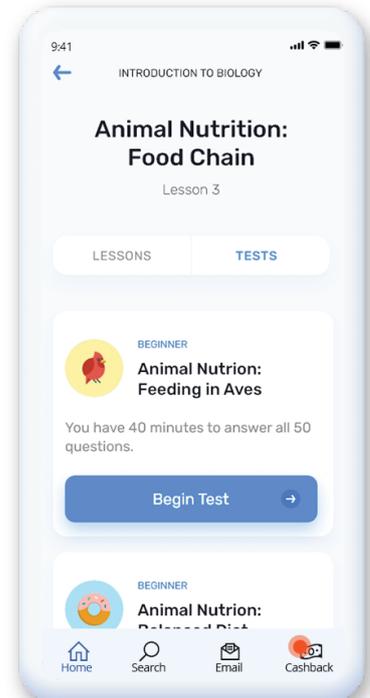
Let us take a look at a few of them here



Tooltip



Spotlight



Beacon

Now, it's only fair to think about all the hard-coding, long-development cycle, worries of app release and the many more hassles that come your way.



But with the low-code / no-code revolution in the industry, platforms today are empowering you with agility and speed. They cut down the days of hard work into minutes of smart work. All you have to do is understand your customer journeys and plant the nudges at the right time for the right user.

We know what your immediate next worry is. The longish development cycles, app release anxieties and more!

Dig further into rightly using nudges on this blog here: [Are You Nudging Your App Users The Difficult Way?](#)

Contextual walkthroughs

While nudges do work wonders in driving feature adoption, it's not the only strategy you want to stop at. You can't just hand over the features to your users and expect them to take the wheel from there. Informing your users about a new feature is undoubtedly crucial, but it's equally important to guide them on how to access those features or how to use them.

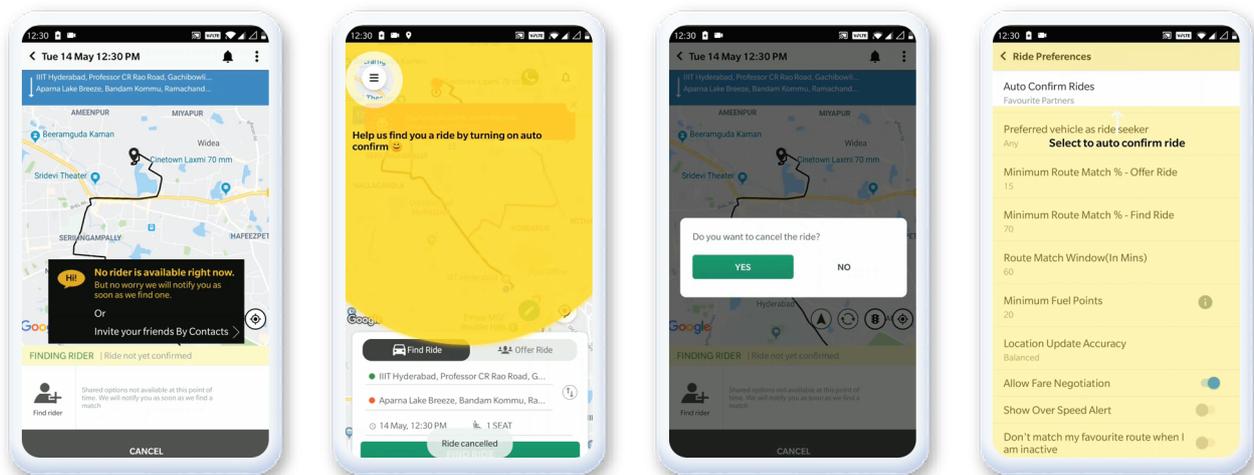
We see this when we install an app for the first time as users. A tutorial of the app, navigating us through the hero features to help us find our path and get accustomed.

Also, when you tell your users about a new feature, make sure you guide them through that new feature and clearly show them a path with contextual walkthroughs that lead them to the action/next step you want them to take.

Here is an example

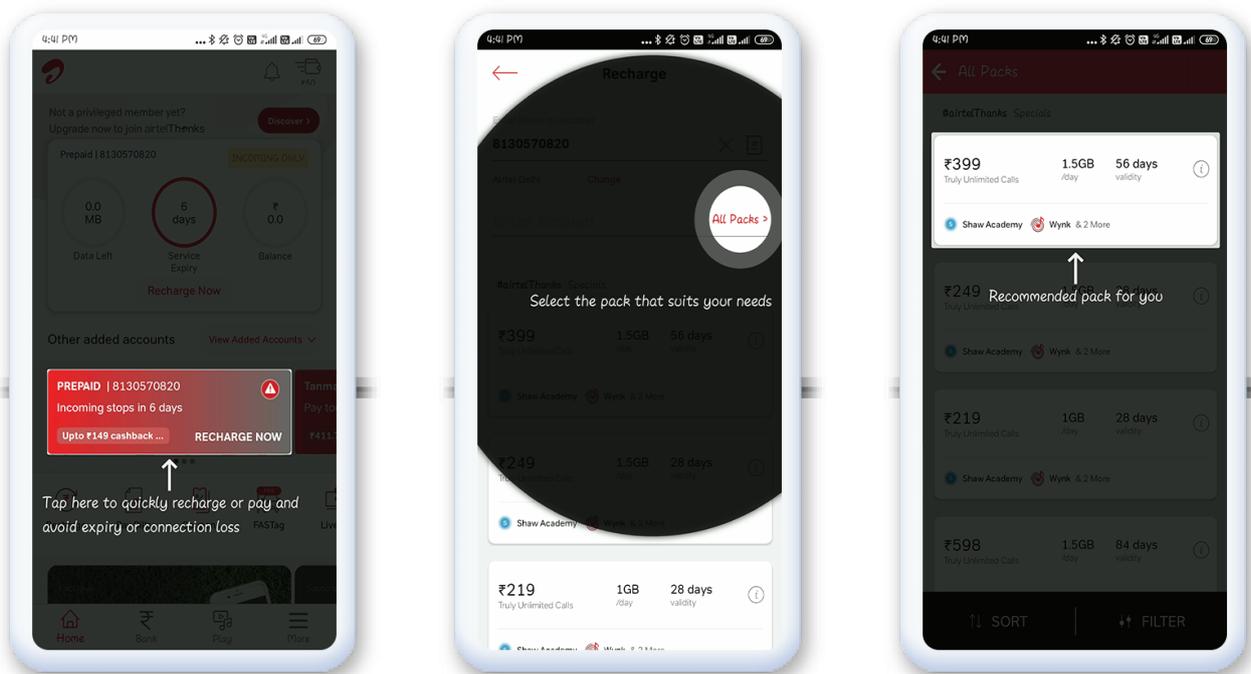
Let's say that you want to convert a freemium user to a premium one. Now you've added certain additional premium features that would be attractive to a particular set of users. So by the data that you have, you can give the users a tour of the BENEFITS that these new features offer and with the relevant, informative and interactive walkthroughs you could direct freemium users to become a premium one.

That's the magic walkthroughs can weave!



The above snapshots from the Quick Ride app, are an apt representation of how it drove feature adoption for a new feature 'Auto Confirm' for those users who couldn't find a ride. Through a series of nudges - a walkthrough, users are guided to the auto-confirm feature and are educated on how to change their preferences. This way, Quick Ride prevents users from dropping off the app when they can't find a ride. It gives way to increased feature adoption and further encourages user retention.

Let's look at another example of one of the telecom majors, Airtel. The images below go on to show how Airtel, through a series of nudges, guides its user segment (prepaid users nearing recharge expiry) to the final action (payment page).



It starts with a recharge reminder that appears as a coachmark. Thereafter, an eye-catching spotlight guides the user to choose from the multiple recharge plans. To further add a touch of personalization, the app elevated the recommended pack option as a coachmark, to the users.

By guiding the users through this whole process, Airtel increased its chance of getting more and more users to recharge their packs.

*More details on nudges and contextual walkthroughs is just a click away:
[Nudges and Contextual Walkthroughs](#)*

Push notifications

So now you know how to engage your users when they're on the app.

But..... what if your user hasn't actually come on to your app yet?

Push notifications are the way to get them to the app!

Even if your user hasn't come on to your app in a long time, you need to keep them updated on what's new on your app. At the time you release a new feature, send a well-crafted actionable message to your customer to let them know something new is brewing up on the app. That's how you could get your users back on to the app, re-engage them and if done right, you surely have captured your users 'wow' moment.

You can grab more insights into Smart Push Notifications right here: [Smart Push Notifications](#)

While we do all that we discussed so far, here are some important things to be taken care of.

Know whom to show which feature - Add context by personalizing it right!

The mantra is that not every user will be interested in every new feature you release and you also can't be all things to all customers.

If you start showing pre-paid packages/offers to a post-paid customer then high chances are that your customer will abandon the app. Every nudge, walkthrough, notification you send out has to be relevant to your customers and that is where the context comes into play!

After all, we want to nudge users to a positive action but nagging is a big no, right ?

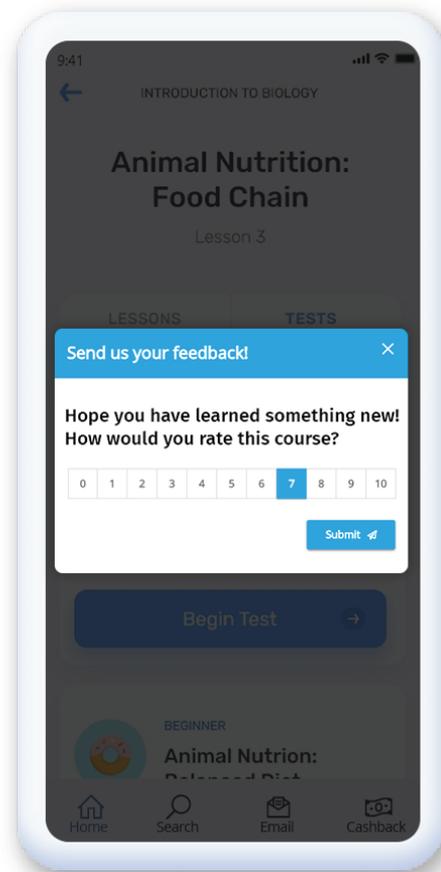
Know who your target audience is and send across the right communication to iterate the additional value that any feature creates for them. Personalization is the way to ensure that you're engaging your customers in the right way.

Gather Feedback

By now, you've ticked off nudges, walkthroughs, push notifications and personalization from your checklist.

But we are yet to do one last yet critically important task of gathering feedback. After all, the first step to building the best product is hearing what our users want and continuing to do that at regular intervals.

It's important to hear from your customers about their experience with you. This can either be their overall experience or their experience during a recent interaction with you. Every time you update a new feature, make sure to include insights you've gathered from all this feedback. Nudges are also a good way to gather user feedback.



Collecting feedback is a way of letting your customers know that their opinions matter to you.

It's what will help you continuously improve upon your features and understand what's working and what's not working for the app and meet the exceeding customer expectations.

To sum this up, I'd say that whether it's a first time user or a regular user or a dormant user, there's a way to get them to interact more and more with your app and its features. This is what ultimately keeps your revenue wheel spinning and your customer base multiplying.

| Feature adoption analytics:

As product managers, you're constantly focused on how your critical features are performing. But how do we measure the impact of all that we have done to drive feature adoption?

Here are some important analytical aspects that help you get a better idea of how the product features are running.

Breadth adoption

How attractive is the new feature? Has it been widely adopted or only a small proportion of your target audience base has adopted your new feature roll-out?

Implication: This measures the appeal of your new feature to your target customers.

Depth adoption

How often do they use your features and to what extent do they use it? Are your users easily adopting the features or are they facing any difficulty using it? Customer feedback helps you understand this pain point.

Implication: This is a measure of app stickiness in a way.

Time to adopt

How quickly do your users take you up on your new features? Are they using it the moment they discover the features or do they take some time to use it?

Implication: Whether or not the feature is able to address the customer's relevant pain point.

Duration of adoption

For how long have your users been using the new features you've introduced? Do they use it just once? Have they been coming back for days and months to that feature?

Implication: It tells you whether a feature is providing added value to your customers or not and whether or not it is helpful in retaining customers.

| Feature adoption metrics

When it comes to analyzing feature adoption efforts, there are a lot of surprises waiting for you.

You're probably worried whether or not the feature's are being easily adopted by the users, are they reaching the right set of users, and if they're being completely abandoned by your users!

To solve this part for you, these metrics are an excellent weapon that give you insights into how successful your feature adoption strategies are in terms of getting your customers hooked on to the relevant features you roll out.

Here are a few must know metrics for you :

Feature adoption rate

Your focus here is to see how much time users are spending using a specific feature. The more time your users spend with a feature, the higher is your feature adoption rate.

Let's suppose that an Ed-tech platform rolled out a feature where students can download an on-going live class to watch later. Now if users are spending a lot of time with this particular feature, it means that they find it useful, convenient, relevant and they know well how to get the best out of these features.

Did you know? By understanding what the user likes/dislikes, we were able to guide users to the most relevant features and help a music streaming app boost their feature adoption rates by as much as 10-12%. Watch the full video here: [Music streaming app enjoys 12% higher D0 retention with Netcore's no-code contextual walkthroughs](#)

Some best practices to skyrocket your feature adoption rates:

- » Go for contextual tutorials to better guide users
- » Use passive nudges and subtly let your users know about new features without interrupting their app experience
- » Tap onto the potential of personalized communication to get your hero features noticed and used
- » Do not annoy users by occupying their entire app screen with a blaring message saying 'Check out our new feature'
- » Always give a skip option for users who already are acquainted with your app

Active users

This basically includes users who have used an app for a certain number of times. The more the number of active users, the more engaging are your features and along with the feature adoption rate it is indicative of the features that are driving engagement. This can be measured in terms of Monthly Active Users (MAU), Daily Active Users (DAU) and Weekly Active Users (WAU).

Session length

In simple terms this is an indication of the time customers spend with you from the moment they login till the time they exit. While a long session length is a good implication, a short session length might not necessarily be a bad thing.

Maybe your contextual walkthroughs made it easier for customers to find their way through your features and easily get what they want.

The more time your customers are spending exploring features, the more you're being able to drive feature adoption and peak the interest of your customers.



Here's a quick tip for you:

Make your walk-throughs interactive to give your users a taste of all relevant features and tell them how to get the most out of it.

In-app time

This suggests the amount of time a user has spent on the app on a specific day.

While session length tells you the amount of time a user spends per session, in-app time tracks the total time for which a user is active on the app and that includes multiple sessions on any given day.

The longer the in-app time, the more engaged users are. Suppose you've rolled out a list of new features available on the app. You've nudged the user to check those features out and now your user is on the feature page exploring all your new offerings. Longer spent time shows the heightened interest of your users in those features.

Conversion rates

This metric tells you the percentage of users who are engaging with you in terms of say signing up for something, completing a purchase etc.

Here you basically want to see what steps your users are taking to get to the final step and how your feature adoption strategies are enabling this.

Let's talk about a regular user of Nykaa. Now there are certain new benefits that users can enjoy once they become a member. So, how are you introducing these benefits to them, when are you showing it to them (maybe at the check-out page where this membership could help save more money) and steps on how to avail the membership. So these contextual nudges & walkthroughs is what could lead the users to actually pay up to become a member.

Take a look at some of these strategies to drive up your conversion rates:

- » Nudge your users to speak to a customer success executive to understand your offerings
- » Educate your users on paying up in instalments
- » Nudge users and inform them on existing discounts on subscription fees
- » Offer free trials to your users
- » Leverage contextual walkthroughs and show your users some demos on how the new feature can be best put to use

Retention rates

It's a measure of how many users are coming back to your features. This can be measured in terms of say subscription renewals.

Let's look at the Nykaa example again. Users took up a membership and a successful retention would be when they come back the next month to renew their membership. Even for Netflix/Prime/Hotstar retention rate indicates the number of users who actually keep renewing the subscription. The higher the feature adoption the more is the retention rate.

Know more about app user retention here: [App User Retention](#)

Churn rate

This rate represents the percentage of users who have abandoned a product/service. The lower the rate, the better it is.

If you're able to give your customers the 'Aha Moment' when they use your features, they are surely not uninstalling your app or leaving you anytime soon. The more value and benefits your customer derives from the features, the more likely they're to stick to you and not churn out and switch to your competition.

Interested in reading more about app churn? You could check this out: [Automated-Predictive-Churn-Model](#)

After talking in depth about the most important aspects of feature adoption, we can be clear on the fact that the race only begins with a new feature launch. What's next is what matters the most.

Each time you introduce a feature to a user, it has to be in the right context through the right channel, easy to understand, and convenient to use. There are multiple tools at your disposal to make a user's feature adoption journey highly contextual, targeted, personalized and relevant at every step of the journey.

Pick up cues from your users behavior and it can be as specific as what the user does in the first 30 seconds on the app and guide them to the relevant features and make every feature interaction count.

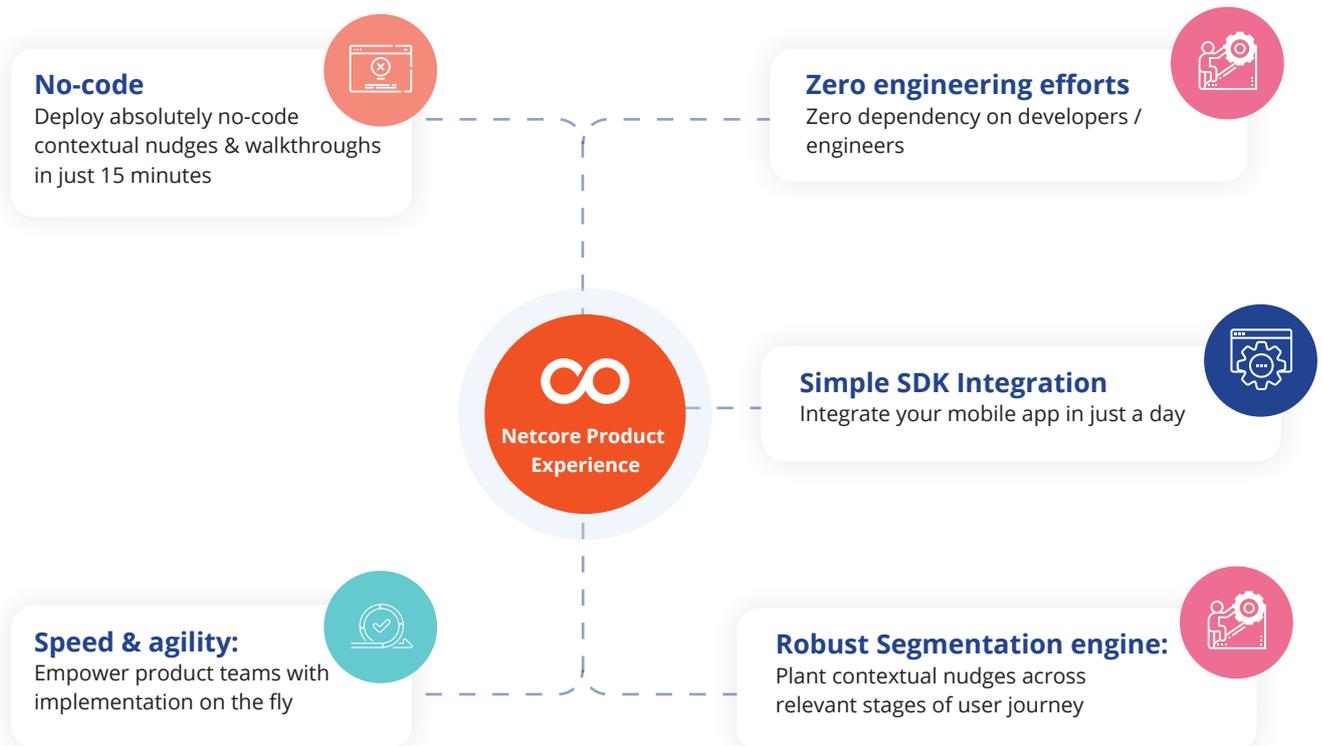
And while you're at it, keep coming back to the list of KPIs and metrics that matter most to you and the road to getting features adopted will not be as difficult as it may seem.

Why trust us with your growth journey?

Every new feature is an added opportunity for you to create more value and benefits for your users. Every time your user comes on to the app, opportunity to create feature awareness and further drive feature adoption. At the end of the day your product is only as good as the features in it.

You can leverage the multiple ways of grabbing your users attention at the right time, with the right communication, a lot less effort and uplift your feature adoption rates.

And here's how a truly no-code platform empowers you to send across relevant and contextual nudges & walkthroughs



We are truly no-code and promise your product teams the much needed agility!

Are you ready to take feature adoption for your brand, to the next level?

To know more about Contextual Nudges and Walkthroughs at Netcore, Get in touch

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