

# THE BEST- AND WORST-RATED RETAIL APPS

*We did the math. The mobile quality leaders and laggards of the U.S. retail industry.*

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43

The average app quality score of the 95 most popular retail apps in Google Play and Apple App Store, on a 100-point scale.

## Browse And Buy With Apps Shoppers Love

Digital is disrupting how people shop. Our smartphones and tablets are constantly in our pockets to research and purchase ... just about anything. [ARC](#) from [Applause](#) studies the present and future of commerce to determine which brands are on the leading edge of the revolution. In our biannual report on the retail industry, ARC revisited how U.S. customers rate the quality of the 95 most popular apps. What did we discover? The retail apps economy is incredibly volatile, with app redesigns, new features, diverse connected experiences, voracious consumer appetite and lofty expectations. As retailers gear up for the fast-approaching holiday season, discover the best-and worst-rated apps so you know ahead of time the retail brands with which to splurge.

## 7 Popular Brands Earn High Quality Marks

[ARC](#) from [Applause](#) authored this report to help retail brands understand how U.S. customers perceive their flagship Android and iOS app quality. In all, 95 of the most popular apps qualified for our biannual Applause Retail App Quality Index, comprised of the apps that earned more than 200 app store ratings and reviews—totaling nearly 2 million.

### **BLOOMBERG BUSINESS**

*In the past four quarters, Starbucks has made \$146 million on interest alone [of gift cards and app balances].*

Just seven retailers earned average app quality scores of 67 or greater with more than 4,000 user reviews:

- **Fanatics (92)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Domino's Pizza (85)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Groupon (82)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **HauteLook (69)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Overstock.com (68)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **REI (68)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **CVS Health (67)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)].



What is the greatest commonality? Loyal and passionate customers sing the praises of their brand experiences because their app is optimized for a shopper's mobile moments (see Figure 1). The best retail apps showcase dynamic experiences such as one tap to see the best deals, seamless switching across devices, content and alerts pushed at the perfect moment and more. Ideal retail experiences were born from customer-obsessed teams who understand what mobile users value.

# Retail Apps That Have Room To Improve

On average, the 95 most reviewed retail apps lag the other 30 million apps globally in quality by 24 points—as compared with ARC’s calculation of a 67 average app quality score from our analysis of more than 30 million apps across the world (see Figure 2). The low average suggests that brands born in the Web era need to rearchitect their digital strategy given how quickly mobile is influencing buying decisions and has crossed the 30% share of U.S. eCommerce transactions, according to [Criteo](#).

Reviews of retail apps also reflect the level of customer experiences. If a shopper checks the inventory of a local store via the app and then discovers the product is sold out upon arrival, they will let their displeasure be known through the app. App stores now serve as a channel through which users share brand experiences—good and bad. Six brands received more than 1,000 reviews and were rated by their customers with average app quality scores of 25 or less:



- **Old Navy (25)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Macy’s (25)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Burger King (25)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Jimmy John’s (19)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **Michaels (19)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)]
- **McDonald’s (12)** [[Android](#) | [iOS](#)].

Note that three of the six are quick service restaurants (QSRs). Killer mobile apps can increase restaurant traffic and drive business growth. Look no further than Domino’s Pizza, Five Guys, Pizza Hut, Starbucks and Taco Bell for evidence—and inspiration.

FIGURE 1

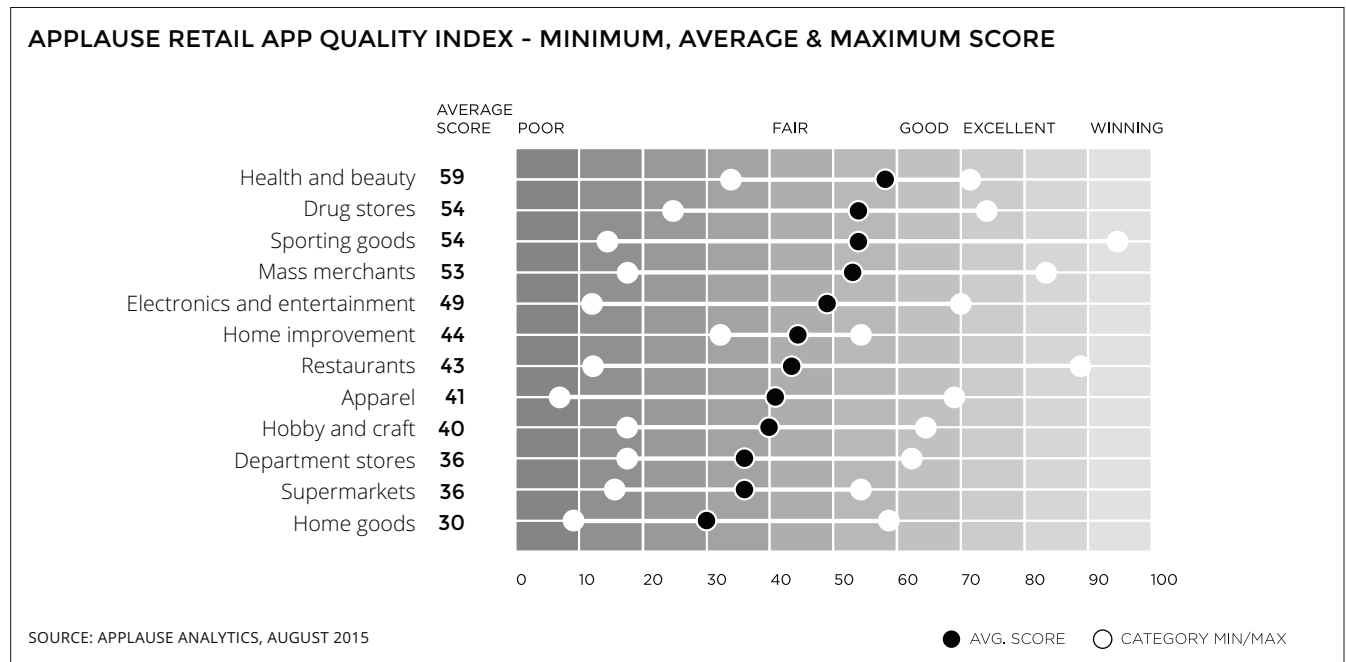
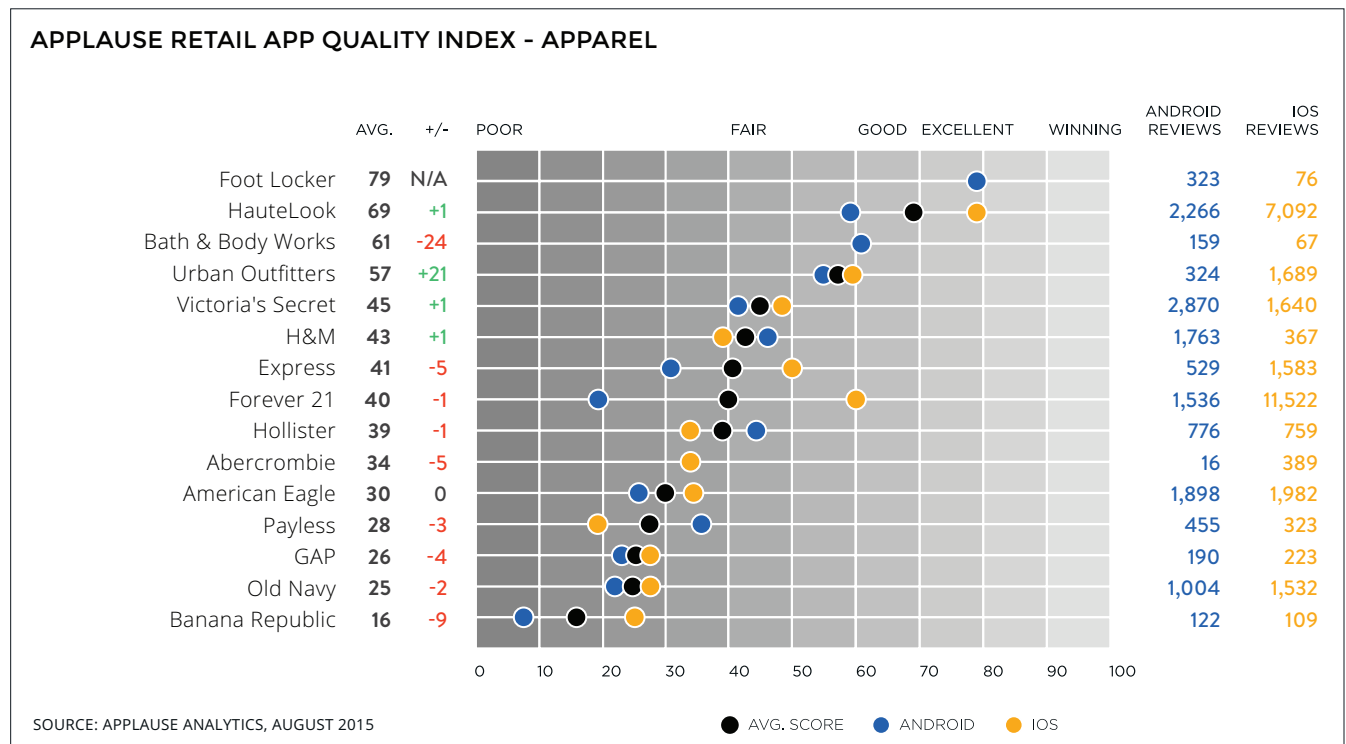


FIGURE 2

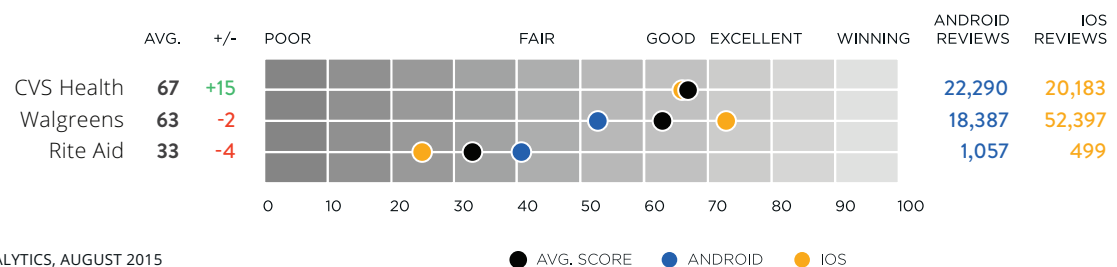


## APPLAUSE RETAIL APP QUALITY INDEX - DEPARTMENT STORES



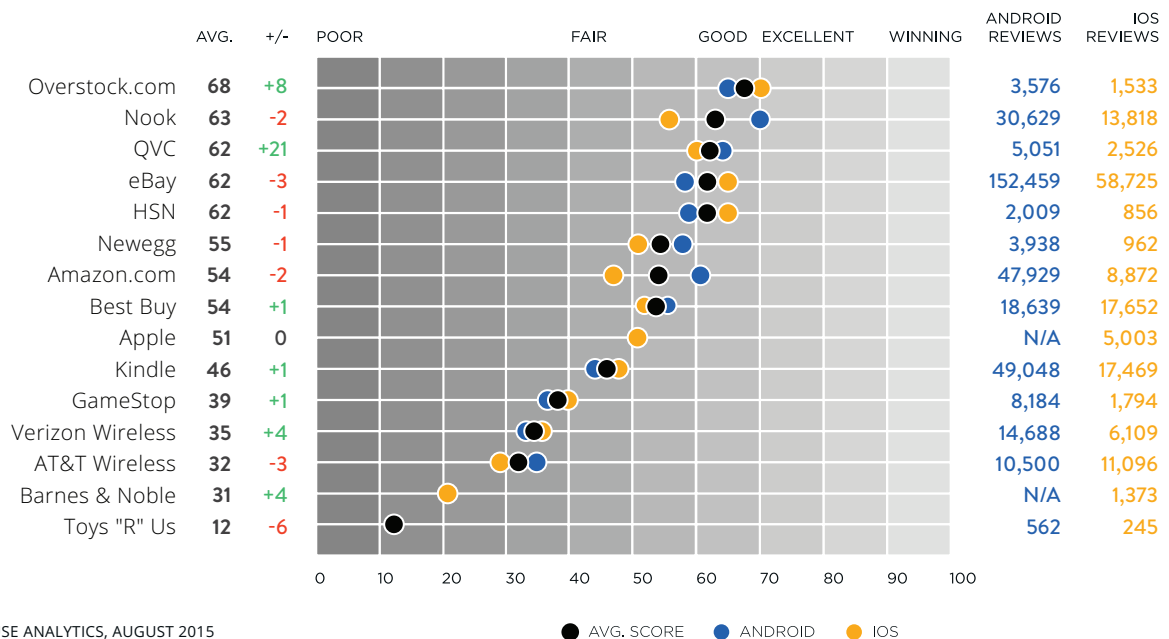
SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, AUGUST 2015

## APPLAUSE RETAIL APP QUALITY INDEX - DRUG STORES



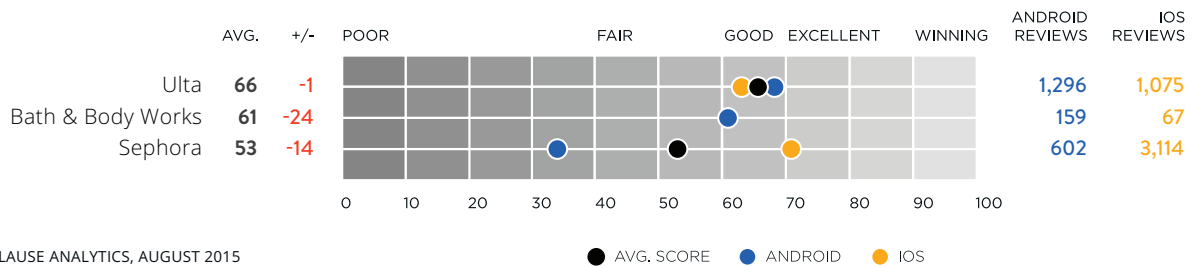
SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, AUGUST 2015

## APPLAUSE RETAIL APP QUALITY INDEX - ELECTRONICS & ENTERTAINMENT

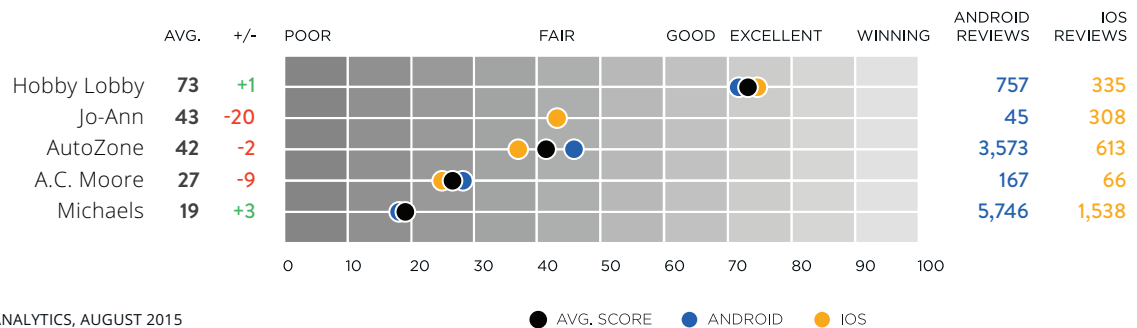


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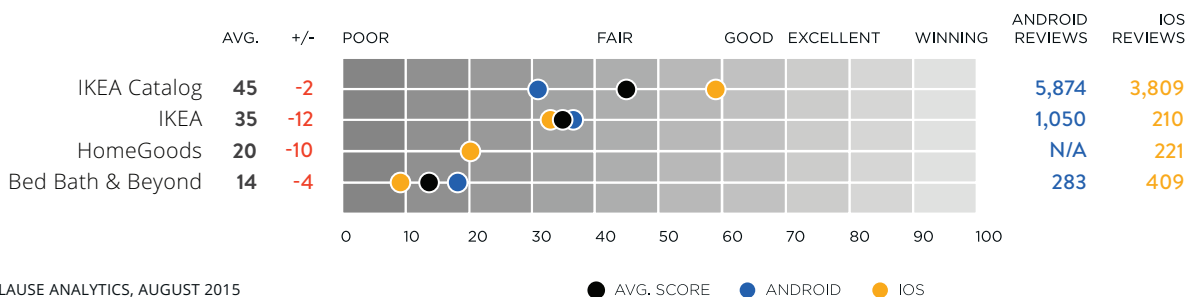
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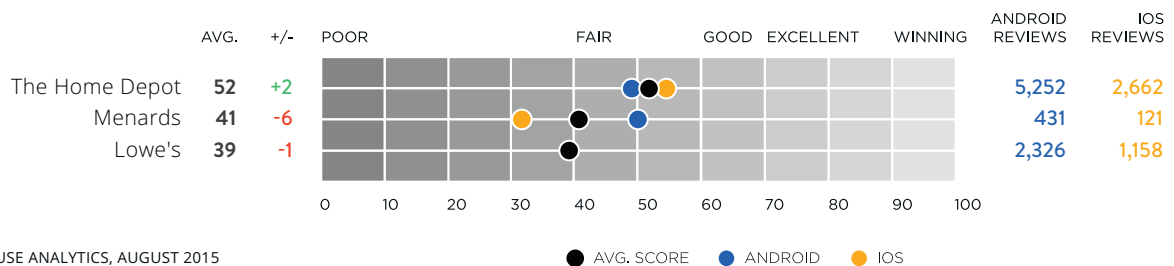
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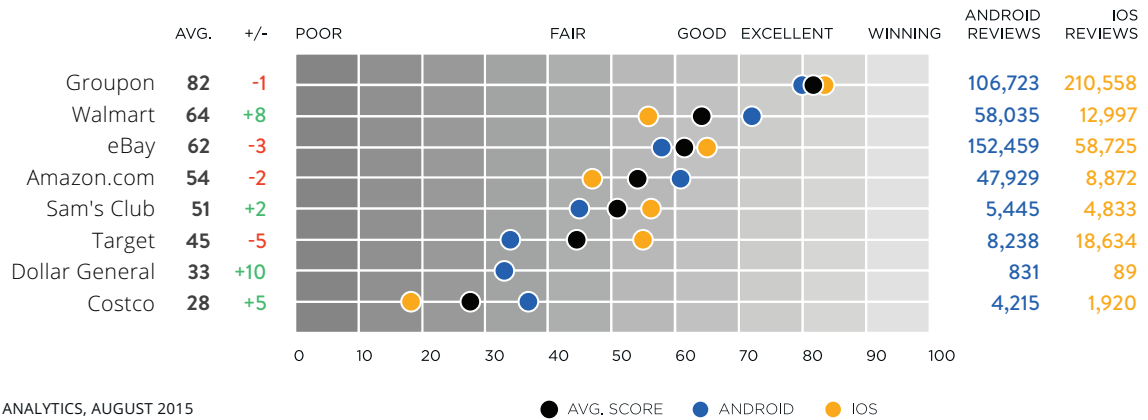
## APPLAUSE RETAIL APP QUALITY INDEX - HOME GOODS



## APPLAUSE RETAIL APP QUALITY INDEX - HOME IMPROVEMENT

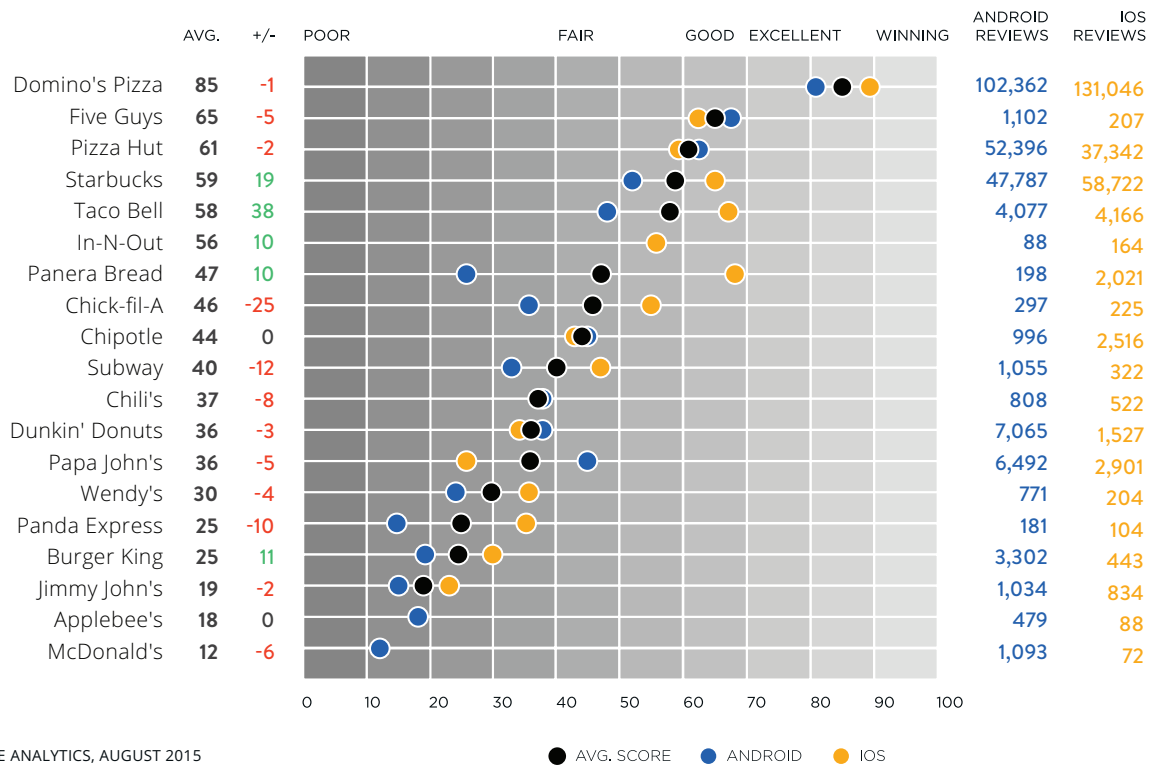


## APPLAUSE APP QUALITY INDEX - MASS MERCHANTS



SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, AUGUST 2015

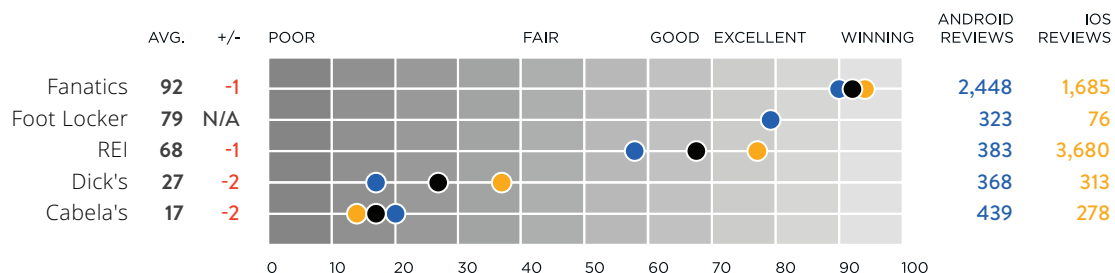
## APPLAUSE RETAIL APP QUALITY INDEX - RESTAURANTS



SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, AUGUST 2015



## APPLAUSE RETAIL APP QUALITY INDEX - SPORTING GOODS



SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, AUGUST 2015

● AVG. SCORE ● ANDROID ● IOS

## APPLAUSE RETAIL APP QUALITY INDEX - SUPERMARKETS



SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, AUGUST 2015

● AVG. SCORE ● ANDROID ● IOS






## The Best- And Worst-Rated Retail Apps

Some retail apps emerged from the crowd with amazing reviews, such as Fanatics for Android and Domino's Pizza for iOS. Others stood out for all the wrong reasons. Eight of the thirteen lowest-rated apps were on Android while ten of the thirteen highest-rated apps were on iOS (see Figure 3).




FIGURE 3

HIGHEST- AND LOWEST-RATED RETAIL APPS WITH 1,000+ REVIEWS

	HIGHEST-RATED		LOWEST-RATED	
Apparel	HauteLook		Forever 21	
Department stores	Nordstrom		Kohl's	
Drug stores	Walgreens		Rite Aid	
Electronics and entertainment	Nook/Overstock.com		AT&T Wireless	
Health and beauty	Sephora		Ulta	
Hobby and craft	AutoZone		Michaels	
Home goods	IKEA Catalog		IKEA Catalog	
Home improvement	The Home Depot		Lowe's	
Mass merchants	Groupon		Costco	
Restaurants	Domino's Pizza		McDonald's	
Sporting goods	Fanatics		None	
Supermarkets	Kroger		Publix	

SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, AUGUST 2015

 ANDROID

 IOS

## Some Brands Had Large Sentiment Swings

MOVERS & SHAKERS	
Taco Bell	+38
Nordstrom	+23
Urban Outfitters	+21
QVC	+21
Starbucks	+19
Belk	+15
CVS Health	+15
J.C. Penney	+11
Burger King	+11
Dollar General	+10
In-N-Out	+10
Panera Bread	+10
Panda Express	-10
HomeGoods	-10
Subway	-12
IKEA	-12
Sephora	-14
Jo-Ann	-20
Bath & Body Works	-24
Chick-fil-A	-25

SOURCE: APPLAUSE ANALYTICS, AUGUST 2015

Since ARC's *inaugural retail report* in November 2014, 20 brands experienced significant volatility in user sentiment. Most significantly, Taco Bell introduced iPhone ordering on October 27, 2014. Today, customers gleefully skip lines and reward Taco Bell with increased in-store revenues and stronger app store star ratings (its perceived iOS app quality has since more than doubled).

With the good, comes the bad. Jo-Ann, Bath & Body Works and Chick-fil-A earned poor distinctions with scores that declined 20 points or more, massive swings in less than a year. These brands have work to do to stem their user sentiment decline and win more mobile customers and greater loyalty.

## About ARC

ARC from [Applause](http://arc.applause.com) is a research group dedicated to providing insights and data on the apps economy. ARC leverages data from a variety of sources, including proprietary Applause data, to provide a 360° view of app quality. ARC combines this data, with analysis, into reports to help brands and app developers understand what is happening in the apps economy.

Learn more at <http://arc.applause.com>.

## About Applause Analytics

Combing through half a billion star ratings and user reviews submitted across more than 30 million apps in the Android and iOS app stores around the world, Applause Analytics closes the gap between mobile app developers and their customers, generating actionable insights and quantifiable metrics based on what users are actually saying about their app experiences.

Learn more at [www.applause.com/analytics](http://www.applause.com/analytics).