

In-App Purchases

Draft Questionnaire – September 8, 2017

In-App Purchases

Q1. Now, we would like to know if you have any experience with so-called “freemium” apps. These are games that are free to download for mobile devices (smart phones and tablets), but offer the purchase of coins, gems, or other items to access different levels, buy different outfits, or speed up the advancement of the game. Popular examples of these that you may have heard of include Clash of Clans and Candy Crush.

First, have you ever downloaded an app that features in-app purchases?

Yes, once or twice

Yes, several times

No, never

Q2. One of the criticisms of this in-app purchase model for games is that they make it too easy for children using their parents’ mobile devices to make purchases without their parents’ knowledge.

Is this something that you have had any experience with?

Yes, a child in my household has made purchases without parental consent

Yes, I have a close friend or family member (who does not live with me) who has had a child make purchases without their consent

No, I have no experience with this

Q3. Regardless of if you have personal experience with this or not, who would you say is most responsible in these cases, where a child – say between the ages of 4 and 10 – has made a purchase without the consent of their parents?

[RANDOMIZE?]

The parent – they should be monitoring their child more closely and adding the extra security measures on their devices

The child – they are the ones making the purchase

The app development company – they designed the games this way

The app store (Google Play, iTunes, Amazon Store) – they should have more mechanisms in place to prevent unauthorized purchases by children for products they’re selling

Q4. A federal judge in the United States recently ruled, in three separate cases, that Apple, Google and Amazon must refund millions of dollars in unauthorized purchases to users whose children made purchases without parental consent. The basis of each lawsuit brought by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) was that there were insufficient measures in place to prevent children from making purchases.

Thinking about this issue in Canada, which of the following would you say is closer to your opinion regarding the role of government in this industry?

[ROTATE]

This isn't the place for government agencies. This issue should be handled between companies and consumers, and by parents being more aware of the risks of their children downloading certain games
OR

The federal government should step in with regulations to ensure there are sufficient security measures to prevent in-app purchases by children without their parent's consent

Q15. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

[ROWS – RANDOMIZE]

Games that are designed for children or 'all-ages' should not allow in-app purchases

If parents don't want their children making in-app purchases, they shouldn't let their children play with mobile devices

Younger children can't be held accountable, but those over age 10 should know better than to make purchases on their parents' mobile devices

[COLUMNS]

Disagree strongly

Disagree moderately

Agree moderately

Agree strongly

Not sure/Can't say