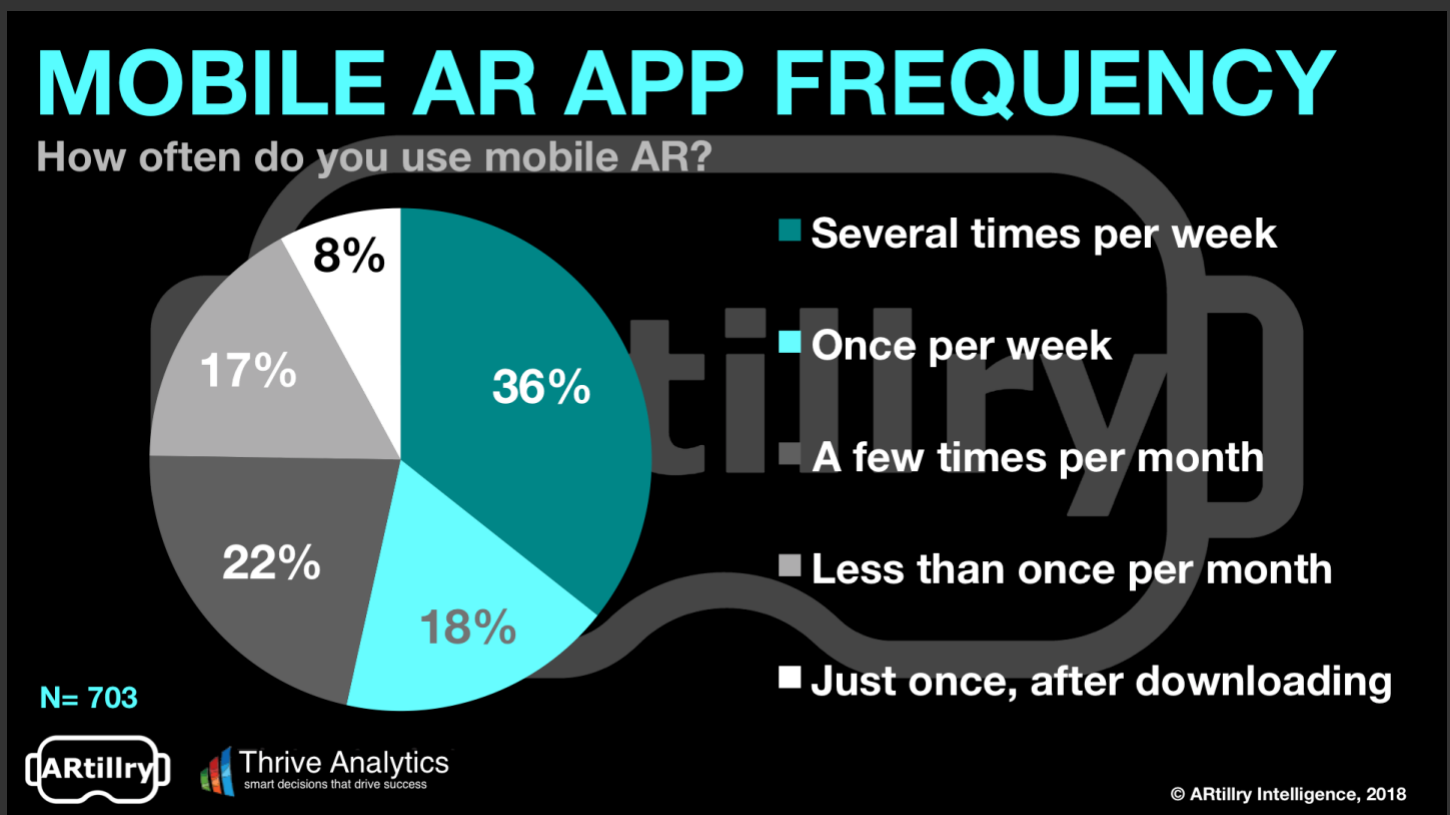# ARTILLRY DATA BRIEFS

WHICH AR APPS ARE USED MOST?

09/03/18

One lesson from the last decade in mobile app development is to be wary of vanity metrics. The most notorious is 'app downloads': A more telling sign of traction is monthly active users (MAU). Like many historical lessons, this will apply to AR, especially app-based mobile AR.

This has come up a few times recently including our analysis of success factors around designing for repeat usage — especially given that AR is a snack, not a meal (think: arm fatigue). And it was a key finding in our consumer AR survey results, with positive signals for AR's recurring usage.

Specifically, 66 percent of mobile AR users are active at least monthly. Going one level deeper, 54 percent use mobile AR at least weekly. Only eight percent used AR just once, indicating that the active-use challenges endemic to mobile apps aren't as great in AR, at least for now.

MOBILE AR APP FREQUENCY
How often do you use mobile AR?

8%
17%
36%
22%
18%

- Several times per week
- Once per week
- A few times per month
- Less than once per month
- Just once, after downloading

N= 703

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smart decisions that drive success

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But going even deeper, what types of apps are driving repeat usage? We've separately looked at the types of apps that get the most traction, with games and social not surprisingly leading. But what happens when you array these categories against the above usage frequencies?

We went back to the raw survey data set for answers. For each respondent that reported the type of apps they use, how did they answer the above frequency question? The results are below, with each app type broken down by reported frequency of usage, and some notable findings.

For example, though games lead usage overall, they have the highest share of users within any category that don't return after one use. This shouldn't be a damning point for the health of mobile AR games as their absolute usage and frequency remain highest of the pack.

Conversely, product visualization apps have the highest share of their users returning with the greatest frequency (several times per week). That's followed by education, and social apps. These each trail games in overall usage but exceed in the share of their respective users that return.

Product visualization makes sense as a high-frequency activity, as does education. But it's surprising that social trailed both of them in share of users returning semi-daily. Social AR's high frequency is expected because it's communications (AR lenses) — a naturally recurring event.
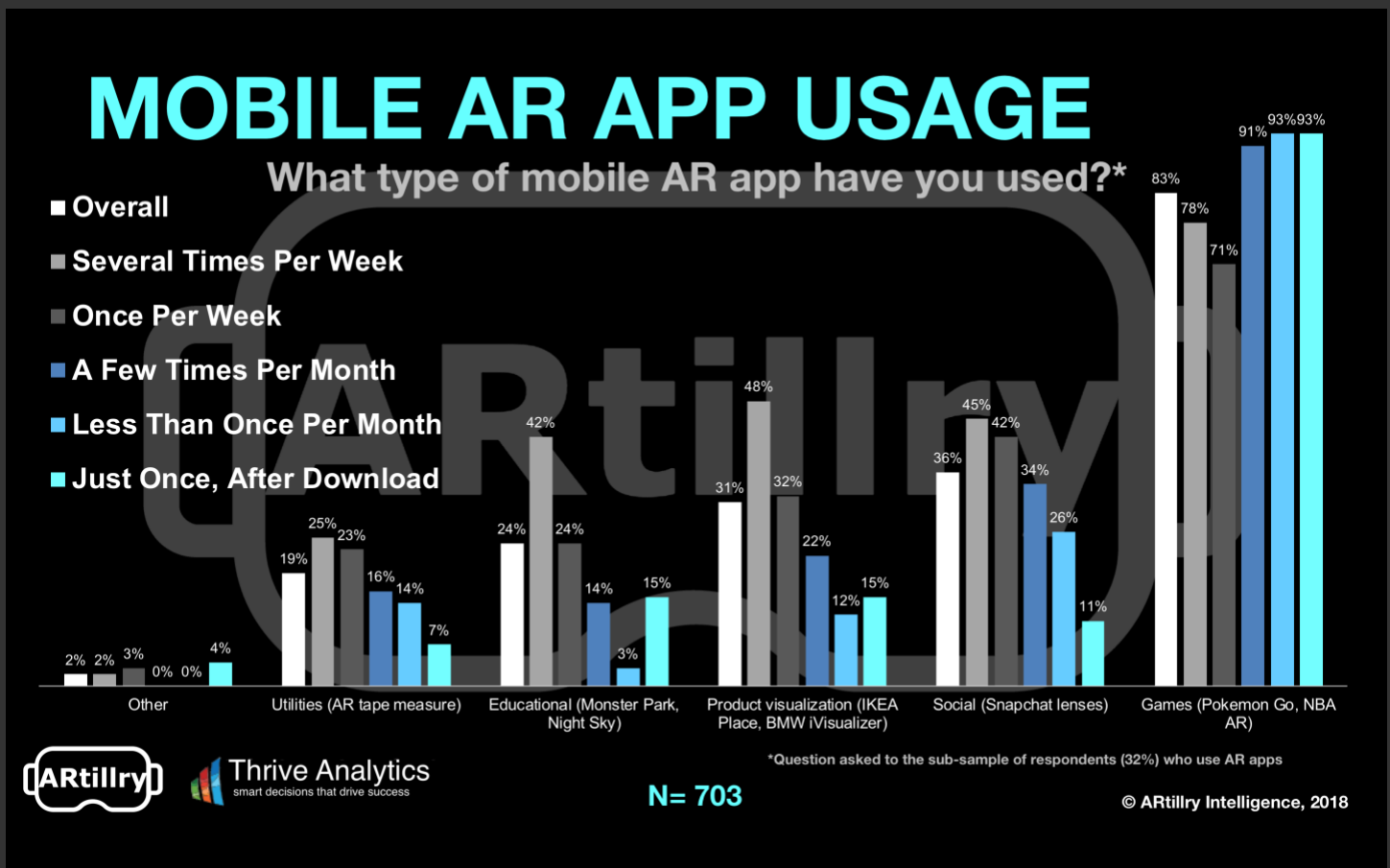
One lesson is that certain categories of apps are inherently advantaged when it comes to tendency for recurring use. But that's only half the battle: Execution is critical within all categories to create compelling and sticky AR experiences that blend novelty, game mechanics and design.

And though the games category had a high share of its users that don't return, it still dominates AR in sheer volume, and likely will for a while (just ask Happy Giant). Stay tuned for more data breakdowns as early phases of mobile AR continue to pose strategic question marks.

Video Companion

(click link to open)

https://youtu.be/vRQiKzrfDGs

Artillry Briefs, Episode 15: Mobile AR Usage & Consumer Attitudes

ARTILLRY BRIEFS, EPISODE 15
MOBILE AR USAGE & CONSUMER ATTITUDES

About ARtillry Intelligence

ARtillry is a publication and intelligence firm that examines augmented reality and virtual reality, collectively known as XR. Through writings, data and multimedia, it provides deep and analytical views into the industry's biggest players and opportunities. It's about insights, not cheerleading.

Run by career analyst and journalist Mike Boland, coverage is grounded in a disciplined and journalistic approach. It also maintains a business angle: Though fun and games permeate VR and AR (especially the former) long-term cultural, technological and financial implications are primary.

Learn more at **https://artillry.co/about**

About the Author

Mike Boland was one of Silicon Valley's first tech reporters of the Internet age, as a staff reporter for *Forbes* (print) starting in 2000. He has been an industry analyst covering mobile and social media since 2005, and is now Chief Analyst of *ARtillry Intelligence*, covering emerging tech.

Mike is a frequent speaker at industry conferences such as VRLA, ad:tech and LeadsCon. He has authored in-depth reports and market-sizing forecasts on the changing tech & media landscape. He contributes regularly to highly read online news sources such as *TechCrunch*, *Business Insider* and the *Huffington Post*.

A trusted source for tech journalists, his comments have appeared in A-list publications, including *The New Yorker*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times*.

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