help*shift*

The Complete Guide to In-App Support SDKs

Supporting App Users and Developers From Pre-Launch Through Ongoing Use

help*shift*

Table of Contents

helpshift

Introduction

Mobile app developers, designers, and coders alike rely on SDKs to build world-class applications faster. Coding every single tool from scratch is a waste of time and energy. Upgrading to a modern SDK allows more people to create and deploy tools faster that ultimately improve customer success and keep users in-app. And when it comes to modern customer experience, in-app support SDKs can help you connect to your users like never before. All too often, though, mobile app developers avoid new SDK integration for fear of:

- Bloating their application's file size
- Introducing code that is outside of their control and may bring instability to their application
- Potential security risks
- Potential risks to having the application rejected during app review, or pulled from the app store for other reasons

Luckily, modern solutions are built with these fears in mind. Integrating an in-app support SDK is a necessary step for app developers to ensure the modern customer support journey is as seamless as possible and keeps users where you want them to be — in the app.

Developers can take advantage of a number of benefits when adopting modern in-app support SDKs, including:

- Simple SDK integration that allows developers to focus on the core of their application rather than reinventing the wheel and building something outside of their app's primary focus
- Small package that reduces extra weight and minimizes the impact on the total size of the app
- Ability to expedite the time to resolution by collecting key pieces of metadata (i.e. app version, device type, battery level, etc.) that assist in segmentation
- Ability to collect feedback throughout the entire app development process
- Ability to customize workflows for different use cases without the need to write any code

In this guide to support SDKs, we'll discuss some of the biggest limitations of current SDKs and myths about integration before presenting two options that can improve daily processes and productivity.
Let's get into it!

Why SDKs Matter for Developers

Simply put, SDKs allow developers to accomplish the various tasks expected of them. Briefly consider some of your expectations on a daily basis, including:

- Implementing new product features
- Fixing bugs and improving product quality
- Solving technical challenges quickly and efficiently

Without the right software development kit, these tasks become increasingly difficult — if not impossible — to complete. Implementing mobile SDKs allows developers to create solutions efficiently. From feedback gathering to crash reporting, you simply don't have time to code every single solution from scratch.

However, it's crucial for developers to detect, diagnose, and resolve performance issues in games early in the process to create a stable product and increase game development velocity. Utilizing SDKs allows you to decrease the development and integration timeline so you can focus on making a world-class app.

"The SDK integration pulling the data needed for troubleshooting crashes or reproduction steps to other issues is amazingly useful!"

- Revyn N,
Quality Assurance Manager, G2 Review

Specifically, for feedback, the right SDK can significantly improve your ability to respond to user issues and quickly guide them through a resolution journey to improve user retention. Helpshift's support SDK can be embedded natively into mobile apps to direct users through self-resolution journeys and communicate with support agents directly within the app.

However, there are a number of common myths that we want to help debunk when it comes to modern support SDKs.

helpshift

Modern Support SDK Myths

Support includes everything from collecting feedback from users to assisting them through various problems that arise when they are using your app. In 2022, optimizing customer support has never been more important. However, many apps are not taking the necessary measures to champion their users through support solutions.

Whereas legacy SDKs were large, code-rich, and time-consuming to use, modern tools have negated many of those issues by offering developers simple solutions and integrations. Here are the truths behind some of the most common fears and objections we hear when it comes to implementing a modern support SDK:

The Myth: Support SDKs are too difficult to integrate

The Truth: Helpshift provides step-by-step integration guides

Too many developers feel as though integrating yet another SDK into their app will cause more headaches for an already swamped development team. However, Helpshift's support SDK comes complete with step-by-step instructions for both iOS developers and Android developers to make integration easier than ever. What's more, its small footprint means that just about everyone can easily integrate and begin utilizing it.

The Myth: Another SDK will crash my app

The Truth: Helpshift's SDK is battle-tested and proven not to crash apps

One of the most common objections to integrating a support SDK is the thought that it will crash your app. This objection is valid for developers who care deeply about providing a great experience for their users. However, we've eliminated that possibility by putting our support SDK through some of the most demanding scenarios before making it publicly available.

The result is a battle-tested SDK that is relied on by some of the most renowned development companies in the world. Don't just take our word for it! Helpshift's support SDK is the recommended solution promoted and supported by Unity, the world's most trusted video game software development company. In addition to being verified as part of Unity's Verified Solutions Partner Program, we are also offered on other leading dev platforms, including Unreal Engine, Cocos, Xamarin, and more.

helpshift

> "The ease of use once the SDK is implemented is awesome. There's so much you can customize to create the experience you want for your users, from automation, segmentation, and routing. All the features have pretty robust guides to them so it's simple to set up. I think of it as the simplicity of Apple OS vs Android."
>
> **- Albert O,**
> Project Manager, G2 Review

The Myth: SDKs increase app size and prevent users from downloading

The Truth: Helpshift's small package support SDK takes up minimal space

When it comes to app size, you as a developer want to do everything in your power to limit package size. Thus, you may think that implementing another SDK will increase your app size to the point where it causes slow gameplay and takes up too much storage space, potentially preventing users from downloading your app or frustrating users enough to delete the app. And while that can be the case with legacy SDKs, our support SDK is quite different.

Developed with minimal code, our SDK is purpose-built to offer all of the support features you need while taking up as little space as possible. This small package means

you can worry less about app crashes and storage size and, instead, know that your players are cared for at every point of their customer support journey.

The Myth: I already have a backlog of feature requests and don't have the time for this

The Truth: Helpshift's SDK gives you time back in your day to focus on these pressing feature requests

If you have a long list of feature requests taking up the majority of your time, it might seem counterintuitive to move SDK implementation to the top of that list. However, doing so actually allows you to prioritize development of these features rather than spending time on tedious bug fixes. Because of Helpshift's speed of implementation and simple management, you can begin collecting crucial feedback that your customers are giving and automating the customer support experience to save time, resources, and frustration.

helpshift

Start With Feedback+ SDK

We understand that apps are at different stages of their development and require tools specific to their stage. That's why we offer two SDKs purpose-built to assist at different stages of the customer support journey, starting with Feedback+ SDK.

What Is Feedback+ SDK?

Helpshift's Feedback+ SDK is built for developers and product managers in the beta testing stage of app development who are looking to collect feedback from their users. Beta testing is an important part of the app launch process that allows developers to push their product to real users to test it. As beta users interact with the app over a specific period of time, they are able to report bugs and provide feedback that developers use to resolve flaws before launching to a wider audience.

This SDK makes the feedback collection process easier by allowing app users to provide feedback to developers directly within the app.

Why Should I Use Feedback+ SDK?

All too often, feedback is an afterthought for developers who are hyperfocused on the details of the development process rather than how users are interacting with the app. Whether it be not asking for feedback or just not having the time to collect it, Feedback+ SDK solves this conundrum and accelerates developers' capabilities in the following ways:

- Gain valuable feedback from the people who will use your app
- Integrate with other features and/or SDKs to use feedback in workflow automation
- Lay the groundwork for creating an intuitive in-app knowledge base or resource center
- Take up minimal space (only ~XYZ KB)

When Should I Implement Feedback+ SDK?

Feedback+ SDK should be implemented as early as possible in the development lifecycle. At the very latest, this SDK should be implemented before the beta testing phase. This will allow for help and feedback to be provided to users, no matter how early they adopt the app, or even if they are testers.

The earlier the implementation, the more readily available a feedback interface will be to allow for quick and easy input, feedback, and suggestions from testers or early adopters.

From the Source

Jam City relied on Helpshift to collect feedback from its users to accelerate their ability to fix and fine-tune products, resulting in a massive improvement in their customer service department.

> "Customer service has just become a more effective tool for our product. Now, it's actually a business driver."
>
> **— Bill Galey,**
> Sr. Director of Customer Support, Jam City

Unlock True Support With SDK X

After establishing yourself in the Helpshift support ecosystem, it's time to take your SDK to the next level and take advantage of everything that SDK X offers.

What Is SDK X?

The 10th edition of our full customer support SDK, SDK X offers developers an end-to-end solution for customer feedback, support, and workflow automation all while keeping users in the app. To put it bluntly, it is the future of in-app support. This SDK combines user feedback, automation, and personal service to provide intent-based customer support solutions throughout the support lifecycle.

Why Should I Use SDK X?

SDK X is the most intuitive customer support solution that app developers can easily integrate into their app development and optimization processes. SDK X builds on the Help & Feedback SDK by making it easy for apps to lead users through a self-resolution journey related to a number of issues, including:

- Gameplay
- Account access
- Funds (importing or exporting)
- Rewards and payments
- Connecting accounts

As the 10th version of our support SDK, this is the most up-to-date and user-friendly solution on the market that acts as a single solution solving everything from integration to communication to workflows. Here's how users and developers alike can benefit:

- Low dependency on SDK upgrades for new features or bug fixes as our one-time integration means that all non-premium SDK X features become fully available without the need for additional coding
- Modern designs with a unified user experience across web and in-app
- Lower app update frequency with more controls on Helpshift Dashboard
- ~90% lighter in footprint (only ~140 KB for Android and 240 KB for Apple) — compared to our legacy SDKs, SDK X code is so lightweight that your app sizes can drop by more than 1MB apiece.

When Should I Implement SDK X?

SDX X is critical for a game's LiveOps cycle and should be used throughout the launch process and beyond. This customer-centric approach to app updates allows you to constantly improve your application using feedback from players without the need to release updated versions of your app. Ultimately, this improves user experience and retention rate by enabling you to make data-driven improvements within your app.

From the Source

Gaming giants Halfbrick Studios, known for popular games like Fruit Ninja and Jetpack Joyride, turned to Helpshift for an in-app support solution throughout the entire development lifecycle.

"Helpshift was instrumental in driving the success of Fruit Ninja 2 throughout its lifecycle, from collecting feedback during development to squashing bugs during pre-launch to addressing account issues after launch."

— Madison Annibale,
Head of Customer Support, Halfbrick Studios

help*shift*

Conclusion

Here at Helpshift, everyone operates under a universal belief: app users deserve better. We aim to make their lives better through unparalleled customer service that makes them loyal to your apps. Implementing Helpshift's SDK allows you to support your development team and users alike.

UNLOCK THE POWER OF DATA FOR YOUR CX, PRODUCT AND ENGINEERING TEAMS