Linkrunner Research

State of Mobile App Growth: India Startups 2026

How India's app startups actually acquire and activate users. First-party data across 77 India-based apps and 25.1M installs measured by Linkrunner: the organic versus paid split, install to signup conversion, and the Android versus iOS reality, broken down by vertical and app scale.

77 India apps analysed	25.1M Installs measured
62.4% Median organic install share	20.4% Median install to signup rate
87.5% Installs on Android	₹20.19 Median cost per install

Executive summary

India is an Android-first, organic-led market, with paid concentrated in a few categories

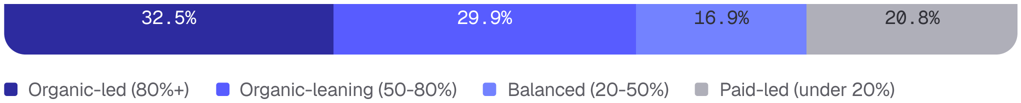
Android-first 87.5% of installs	**Organic-led** 62.4% median organic	**Paid concentrated** in a few categories

The dataset is overwhelmingly early-stage and growth-stage Indian startups, which is what the country's app market is mostly made of. Across 77 of them and 25.1M installs, the median app acquires 62.4% of its installs organically, and 63.6% of all installs in the dataset are organic. The market is overwhelmingly Android, at 87.5% of installs versus 12.5% on iOS. Installs measured grew roughly 27x over the year, but that reflects startups onboarding onto Linkrunner, not same-app growth.

Paid acquisition is not spread evenly. Gaming, astrology, health, and social apps buy a large share of their installs, while food, entertainment, productivity, and most fintech and e-commerce apps grow mostly organically. Install to signup conversion is just as category-bound, with a multiple-fold gap between the best and worst verticals. This India cut runs lower on organic share than our global growth benchmark, because it is India-only and measured cumulatively.

How the 77 startups split by organic install share:

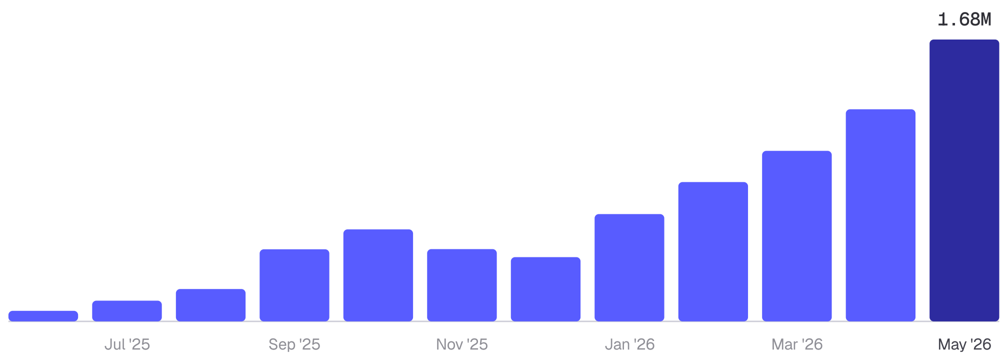
Human Machine



Finding 1, install growth

Installs measured grew 27x as startups onboarded

Total installs Linkrunner measured across the India dataset, by month. Read this as adoption, not a same-app growth rate: the 27x reflects the measured base expanding as startups onboarded onto Linkrunner through the year. Among the 6 apps measured for all twelve months, monthly installs did not grow.



Finding 2, by vertical

Organic share and conversion by vertical

Vertical is the clearest differentiator in this data, though spread within a category is wide (see the ranges in the appendix). Read your own numbers against your category, not the dataset median.

Vertical	Median organic %	Median install to signup %	Profile
Food & beverage*	83.8%	2.9%	Organic-native
Entertainment & content*	75.5%	15.2%	Balanced
Productivity & tools	67.5%	23.5%	Balanced
E-commerce	66.6%	17%	Balanced
Fintech	61%	20.9%	Balanced
EdTech	60.2%	28.7%	Balanced
Health & fitness	47.6%	15.9%	Paid-dependent

Astrology & spiritual*	46.7%	67.8%	Paid-dependent
Social & community	46.3%	28.2%	Paid-dependent
Gaming*	6.7%	69.7%	Paid-dependent

* Smaller sample, read as directional. Go deeper on attribution for fintech, gaming, edtech, and e-commerce apps.

Finding 3, what paid installs cost

A paid install costs about ₹20.19, a signup about ₹48.01

Across ₹22.2 crore of measured ad spend from 58 apps that ran paid, the median cost per install is ₹20.19 and the median cost per signup is ₹48.01. The spread by category is large, so benchmark against your vertical. For region and platform cuts, see the cost per install benchmark tool.

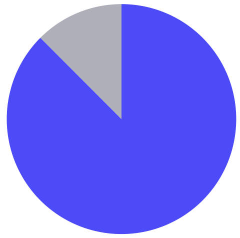
	CPI
Entertainment & content	₹113.59
Astrology & spiritual	₹111.56
EdTech	₹67.79
Health & fitness	₹31.18
Fintech	₹21.42
Social & community	₹19.25
Productivity & tools	₹18.76
E-commerce	₹18.22

Figures in INR, for apps that ran paid acquisition in the window.

Finding 4, by platform

India runs on Android

iOS is a small minority of installs. Plan measurement, deep linking, and store optimisation for Android first. (This is install share only; we do not report iOS-specific conversion or revenue here.)



87.5% Android

12.5% iOS

Finding 5, by scale

Larger apps in this dataset are more organic

Median organic share and conversion by app size. This is a cross-section of different apps in each size band, not the same apps tracked over time: the larger apps here sit at 80.2% organic versus the mid-50s for sub-50K apps, and conversion is lower at the top. Smaller bands carry few apps, so read them as directional.

	Organic	Signup
Under 50K installs	56%	22.4%
50K to 200K installs	58%	24%
200K to 500K installs	80.2%	13.8%
500K+ installs	75.2%	15.2%

What this means for growth teams

Five ways to act on these benchmarks

01

Build for Android first

Indian installs are overwhelmingly Android: 87.5% versus 12.5% on iOS across the dataset. Deep links, store listings, and attribution QA should be tuned for Android before iOS, and your iOS sample will always be the smaller, higher-intent slice.

02

Read organic share against your category, not the average

The median app is 62.4% organic, but that hides a wide spread. Gaming and astrology buy most of their installs, while food, entertainment, and productivity apps grow mostly organically. A fintech app at 60% organic is normal; an e-commerce app at the same level is under-investing in paid.

03

Conversion is a category trait

Install to signup conversion swings several-fold across verticals. Gaming and astrology turn installs into activated users far more often than e-commerce or health and fitness. Benchmark your

04

Expect to grow more organic as you scale

Organic share rises with size in this data, from 56% for apps under 50K installs to around 75 to 80% once they cross 200K. Paid seeds early growth;

activation against your category before you blame the funnel.

brand and word of mouth compound later. Budget for that shift instead of reacting to it.

05

Move at startup speed with a new-generation MMP

Most of these apps are startups, where a small team has to measure paid, organic, and deep links without a dedicated analytics function. That is why new Indian apps increasingly choose Linkrunner, the new-generation, AI-powered MMP: it integrates in an afternoon, matches every install to its real source, flags suspicious installs, and surfaces what is actually driving installs, instead of heavyweight legacy MMPs that add cost and bloat as paid grows. As paid becomes a real share of installs, that accuracy is what protects the budget.

If paid is growing for your app, attribution accuracy is what protects the budget. See why teams choose Linkrunner as their mobile measurement partner for India, benchmark spend against India cost per install data, or compare this with our global growth benchmark report.

Methodology

How the data was collected

The report uses first-party attribution data from the Linkrunner platform, the same engine behind the product dashboard. It is a census of Linkrunner-measured apps, not a probability sample of the Indian app market, so it generalises to apps like these rather than to all Indian apps. Of 440 active projects, 100 recorded at least 100 attributed installs in the window; of those, 80 are operated by India-based companies and 77 had measurable installs and are analysed here. 58 ran paid acquisition and 74 track a signup event. App-level data is anonymised and aggregated; no individual app is identifiable.

“India” means the operating company is India-based; each app was assigned a vertical through company and product research. We do not measure where installs geographically originate, so these figures describe India-based startups measured by Linkrunner, not installs from users located in India.

An organic install is one not matched to a paid ad-network touchpoint within Linkrunner’s default seven-day click-through window (store search, word of mouth, SEO, untracked referrals). Because it is defined by the absence of a match, it can include genuinely organic installs and paid installs that could not be attributed. A paid install is matched to a specific campaign. Reinstalls and view-through installs are excluded from headline counts; retention and fraud-flagging are not reported here.

Install-to-signup conversion is signups divided by installs for apps with an activation event. CPI and CPA cover only the 58 apps that ran paid, in INR; they and the conversion rate use different app subsets and separate medians, so they will not divide cleanly into one another. Organic, paid, CPI and conversion are cumulative (lifetime through mid-2026); only the install-volume series is windowed (trailing twelve months), and that series reflects apps onboarding onto Linkrunner, not same-app growth, a constant panel of 6 apps measured all twelve months did not grow. Per-app stats use medians; platform splits are volume-weighted. Per-cell counts and ranges are in the appendix below.

Appendix

Sample sizes and ranges

Every headline figure with the number of apps behind it and its interquartile range, the middle 50% of apps (P25 to P75). The spread is often wide, and small cells are directional, so the medians are a starting reference rather than precise constants.

Growth panels. Across all 77 apps, monthly installs rose 26.7x over the window as startups onboarded. Restricted to the 6 apps measured in every month, the same series was 0.4x, so the headline curve is platform adoption, not same-app growth.

Organic share and conversion by vertical

Vertical	Apps	Organic % (P25–P75)	Signup % (P25–P75)
Fintech	15	61% (31-79.9)	20.9% (7.9-31.1)
E-commerce	14	66.6% (41.6-91.4)	17% (7.8-27.8)
Social & community	10	46.3% (17.7-74.8)	28.2% (11.2-54.2)
Health & fitness	8	47.7% (11.3-96.6)	15.9% (0.8-34.1)
Productivity & tools	8	67.6% (52.7-88.1)	23.5% (6.5-35.3)
EdTech	5	65.1% (55.2-80.6)	22.1% (13.6-35.3)
Entertainment & content	5	75.5% (71.5-85.1)	15.2% (6-17.6)
Astrology & spiritual	4	46.7% (19.1-78.3)	67.8% (41.9-71.6)
Gaming	3	6.7% (3.4-34.6)	69.7% (48.6-36093.2)
Food & beverage	3	83.8% (70.9-84.1)	2.9% (2.1-13.2)

Cost per install by vertical (INR, paid apps)

Vertical	Apps	Median CPI (P25–P75)
Entertainment & content	3	₹113.6 (₹69.6-₹303.1)
Astrology & spiritual	3	₹111.6 (₹64.7-₹262.5)
EdTech	3	₹67.8 (₹37.8-₹80.5)
Health & fitness	6	₹31.2 (₹15.3-₹42.9)
Fintech	12	₹21.4 (₹14.7-₹63.4)
Social & community	5	₹19.3 (₹14.7-₹30.9)
Productivity & tools	7	₹18.8 (₹10.1-₹23.1)
E-commerce	12	₹18.2 (₹10.9-₹33.1)

Organic share and conversion by app scale

Scale tier	Apps	Organic % (P25–P75)	Signup % (P25–P75)
Under 50K installs	36	56% (12.1-83.1)	22.4% (6.6-42.2)

Scale tier	Apps	Organic % (P25–P75)	Signup % (P25–P75)
50K to 200K installs	24	58% (35.2-83.9)	24% (8.1-39.1)
200K to 500K installs	5	80.2% (74.8-83.7)	13.8% (4.4-14.8)
500K+ installs	12	75.3% (60.6-88.8)	15.2% (10.7-31.4)

Cite this report

Use these benchmarks, with attribution

These numbers are free to quote in articles, decks, and posts. Please attribute them to Linkrunner and link to this page as the source.

Copy-ready stats

- 62.4% of installs for the median Indian app startup are organic, and 63.6% of all installs across 77 apps are organic.
- India is an Android-first market: 87.5% of app installs are on Android versus 12.5% on iOS.
- The median Indian app startup converts 20.4% of installs into signups, with conversion swinging several-fold across categories.
- The median Indian app startup pays about ₹20.19 per paid install and ₹48.01 per signup, with category CPI ranging from ₹18.22 to ₹113.59.
- Across 32.5% of India app startups, organic drives 80% or more of installs; 20.8% are paid-led.
- Indian app startups tip from a balanced acquisition mix to about 80.2% organic once they pass 200K installs.
- Installs Linkrunner measured across the India dataset grew about 27x over the trailing year, driven by startups onboarding onto Linkrunner rather than same-app growth.

Suggested citation

```
Linkrunner. State of Mobile App Growth: India Startups 2026.
https://www.linkrunner.io/state-of-mobile-app-growth-india-2026
```

Measure your own India growth

Linkrunner attributes every install to its real source, so you can see your organic vs paid mix, benchmark it against your vertical, and protect budget as paid grows. Start free with 25,000 attributed installs.

Start measuring free

Book a demo

Compare this India growth report with every Linkrunner solution for attribution, CPI, and paid channel measurement. **See all solutions**.