

# How much does it Cost to Create an App like Instagram?

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It goes without a mention that an app like Instagram has millions of users. With incredibly intuitive interface, relevant icons and stunning features and powerful photo editing tools, Instagram is now an everyday part of our lifestyle that lets share anything we capture in a matter of seconds.

Such scintillating success often spurs an idea of developing an app like Instagram among startup owners.

Developing an app that mirrors Instagram does not really mean building an exact clone. The app like Instagram should reflect most captivating features and image sharing capabilities along with effective marketing activities.

A few apps that have dared create as much buzz are [Flickr](#), [Vine Camera](#), [Snapchat](#), [Swipe](#) and more. So how much would it cost you to deliver an app that compete with Instagram?

Let's see all the areas of development that are major cost drivers in the process:

### **Must-have essential features**

Depending on the scope of your project, you should include these basic features in the app.

- User account & Registration
- Login and Authentication
- Profile Editing
- Integration with Camera (Photo/Video)
- Social Integration
- Photo/Video Editor
- Tagging
- Geolocation
- Messaging
- Push Notifications
- Custom Settings

You can also consider having a photo sharing website that reflects all features of an app just like what Instagram has done. Desktop application helps reach more users.

### **Most important aspect: Technology stack**

Your primary research work that starts long before developing the app should necessarily involve critical findings on tools and stack of technologies to go into building the mature and robust architecture of mobile app like Instagram.

Instagram stands on the pillar of an extensive set of frameworks, languages, DevOps tools and server load systems. While determining tools, it is important to focus on load balancing capacity, iteration speed, code implementation and sharing, testing quality and operational system.

### ***Read also : How To Create a Messaging App Like Whatsapp?***

Based on the functional category the following set of tools can be used:

Frameworks: React Native, Django, [Xamarin](#)



Languages: JavaScript, Java, Objective-C, Python

Developer Tools

- HAProxy (Load balancing and as a proxy server)
- Sentry (Cross-platform application monitoring)
- Babel (JavaScript compiler)
- Webpack (Module bundler)
- Nuclide (IDE – Integrated Development Environment)

For Computing and load balancing, Instagram uses Amazon web services (AWS) such as:

- Amazon Route 53,
- Amazon EC2
- EBS

To enable speedy operational system, Instagram mainly relies on Ubuntu Linux 11.04.

Django framework of Python language builds Instagram's web server with impressive processing units.

For creating data storage, Instagram capitalizes on PostgreSQL that facilitates user data, tags, meta data and more.

Not all the technologies and tools mentioned above are open-source; some of them come with fixed or dynamic charges which are included in developer's bill.

### **Backend development cost**

To create the backend of Instagram-like photo sharing app, we consider four major components that shape the skeleton of the app:

- User interface
- Content
- posts
- messaging

These four elements build the backend structure of Android or iOS app. Like Instagram, you can build the architecture with Django framework (based on Python language) and HTML5.

### ***Read also : How Much Does it Cost to Create a Game App in India?***

Alternatively, you can opt for Java or Kotlin for Android platform, and Swift and Objective-C for iOS apps.

To give a shape to entire backend, it may take 300-400 hours.

### **For Android**

If you have chosen Android platform for developing a native Instagram-like app, it is crucial to set mind on time and resources to go in the development. the cost will be subject to the specific technical challenges and complexities involved in Android ecosystem. The elements like design, screen sizes, app opening time may affect the overall cost.

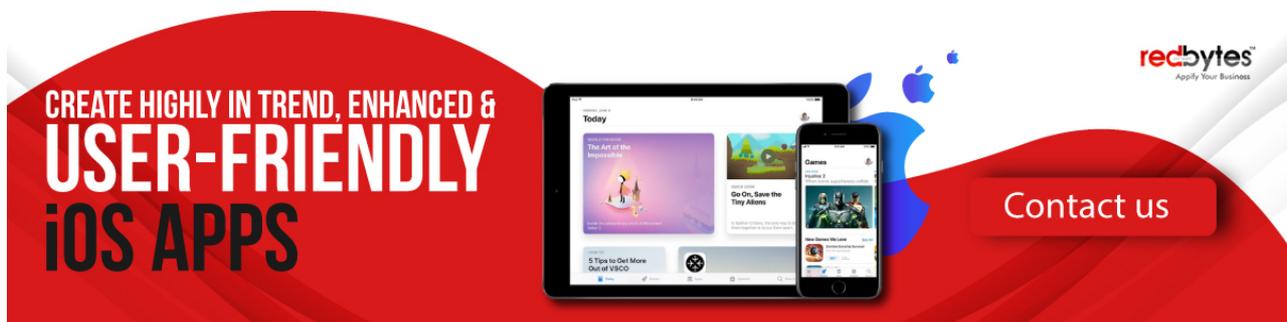
Functionalities for Android that might be strenuous to develop are:

- App infrastructure
- Backend structure
- Profile editing
- Optimization for Screens
- Capturing photos/videos
- Photo Editor
- Search
- Geolocation
- Push notification

For Android, the app is likely to take 1300-1500 hours.

## For iOS

For developing iOS app, challenges do not perturb developers much since iOS developers can easily build a photo sharing app with social media integration. This is because Instagram offers ready document interactive API, and other iPhone-friendly tools to work their way.



iPhones also give the benefit of having pre-loaded images with a regular square size (640px X 640 px) for Instagram. Since iOS devices are mostly configured to meet basic requirements of Instagram app, developers can build all the great features using its Swift or Parse languages in Xcode environment for iOS, WatchOS and MacOS. This facility from iPhone saves a lot of time for iOS developers.

For iOS, Instagram clone can be built in nearly 1300 hours if everything goes as planned.

## Other critical costs to shapethe app infrastructure

Though these are additional expenses, they are still essential in order to make a full-fledged, high-performance and unblemished app of excellent quality.

The costs explained above are meant for developing an app for a single platform. This means they don't necessarily include preparation efforts spent in set up process, database architecture and cloud computing. These may close to 150-200 hours.

***Read also : How Much Does an MVP Mobile App Cost in India***

Moreover, for your app to look and feel like Instagram, you need an intuitive and interactive UI/UX structure which is covered by design and admin panel experts.

In the end comes software testing services. There are some software development companies that additionally charge for testing services. You will need to discuss the commitment terms and price breakup with your development partner before starting the project to avoid serious predicament later.

**Calculating the cost of MVP development**

After having a thorough knowledge of what to include in your app to make it rich and usable, it is time to conclude the cost for developing an MVP. It is to be noticed that the MVP of an Instagram-like photo sharing app will focus on basic features, to see if it creates a massive appeal to the crowd.

For each platform, you will need to invest at least 1000-1300 hours until the development is perfectly completed. To calculate the cost estimated by software development companies, the usual approach is to consider per hour rate and multiply it to the total number of hours.

For instance, if the average rate of developers is \$50 per hour, the cost of development may hit \$60000 taking into account 1200 hours.

The price excludes design services and backend or admin panel development. In India, the prices proposed by app development companies are justifiably fair. However, the cost per hour for projects of this caliber in North America usually ranges between \$100-\$250.

**Summary on final cost**

In this final section, after discussing all vital elements that shape an app like Instagram, we can easily deduce how much the app will cost. The two main factors that play bold role in determining the cost will always be the timeline and rate of resources consumed which includes developer fees and paid APIs and technology platforms,

***Read also : How To Create Video Chat Apps***

To count the average rate of fees, we can see \$40-\$50 per hour as an ideal estimate . Based on this, the total estimate for various app architectures may come down to:

- 350-400 hours for backend
- Total 1300 hours approximately for development (each platform)

- Nearly 100 hours to design
- Additional 100 hours for creating a web application (optional)
- 80-100 hours for detailed app performance testing

If we consider above factors to be the case for your project, we can summarize that the whole process would generally cost around \$100000 to make a photo sharing app like Instagram.

If you aim to make it available and functioning for both iOS and Android, you may spend additional \$50000 or more to enable cross-platform coding structure.

## Conclusion

The success story of Instagram did not happen overnight. Its initial version was built in 2 months by only 3 software engineers though the app was sold to Facebook for \$1 billion in one year.

The epic characteristics of Instagram app that thrilled millions of global users were its exceptional performance, engaging features and unparalleled photo-creative capabilities.

You may need to adopt an experimental approach to build an app like Instagram. But as you learned, it is worth the time and efforts spent.

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