



# **The Top Five Things To Consider When Creating a Mobile App For a Business**

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First of all, let us all agree that, especially for a smart phone user, a laptop is not a mobile device. Those of us that can recall the first “portable” computer remember that it was a short tower with a handle on top of it! The laptop has now fallen to the level of the dinosaur – you can unpack it, fire it up, connect to the Internet, where available (or connect it to your smart phone via USB as a hub for access to the internet – get the point?), download an entire file (or report), evaluate the information, close it up, and finally re-pack it into your travel case. Your smart phone/pad is a person’s instant reference manual – wherever he or she may be.

### **Number 1: Convenience**

Mobile apps, whether for business or recreation, exist to support the end-user’s convenience: able to do whatever, whenever, and wherever he or she is, hence MOBILE. For your customer, internal or external, you must answer the question, “Will it enhance my customers’ convenience by allowing them instant access to my company’s information, products and/or services?” Access to the information is just as important. Can the end-user access all pertinent things with the use of only one single thumb?

### **Number 2: Immediacy of information**

Hand-in hand with convenience is information immediacy. It serves little purpose to provide old information which the end-user is already privy to. The most current information possible to enable people to make decisions “on the run” is truly the second mandate for a mobile app, and this has slightly different implications in the B2B and B2C world.

#### **B2B**

A person on your sales force is at a client site wanting to engage in an impromptu meeting as he was in the area. Who is his contact? Is there a birthday? Child’s event? Anniversary? What was the last client order? Are there any specials currently running to offer the client? Is there any quick information that your salesperson can leverage to his/her advantage?

How about from a client’s perspective? What about an internal purchasing agent? It is a Friday, and this person is at lunch, suddenly she gets an alert notifying her that a last minute, rush sale needs delivery by EOD Monday. She engages her application, navigates to her inventory and realizes that there is insufficient supply at the warehouse. How can you offer an easy to use application that can satisfy any quick (perhaps emergency) question or ameliorate an ad hoc situation that will build further client loyalty for your business?

#### **B2C**

True or false, the ultimate consumer is fickle – FALSE! As the 80’s rock band The Kinks said in 1981, “Give the People What They Want!” Even though you need to begin by offering your products/services to your consumers, it is so important that you continually ask them their opinions and wants, continually (and automatically) monitor how every person interacts with your mobile application and ultimately, your company. It is all too easy to cater to every individual’s needs that it is simply insanity not to do so. This brings up tracking individual’s usage and patterns. A sophisticated mobile app development company, worth their weight in programming, will have a system in place



to be able to implement such technology, without impeding upon the consumer experience, to allow you to better know your customers, and thus serve them better.

### **Number 3: Granularity of Information ( AKA “Simplicity of Use)**

KIS – Keep It Simple! Every mobile application should perform a maximum of 3-5 tasks. Remember a mobile device is the new instantaneous reference source. If you are trying to create a mobile app that requires a consumer to navigate through page upon page in order to find an answer or retrieve a discreet bit of information that they think of as a simple question is bordering on insulting to the end user. Each app you have created should be short and sweet. If you do need to provide multiple offerings for your company, consider this: create a suite of apps that collectively provide the functionality you wish to offer. It is always simpler for someone to select your mobile app suite and then select the particular function they are currently looking for!

### **Number 4: Marketing, Advertising, Promotions and Data Analytics**

You must build your mobile applications so that each marketing opportunity is actually catered to the individual. Mass marketing is totally out – the mobile phone is the quintessential device in DIRECT MARKETING. This simply means that you need to market to each, individual, smart phone user. Blast MMSs will not be effective in promoting your products and services – as a matter of fact it will detract your download numbers and active users. BE SMART, know your customer, and this means Data Analytics.

What is Data Analytics? If you do not have this built into your mobile application, you are marketing in the dark and will not possibly be able to effectively market, advertise, promote your company’s products and services and ultimately achieve a positive return on the dollars spent on developing your mobile application. Data Analytics is the ongoing recording and analysis of individuals’ data to computationally predict and identify what is effective in prompting responses for each end user.

### **Number 5: ROI**

How is your company going to make money from your mobile application investment? This is perhaps the MOST important aspect in the mobile application market. If your goal is acquisition – so be it – how much will your organization make off of each person acquired? If it is selling product, how much product needs to move in order to make a profit?

These questions need to be answered and your business case must be completed BEFORE application development should begin. In essence, it could be not only extremely costly, but also a career ender (you KNOW what I mean). Please make sure you have all of your “ducks in a row” before you even engage with a mobile app development company – some of them may be a little lenient with their up-front consulting fees, but they will add up very quickly and soon you may find yourself in an untenable situation that has just depleted your mobile budget!