

Task B: The Platform
Mobile Roadie

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Introduction

Mobile Roadie, which is a platform to create applications, is stored on the platform servers. This website is geared towards larger businesses and will use the business' website to import information so that the developer has less work to do. However, importing a website is not needed as the developer can choose to build the app from 'scratch'. The website also offers a 15 day trial, which is what I signed up for to write this paper.

Mobile Roadie Features Overview

Mobile Roadie is an app platform that is mainly geared towards larger businesses, specifically those in the music industry. Many of the features that Mobile Roadie promotes would work well with a band or an entertainment venue, such as the Brandt Centre, that want to create an app. Some of these features include the ability to import events from artistdata, Bandsintown, ticketmob, and eventbrite. The developer could also add events manually, however if they already use one of the previously mentioned event calendars Mobile Roadie provides an easy way to import the data. This would be an attractive feature of this platform. Another feature that is geared towards bands or entertainment venues is the ability for a user to RSVP to an event. This feature would be beneficial for bands or venues to get people that use the app excited about an event.

Other features that Mobile Roadie promotes include the ability to add pictures, video and audio. This is a standard feature to many app building platforms. Mobile Roadie also allows the developer of an app to generate a QR code and link it to the app or use it to unlock video content (or other content) within the app. This feature is unique as I do not know of many apps that have a QR code to unlock features in an app. I have only seen QR codes that will direct you to a place you can download an app. I am unsure how this type of QR code would be implemented as I was unable to find a way to implement this option.

Mobile Roadie allows the app developers for a business to add news posts manually or to import these posts via an RSS feed, twitter account or from Google news keywords. Within the same line of thinking the platform also provides the option to make a fan wall that allows users of the app to chat with each other on an auto-refreshing fan wall. With the fan wall being auto-refreshing there will be no need to constantly refresh the app to check the fan wall; this feature will prevent users from feeling frustrated. In addition to the fan wall the platform also provides the ability for the app to create multiple threaded replies, to post pictures and to find the location of other people on a map. The last feature is a strong selling feature as individuals at a crowded event or events spread across a large area make locating a friend difficult. Mobile Roadie does not explain how accurate this function is and I could not find a way to implement it (this feature may only be available to paying customers).

Other features of building an app with Mobile Roadie include: geo-targeted push notifications, powerful feature analytics, mobile marketing engagement tools, deeply integrated user community features, custom interactive mapping, in-app purchasing, geofencing and beacons, and dozens of SDK integrations. A developer can build an app with location based services that would include geo-targeted push notifications. This would provide an app user notification such as telling them how close they are to the nearest entrance to the venue. Unfortunately, I was unable to view this on the free trial.

Pricing

Billed Monthly Billed Annually	
<div>CORE</div> <div>149 USD</div> <div><small>or pay annually and receive 2 months free</small></div>	<div>PRO</div> <div>799 USD</div> <div><small>or pay annually and receive 2 months free</small></div>
<small>An affordable and fully DIY solution to all your mobile needs.</small>	<small>All the abilities of CORE with the added power of our advanced PRO features.</small>

Figure 1: Pricing to build an app on Mobile Roadie

Mobile Roadie offers two main pricing options, with a third option for enterprises to contact Mobile Roadie for prices. The core package is \$149 USD per month with an option to pay annually and receive 2 months free (see figure 1). The core package includes: web support access, tip calculator, user list and map, mailing list, analytics, geo-targeted push notifications, etc. For the full list see figure 2. For a small business this option is good if they can afford \$149 USD every month. For a developer that is trying to build an app that is not used for a business but to be used for personal organizing Mobile Roadie would be an expensive option.

✓ CORE App Features			
✓ Native iPhone App	✓ Web Support Access	✓ User Accounts	✓ Livestream & U Stream
✓ Native Android App	✓ Photography	✓ User Moderation	✓ Tip Calculator
✓ Access to our CMS	✓ Audio & Video	✓ User List & Map	✓ Biography & Text Views
✓ Mobile Roadie Connect	✓ Media Feed Plugins	✓ Media Catalogues	✓ Ad Support
✓ Analytics	✓ RSS News & Twitter	✓ Data Categorization	✓ App Submission Support
✓ Geo Targeted Push	✓ Chat Room & Social Tools	✓ Mailing List	✓ Promotional Tools
✓ Customizable Theme Library	✓ Events & Schedules	✓ Menus	✓ Mobile Website

Figure 2: features of the core pricing for Mobile Roadie

The pricing for the Pro version of Mobile Roadie is \$799 USD per month or the option to pay annually and receive 2 months free (see figure 1). The Pro version provides the same features as the core price with added features such as: geo fencing, deep content organization, social camera tools, advanced mapping and custom design. These features would be good for venues or a larger business that has many supporters. The price tag of \$799 USD per month would be difficult to afford for businesses that are not franchised.

Dashboard for Mobile Roadie

After the initial set up of an app (the app name, providing a website you may want to import data from and choosing a theme) the developer will be directed towards Mobile Roadie's dashboard (see figure 3). From the dashboard the developer can decide the content of the app on the Build page, customize the app in the design page, manage credentials on the manage page, and view the analytics of the app on the analytics page. The next couple paragraphs go into detail of each page.

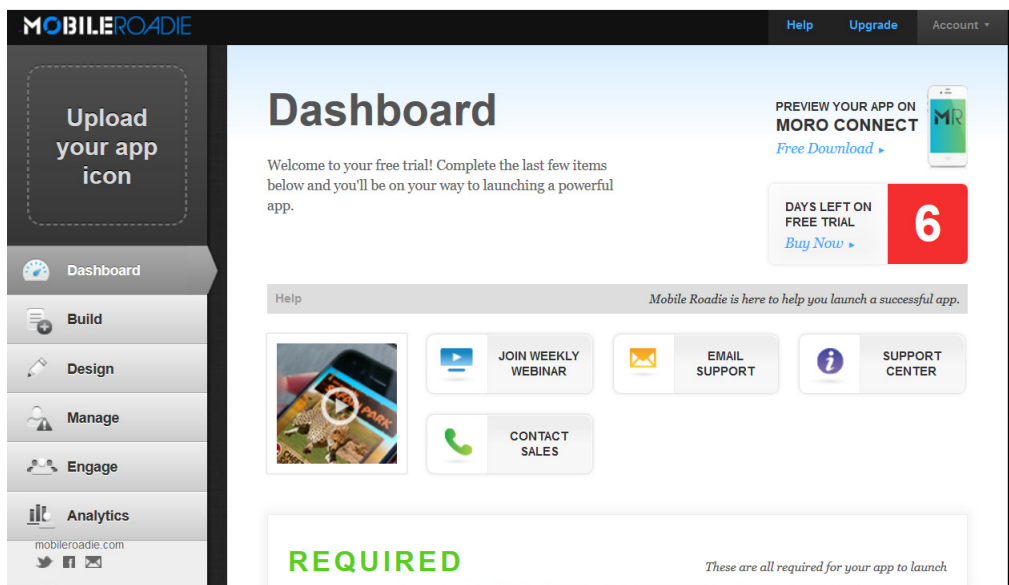


Figure 3: Mobile Roadie's dashboard

Build section

When you select Build from the menu on the left hand side of the dashboard another list of options appears for the developer to further customize the app. Some of the options include: the ability to personalize the fan wall, mailing list, news, directory, photos, videos, events, about, and links. Having these options available offers the developer greater control on how the app can look. This is a positive development feature as the more customization available to the developer the more options the developer has to create the app. Some of the customizations that can be done on the build page include changing the

background of the fan wall and how fan posts will be displayed on the fan wall. Within the build area the developer could also decide which sections the app can have and which sections should be hidden. For example, if a company does not want to provide a directory the app the developer can hide the section from being visible on the app.

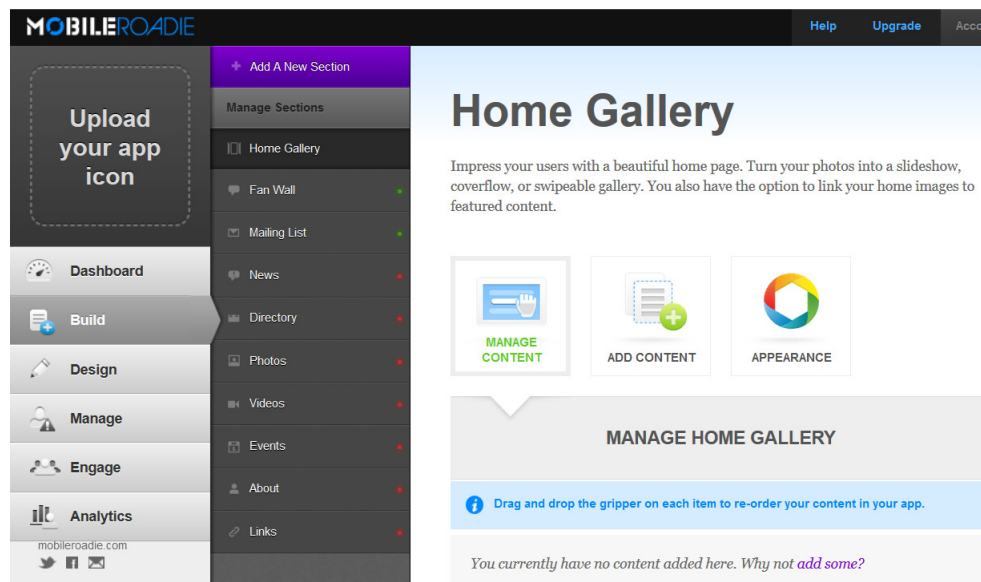


Figure 4: the build page of Mobile Roadie

Design

In the design section of the dashboard there are many different options. For example, you can change the color theme of your application, arrange the sections of your app and decide how different parts of the app look on a smart phone.

Manage

The manage section of the dashboard is used to manage your account credentials for making your application live. By making your application live you would allow others to download your app. As I do not have any of these

credentials I was unable to make my app live. Because my app will never leave the development portion of creating an app, the Engage and Analytics sections of the Dashboard are inaccessible to me. The message “Your app must be live!” is shown in the figure 5 below. This message prevents me from seeing what may be on these pages.

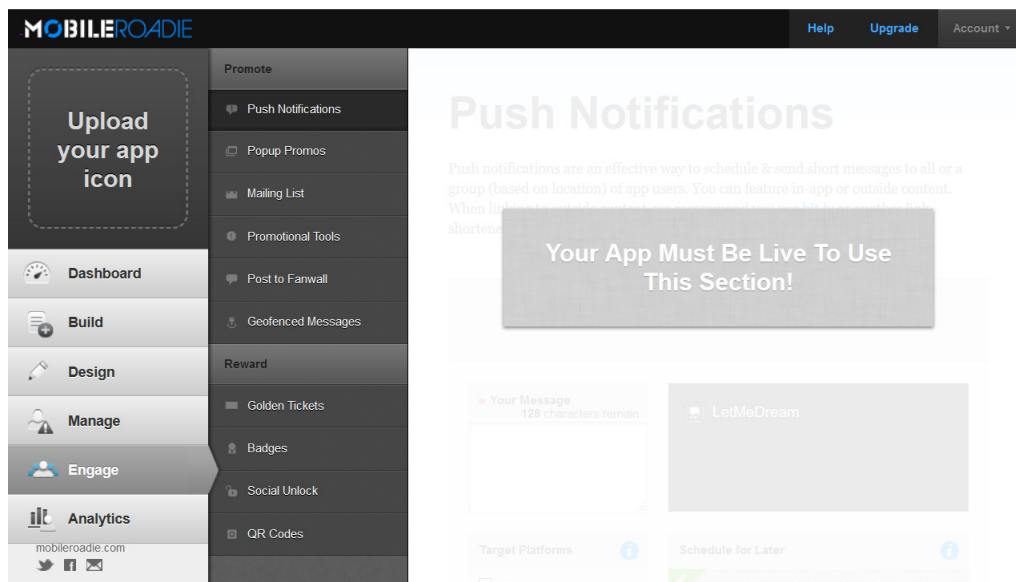


Figure 5: Engage section of Mobile Roadie's Dashboard

Comparison to other platforms

When comparing different platforms that were talked about in class to Mobile Roadie I noticed some differences. For example, when comparing wit.ai to Mobile Roadie it was apparent these two platforms are quite different. Wit.ai allows for the developer of an app to write code for the app which is more customizable than Mobile Roadie. Mobile Roadie only allows a developer to customize the look and ability of the app. Wit.ai allows a developer to start from scratch but as mentioned in the introduction Mobile Roadie builds a base app for you before you get to customize the way the app looks.

Another comparison that can be made is appery.io to Mobile Roadie. These platforms are closer in design than other platforms presented in class. Appery.io is a drag and drop app builder but there is also a way to create an app with some code, if

the developer would like that option. Mobile Roadie on the other hand is not as customizable as appery.io. You cannot add functions such as scanning a barcode to an app like you can using appery.io as your app builder. Mobile Roadie also does not allow you to decide where a certain part of the app will be located, it will give you a theme and you get to decide the look of the theme (surface features).

Conclusion

If a company or small business is looking for an app building platform where they do not have to store the app, create the app from scratch or already has information elsewhere that should be imported to an app, Mobile Roadie is for them. Some of the names of companies and places that are using Mobile Roadie, according to the Mobile Roadie website, are the San Diego Zoo, Wynn Las Vegas, and LiveNation. The price point of using Mobile Roadie would be too expensive for a small business that is still starting out. Mobile Roadie seems to be specifically geared towards bands or venues (such as entertainment venues or hotels) which would limit the kind of apps developers can use this platform for. Overall, this was a simpler platform to use but for everyday apps it does not work.

References

www.mobileroadie.com