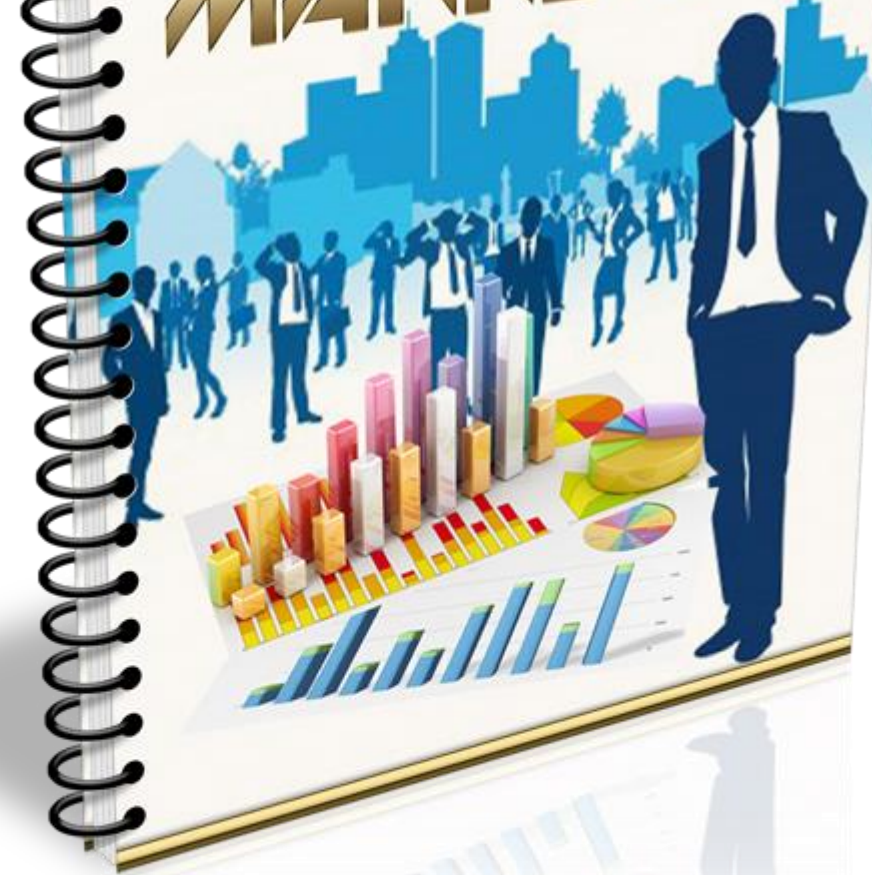# MOBILE APP
MARKETING

What Your Local Business Needs To Know
About Mobile Apps

Most businesses know that to increase their revenue and remain competitive they need to continually adjust to an evolving market place. Currently, 2.5 billion people use the internet worldwide, and as a result, online advertising has seen rapid growth. However, further shifts in online patterns are now occurring, as people increasingly use mobile devices as their main form of internet access.

Mobile devices such as smartphones and tablet computers enable people to engage with brands, services, and each other at any time, no matter where they are. For businesses, the opportunity to reach out to customers via this platform has huge potential.

Mobile apps are one of the most effective ways to take advantage of the online marketing boom, as businesses can use them to promote their products, increase brand awareness, and offer valuable resources to customers.

What Is A Mobile App?

A mobile app is essentially a small software application designed to run on a smartphone or similar mobile device. Unlike mobile websites, apps are programs that are downloaded and installed directly on the mobile device. Depending on their functions, they can be designed to run with or without an internet connection.

Why Focus Your Marketing Strategy On Apps For Mobile Devices?

The number of people who own a smartphone has grown quickly since the introduction of the iPhone in 2007. The devices are no longer simply used for making calls and sending texts. In 2011 41% of smartphone users purchased goods and services via their mobile device.

Your Mobile App Strategy

Mobile apps open up a world of advertising opportunities that can be swiftly converted into increased revenue. However, designing, creating, and distributing a mobile app can be a complicated process. Having a pre-planned strategy in place enables you to minimize the project's cost while maximizing your profits. Each of the following stages should be carefully considered before you begin:

- Choosing An App Developer

When interest in online apps first began, the cost of developing them was extremely high

and completely unattainable for a small or local business. However, as the market has expanded, a range of inexpensive development options have become available. Online app making sites provide low-cost creation tools which allow you to customize your own app solution.

Alternatively, you could hire a design team or individual to create your app for you. This gives you a higher level of customization and intricacy, and depending on your needs, they can often be created on a modest budget.

- The Function Of Your App

The function of your app is the single most crucial decision you will have to make. Your app is a representation of your business, so it not only needs to be professional, but also useful for both you and your customers. Before you decide on its specific function, it is important to understand your marketing aims.

Here are some common app types:

Entertainment App
Entertainment apps often include a game or other interactive feature, and they are used to engage customers in a positive way without seeming overly promotional.

Shopping App
Shopping apps allow customers to put together shopping lists and buy products online, no matter where they are. These apps are perfect for businesses that already have an ecommerce system in place.

Reservation App
Apps that enable customers to book appointments and reservations are ideal if your business offers a service rather than a product. Including a map feature and an automatic reminder is also very useful.

Coupon App
By giving your customers easy access to promotions, sales, and offers, you not only encourage them to spend money but also build up a positive customer relationship. To save customers the effort of printing out vouchers, many coupon apps make it possible to use a smartphone as virtual voucher instead.

Some of the most effective apps combine several of these features. However, it is important that your final app is still clean, uncluttered, and easy-to-use.

- Marketing Your App

Most apps made for marketing purposes are provided to people free of charge, so customers will instantly be drawn to them. Placing your app on markets like Google Play

and the iPhone App Store, make it available for anyone to download. You could also build up awareness by promoting your app on your website, blog, Facebook fan page, Twitter profile, or even on your business cards and brochures.

The Results You Can Expect

An app that is properly planned, designed, and advertised can provide a wide range of advantages. Here are just a few of the ways your company could benefit from this method of online marketing:

- Expanded Customer Base

By creating mobile friendly access to your business, you can make your company more accessible to everyone. Mobile apps give you the opportunity to branch out to new customers, in particular those aged 25-34 who are most likely to own a smartphone.

- Increased Sales

There are many ways that an app can increase a business's profits. A shopping app that enables customers to make purchases or bookings more conveniently can translate directly into increased sales. Indirectly, building brand awareness and improving your company's image can also boost your revenue.

- Better Public Image

Though apps are growing in number, the majority of local businesses still do not have them. By going ahead of the crowd to develop your own, your business will be viewed as more tech-savvy than your competitors.

How To Get Started

A mobile app that effectively promotes your business and is valuable to customers can improve your sales, widen your customer base and build up your brand image. However, if the app creation process is not properly managed, it can end up costing large amounts of money and end up unprofitable. In addition, people will little advertising experience often struggle to market their app successfully.

If you are interested in creating an app but are daunted by the process, turning to an online marketing specialist can save you time and money. A marketing expert can take care of developing, creating and advertising your mobile app while working with you to ensure this strategy benefits both your customers and your bottom line.