



5 Steps to Creating an Enterprise Mobile App Strategy

The world around us is increasingly going mobile! The adoption of smart phones and tablets continues to grow in both the consumer and enterprise spaces. BYOD strategies are starting to take hold and companies are recognizing the powerful value and inherent need to provide mobile applications to both their employees and their customers. Understanding how to build a successful and sustainable mobile app strategy is critical to the mobile relevance and success of any organization.

The snAPPii platform can help your company execute a mobile app strategy that meets the needs of robust, rapid development and successful adoption across your organization.



Table of Contents

<i>Mobile Possibilities</i>	3
<i>The Web Transformation</i>	4
<i>Mobility for Business</i>	4
<i>Step 1</i>	5
<i>Understanding your business needs</i>	5
<i>Step 2</i>	5
<i>Defining your mobile app users</i>	5
<i>Step 3</i>	6
<i>Determining User Access and Trends</i>	6
<i>Step 4</i>	7
<i>Mobile technology selection</i>	7
<i>Step 5</i>	9
<i>Management and Analytics</i>	9

Mobile Possibilities

Tremendous growth, complex challenge

The birth of the web opened up an entire world of information and gave life to the dot.com boom, bust, and rebirth. Sites like MySpace were groundbreaking but soon replaced by behemoth new and improved options like Facebook. Google opened up endless possibilities to search and find information and YouTube has put a moving face on the world. It doesn't stop there, but today, the mobile revolution is a step in tandem and on its own with companies like Instagram and their photo sharing service, Foursquare social networking mobile website, the Angry Birds empire and many other mobile applications and sites that have reached billion-dollar valuations in half the time of their web predecessors.

The web and the mobile revolutions have many things in common, but mobile devices have some key differentiators that set them apart:

- Smart phones and tablets – are outselling PCs by more than half and these numbers are expected to grow every year.
- People spend more time using mobile applications than surfing the internet – more than six times as much per month (based on recent analysis by Business Insider).
- Mobile devices are more personal and mobile applications are often aimed at a particular user, while websites are focused on the mass market.
- Mobile development is much more complex than creating a website as there is a huge number of various mobile devices running on different platforms and thus, no single operating system.

With almost [2 billion](#) smart phones expected to be sold this year and [tablets outselling PC's](#) by more than half, enterprise companies across the board are encouraging employees to bring their own devices into the workplace – this BYOD concept is becoming really popular now as it makes employees more accessible and connected to whatever personal and in-house data they may need. Widespread adoption of mobile technology together with the BYOD concept is encouraging another trend called "Bring Your Own Application" (BYOA). BYOA is in its turn focused on the User Interface and re-evaluating mobile app projects to be more in line with what employees find useful.

Today organizations are looking for opportunities to increase revenue and market share in the most effective ways possible and that means going mobile. Creating a sustainable mobile app strategy is at once the most challenging and effective way to embrace "everything mobile" reaching the largest internal and external audiences and addressing key operational and productivity opportunities at the same time. Mobile apps offer a unique opportunity to enhance the relationship between a company's partners, vendors, staff and clients in even more intimate and powerful ways than the web could have imagined...if done right.

The Web Transformation

First steps to intricate offerings

Take a step back to the first iterations of websites a few decades ago. Remember the simplicity of design and information? Then slowly, year after year, the web took on a life of its own and grew to the searching, educating, instant messaging, ecommerce monster it is today. It didn't happen all at once but rather in 3 progressive phases:

1st phase – informative: the first websites were, of course, infantile in presentation. They were primarily informational ones and were little more than a company's web brochure, text and a few pictures accessible from a PC.

2nd phase – interactive: website owners started looking for interaction with their customers –capabilities like online banking came in to play.

3rd phase – robust: interactions became more complex and involved offering online catalogs, ecommerce, live chats and more.

Today, the web is virtually as much a part of mainstream personal and business life as the telephone, television or toothbrush! The momentum built relatively slowly however and took companies a long time to understand and fully adopt. Coming on the heels of not only having the big push for engaging in website optimization tactics that have been all the rage the past few years, organizations' heads are spinning at the thought of "going mobile" and what it could mean. Unlike when the web first came to be, and what strategies like SEO meant (far beyond spam-like back linking), corporate "mobile trepidation" is less about not understanding the opportunity and far more about how to execute upon it.

Mobility for Business

From games to critical operations

Just like the websites before them, mobile communication alternatives, including the emergence of mobile apps, started with baby steps.

Simple informative apps that provided information or entertainment were soon transformed into interactive offerings that took advantage of the cloud, social networking and location services. Now, far beyond social networking and shopping opportunities, we see mobile apps streamlining business critical operations, allowing companies even more opportunity to reach their customers and increase employee productivity. Not only are companies realizing the need for mobile apps but are beginning to embrace the BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) concept that is transforming company's relationships with employees and clients.

Identifying the desire and/or need to create and implement enterprise mobile apps (internal or external) is barely the first step. Clearly understanding what the apps need to do, the processes they will support, the target audience, the technology/platforms for execution and the ongoing management, will make all the difference in successful implementation.

Step 1

Understanding your business needs

Building apps that matter

Understanding why your enterprise organization needs mobile apps, and what business processes they will support, is key to a successful mobile app strategy

An effective mobile app strategy involves knowing the reasons behind the mobile app drive. You need to take a deep dive into the goal of your enterprise mobile app strategy and determine exactly what it is that mobile apps will do for your business. Are you looking to serve your customers, employees, vendors, channels, or all of the above? Will mobile apps enhance or replace current technologies? Think of the business processes you want to enable with mobile apps first, determine the priorities for delivery (chances are multiple apps will be needed and desired for maximum productivity and ROI) then build your strategy around these processes.

Once a list of the business processes they map to is determined, it's time to bring the end users into the fold. Too often companies engage in enormous technology projects, investing huge amounts of time and money to create what they believe their customers (internal or external) want and need without actually asking them. Development of any kind in a vacuum is never successful and in many cases can lead to a project being scrapped shortly after implementation or even before the project is completed, but not before time, money and resources have been consumed.

Step 2

Defining your mobile app users

Consumer demands

The more experience and exposure users have, the more complex apps they want to see, the greater their expectations those apps will exist. When they find organizations that support their app demands and desires, those are the companies they support, as consumers and employees. Mobile applications as well as the websites are now actively using cloud services, personal log in functionality, chat, online catalogs, product lists and shopping carts etc. Apps are quickly following suit.

Trying to build a single app to meet the breadth and scope of everyone's requirements will prove far more frustrating than beneficial and in many cases can lead to a project being scrapped shortly after implementation or even before the project is completed, but not before time, money and resources have been consumed. For any customer-facing mobile apps, create focus groups of current and prospective customers and find out what products or services they want to be able to access through your mobile apps and the functionality within the app that would be most useful to them. For employees, channels and business partners survey each group and determine what business issues they are facing and how mobile app(s) can solve these issues.

The wide range of functions that are now available for mobile applications significantly changes companies' relationships with their mobile users. Interactive user experiences during the development cycle and within the apps themselves are inevitably a key piece of that engaging and ongoing experience. This can be a positive and transformative opportunity for companies and users as long as active research and implementation into users needs is constantly occurring. Determining what users want is one piece of the puzzle, it's also important to know how they want to see it, the way they want to use it and where they want to access it.

Without understanding who your audience is and what they want, as well as their preferred device methods to find you, companies may end up building the greatest apps no one ever uses. This is especially important with the emerging proliferation of BYOD opportunities and therefore every imaginable type of mobile device infiltrating daily enterprise operations.

Step 3

Determining User Access and Trends

Rapid and diverse technology implementation

Despite some commonalities between the web and mobile offerings, the complexity of mobile is even more challenging as there is no single operating system suitable for all devices. Every device type runs on its own OS and has its own software and interface peculiarities. This means choosing the platform upon which to create your apps is as important a task as determine what apps you want to build. The choice will also hinge on who your audience is and how you want to attract and interact with your potential app users.

At one time, Blackberry and their proprietary OS was THE corporate standard and the device that chartered in the emergence and predominance of mobile to the business space even before mobile apps came in to play. Then the Android and iOS platforms took over and devices like the iPhone exploded onto the scene bringing with it the introduction of mobile apps and their endless possibilities. For a time, iPhone reigned supreme as the number one

smartphone device and now Android devices like the Samsung Galaxy III have dramatically taken over the #1 spot. On top of this, there's Windows Phone 8, the re-emergence of Blackberry with BB10 and the explosive growth of the tablet market, now outselling PC's by more than half with no slow down in site. As such, organizations are now faced with a plethora of devices and operating systems to consider supporting with their apps.

Beyond purely the number of operating systems and device to consider, there is also contemplation of the markets in which certain mobile devices tend to be preferred. For entertainment purposes, like streaming video or large/high intensity graphic applications, tablet-based devices tend to be a popular user choice. This is also true of ecommerce industries like retail, where more purchases are made on tablets than via smartphone, though the latter still provides a hefty amount of revenue for these shopping sites and applications. Due to the continually increasing popularity of Android devices like the Samsung Galaxy series, retail-related organizations might assume Android is the best market for their applications. For business, the jury is still out on whether, or if, there will be a [predominant player](#) in the business space, like Blackberry once was, though at present the Android and iOS operating systems hold the most market share across a number of devices.

Understanding why your enterprise organization needs mobile apps, and what business processes they will support, is key to a successful mobile app strategy. A big piece of that puzzle is mapping those processes to the needs of the end users and the overall audience you will be addressing early in the planning stages. This approach will help create the solid enterprise mobile app foundation upon which to build the robust, data rich apps your end users want and your business needs. As important as taking those first steps, however, is determining the best [tools and resources](#) to execute your strategy.

Step 4

Mobile technology selection

The metamorphosis of mobile and choosing a flexible, scalable mobile app technology

Remember earlier we talked about how the web transformed from its earliest static stages to the highly interactive solution of today. Part of this change occurred as a result of the continually new and improved development technologies.

In the informative phase of the web, HTML web servers were the foundation of web technology. With companies constantly having to meet their growing requirements and competitive needs, new tools such as JavaScript and other app servers quickly became an integral part of interactive phase. The web showed companies' they could dramatically change and influence their customer relationships even by taking advantage of the full-featured web opportunities and application that had been developed. This was then the time for companies to develop their enterprise web strategy. They took, and had, the time to plan IT

budgets, interact with client and employees, integrate internal company systems and of course, time to innovate.

Mobile technology development and adoption is following a very similar course to the web only at a highly accelerated pace. Companies started by building native apps using SDKs and frameworks. These offered the most robust and user friendly apps, but was (and still is) a costly and time-consuming process that can only occur with experienced mobile app programmers. Then HTML5 came about allowing non-Objective-C and/or JavaScript programmers to build mobile apps quickly, more easily and without the concerns of rebuilding for various mobile device platforms. But a number of issues such as major security risks, poor offline accessibility and a much less robust overall user experience make this a faster, yet less effective offering. Now hybrid apps have begun making their way into the corporate mainstream offering the option to basically take the HTML5 technology, and wrap it in native code. However, since Hybrid apps are doing their best to emulate native apps the work required to create the “virtually native” look, often takes even more time and coding knowledge than simply building a native app to begin with and there are still some potential performance and compatibility issues.

Just as there is no one single mobile device platform and no one mobile device type, companies may also want to consider adopting an enterprise mobile app strategy, and development tool, that offers native and HTML5 options. At the end of the day, native apps simply offer the richest most ultimately satisfying end user experience, being able to take full advantage of native device features and functionality, and should be part of any organization’s mobile app strategy. That may mean going wholly native, which is the ideal scenario, or possibly even hybrid if the organization feels strongly in that approach. But with the opportunity to offer data rich, cross platform, native mobile apps in tandem with HTML5 offerings, all from a single development platform, companies can take advantage of reaching users directly through their mobile devices in whichever way the user wishes to engage.

More and more organizations are realizing that not offering mobile apps to their employees and/or consumers is simply not an option and instead the question has become how to address the burgeoning app development backlog perpetuated by high consumer demands and a shortage of programming resources. Mobile app development platforms like snAPPii allow developers to quickly and easily build data rich, cross platform, native apps. It enables rapid development, testing, deployment, new version distribution and analysis of all apps. With its [visual build methodology](#) programmers can create apps faster using drag, drop and configure capabilities, without having to write any code at all for many apps. Apps can be launched in tandem across Android, iOS and HTML5 platforms without having to rebuild for each platform. Experienced programmers can work faster and more effectively taking advantage of maximum scalability, performance and code re-use. The snAPPii architecture facilitates creation of enterprise apps that access data from back end and cloud based servers.

Using the snAPPii Mobile App Platform companies can:

- Accelerate app development and shorten it to days, not months
- Develop real, high performance, secure, native, data rich apps by leveraging existing programmers without having to retrain them on Objective-C and Java technologies
- Exercise greater project control by keeping mobile app development in-house
- Leverage company employees who understand the business
- Accelerate development for experienced programmers providing them a solid app development foundation to enhance only as needed with business specific code.

Step 5

Management and Analytics

A path to long-term success

An often overlooked but key component of mobile app success, and the final step in your strategy (though on-going), is addressing apps analytics and management.

App analytics relates to the number of users – new, active, registered; how often they use the app and other statistics to track in the immediate term and over time. If you have added a discussion forum or Q/A component to your app, users can also ask questions and provide feedback about functionality they'd like to see. This information will help you to understand how your app is performing and what your users are saying so you can consistently improve your app and its overall performance.

To follow your app/apps statistics snAPPii enables you to use the dashboard. Dashboard measures user analytics and improves app performance, allowing you to leverage continued feature and functionality updates to enhance the user experience.

Utilizing the snAPPii dashboard you can:

- Track the total number of app downloads (active, registered, first time)
- Send and track push notifications
- Track usage frequency
- Track registered users

Just building your app(s), dropping them in the public or private app store(s) and running won't ensure rapid and long-term user adoption. Analyzing and managing your enterprise mobile application(s) to suit the changing demands of your app users and their technologies will make a dramatic difference in the popularity, usability and lifecycle (and revenue generation) of your mobile app(s).

snAPPii is an open, cloud-based mobile app building platform that allows individuals and companies of any size to easily build native, cross-platform business apps without requiring any mobile programming skills. The development process is also significantly accelerated for experienced programmers writing code only to enhance the platform for some business specific functions.

Customers like GallantMEDIA, NIBA, TerraSafe, Hospitality Recruiters and many others have delivered their apps faster, with fewer resources and lower costs utilizing the scalable, flexible snAPPii platform. For additional information please email us at sales@snAPPii.com or call +1 603-651-0066.

Visit www.SNAPPii.com today to begin building your mobile app online - free (nothing to download)!