



**Usablenet**

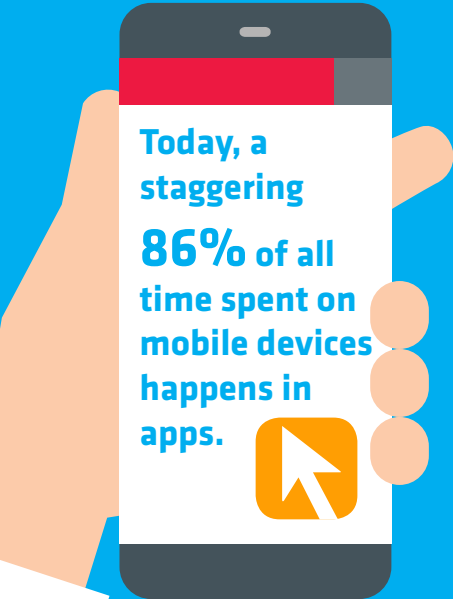
# A Guide to Mobile Apps

## Considerations and Tips for Executing a Successful Mobile App Strategy



# Introduction

As mobile adoption continues along its booming growth trajectory, users are increasingly doing and expecting more on mobile. Mobile devices, accessed both via mobile sites and mobile apps, have become a key source of information, utility and point of contact between users and brands across industries.



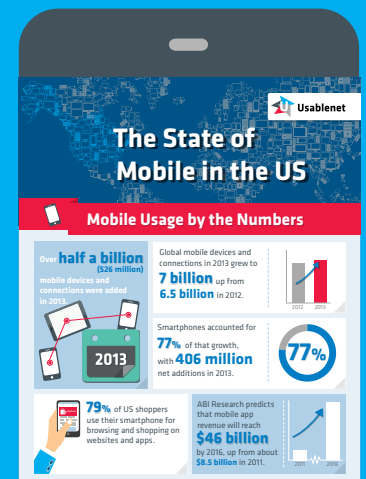
**Today, a staggering 86% of all time spent on mobile devices happens in apps.**

Often considered primarily an engagement tool, mobile apps are becoming more multifaceted. Apps are used for media consumption as well as for browsing, purchasing and as a purchasing aid.

**Today, a staggering 86% of all time spent on mobile devices happens in apps.** As more users purchase in apps and as apps continue to influence in-store sales, there is potential for a mobile app economy that goes beyond customer engagement.

Through apps, brands can connect with users where they spend the majority of their time, making it crucial to provide an engaging and high performing mobile app experience. What, then, does it take to build this kind of experience? How can brands get started? Determining whether your brand needs an app and uncovering the value an app would add are vital first steps in building a winning mobile app strategy.

**For more on the current state of mobile overall, click here to see our infographic.**

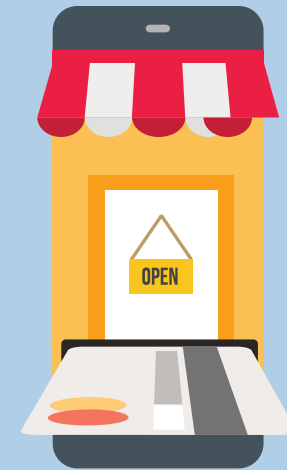




# At a Glance:

Globally, mobile now accounts for **30%** of eCommerce transactions.

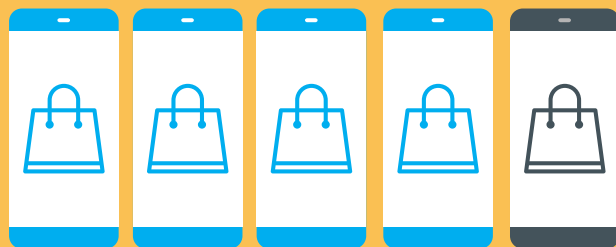
In 2015, mobile's share of ecommerce is expected to grow another **10%.**  
(Criteo)



## 4 in 5

mobile users have used a retailer's mobile app.

**25%** do so on a weekly basis

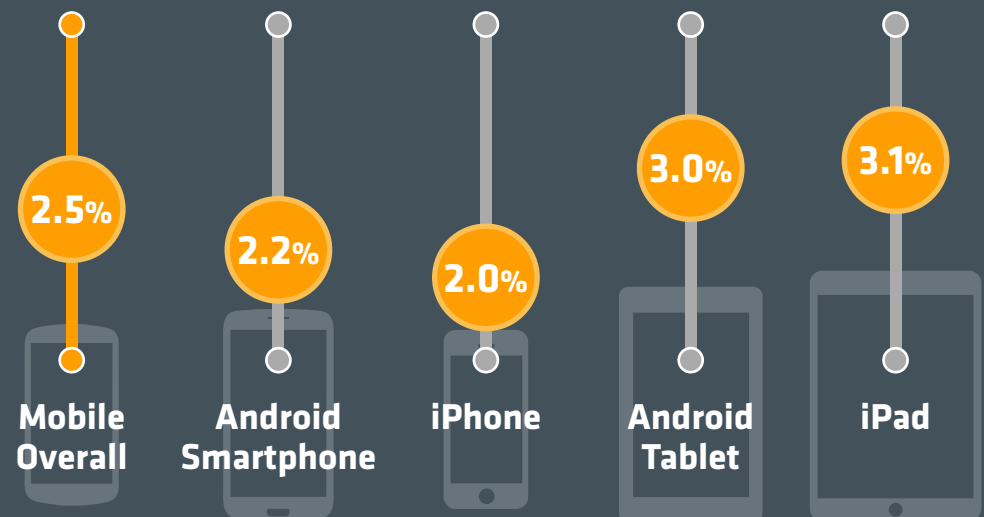


(UPS)

Conversion rates are at **2.5%** on mobile, reaching over **3%** on tablet



(Criteo)



# What Are Users Doing in Apps?

Today, apps account for 52% of all digital media consumption. In 2014 alone, overall app usage grew by 76% from the previous year, with shopping apps, utility apps and productivity apps driving the majority of usage.

Though many believe apps are largely used to get discounts, users actually turn to apps for convenience and to stay informed about a brand or product. Seeking out a specific brand experience via an app, users are looking to engage in a way that can be easier than visiting a website or social media page.

## Reasons that Mobile Device Users Worldwide Use Branded Mobile Apps, Feb 2013

% of respondents



Note: nw6, 158 who regularly use at least one mobile/tablet app for brands, products, stores or companies

Source: Ipsos OTX and Ipsos Global advisor, "Socialogue," July 23, 2013



# App Considerations

# Overview: Why Build an App?



**Brand Experience:** Apps allow you to have a feature-rich and visually engaging environment to project the brand with performance that is quick and reliable.



**Loyalty:** An app requires a level of commitment to a brand from the start user must make a decision to install an app, therefore generating an engaged audience. Repeat usage further builds on user loyalty.



**Direct Communication:** An app allows for 1-to-1 contact with a user. Options that include sign-in, tailored content and personalization feel more directly tailored to an individual user, whereas mobile web often feels tailored to an entire audience.



**Efficiency:** Users rely upon apps to complete tasks, like checking flight times, reading the latest news, and checking account balances. While mobile websites are great for general discovery and exploration, apps help users get things done.



**Full device functionality:** With apps, brands can leverage the full potential of a mobile device. By exploiting device capabilities, brands can utilize the mobile Camera, GPS and push notifications to create a consistent and all-encompassing experience.



# What are the benefits of an app?

App benefits range from effects on tangible revenue to effects on customers' opinions of a brand. They influence in-store sales but may also increase purchases directly and strengthen consumer-brand relationships and foster loyalty.

## Sales:

### Increased Conversions and Purchase Size In-Store

According to Deloitte, digital device-aided shoppers spend, on average 25% more than originally budgeted. In fact, the conversion rate in-store for shoppers who use a retailer's dedicated mobile app is 21% higher than those who don't (Deloitte, 2012). As app usage grows, mobile apps will only contribute more to this revenue growth over time. Meanwhile, increasingly sophisticated apps with engaging features will encourage usage and spending further.

**52%** of users who regularly use at least one branded app feel that it makes them more interested in making a purchase either in-app, online or in-store.

-eMarketer



# Apps Deliver Engagement

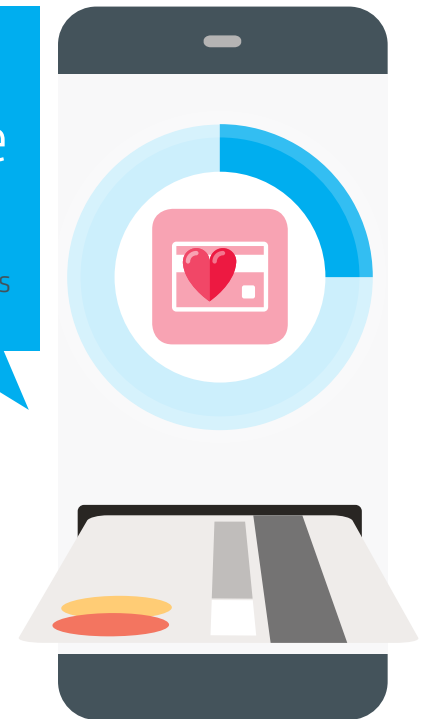
According to Forrester, mobile apps, driving 26% of digital sales, are the most significant sales drivers after loyalty programs. Integrated loyalty programs and mobile apps can leverage the opportunity of both tactics and maximize the opportunities mobile apps present for brands.

## Engagement

Mobile app users are more loyal than those who visit a website from a mobile device. Compared to website browsing sessions, app sessions are, on average, 3-4x longer. Collectively, app usage outpaces mobile web visits by an average of 100 minutes per month. Further, consumers use the average smartphone apps more than twice as often as they visit the typical mobile website (Adobe). Beyond pure usage, loyal users also influence revenue growth, driving more sales than infrequent users.

Loyal app users  
generate **25%** more  
in-app purchases.

-Localytics





# Apps Build Loyalty

While brands often concern themselves with the cost of developing an app that may see few downloads or infrequent usage, recent trends show that over the last four years, retention rates have been on the rise along with app-driven and app-influenced sales. As usage and retention grows, brands will maintain a larger and more engaged audience.

## Customer Retention

Brands across industries must look to engage customers and incentivize them to make repeat visits to their mobile app. In fact, users who interact with an app multiple times before making a purchase also make 25% more in-app purchases over their lifetime as a consumer. However, of users who make an in-app purchase, 44% do not do so until they have interacted with an app at least 10 times. By the end of 2015, according to Localytics, in-app purchases will make up \$5.6 billion of digital channels' total revenue, making frequent visitors a key audience to tap.

Mobile app retention rate, or rate of users whose usage rate reaches 11 visits or more, reached **39%** in 2014.



# A Guide to App Strategy Decision-Making

START  
HERE

Do you currently have a mobile website?

No

Yes

Are you satisfied with the level of personalization your mobile website offers users?

Yes

No

Is your brand struggling with engagement, loyalty or nurturing repeat customers?

Yes

No

Would your mobile strategy benefit from native device functionalities such as GPS, camera or a scan feature?

No

Yes

To improve your mobile strategy, would you need to make frequent updates or changes to your mobile platform?

Yes

No

Do you have a tight development budget or few development resources?

Yes

No

## Focus on Mobile Web

The basics of a mobile strategy is to leverage a key touch point between your brand and your customers. It is not yet time for a mobile app launch. Focus on optimizing for the mobile browser.

## Consider an App in the Future

Your brand may benefit from the advantages of a mobile app, but budget and resources play a key role in the development of a successful one. Focus on improving current mobile strategies until the opportunity is right.

## Build a Mobile App Now

Your brand is ready for the next step in its mobile strategy. Build an app to complement your mobile site, and take advantage of apps' loyalty, engagement and sales-driving benefits.

## Choosing:

# Mobile Apps, Responsive Web Design, Both?

It's a tough call to make when deciding between responsive design or an app, but in the end, it depends on the goals of your business.

A complete mobile strategy can encompass both an app and a responsive website. The native mobile app will provide a mobile-centric experience for your existing and most loyal customers, while a responsive website can provide an optimized experience to new and old visitors browsing your website or discovering it for the very first time. Considerations when making the decision include:

Factor in the initial costs of redesigning your entire website for responsive, plus the cost of upkeep and upgrades. Typically this will exceed the cost of building a native mobile app.



Visibility to search engines is an important part of any business strategy. For responsive sites, this can be achieved through effective SEO best practices. For apps, Google and Apple's newly announced deep-linking allows mobile apps to be indexed by search engines and improves discoverability for apps users have and have not installed on their device.

A mobile app will provide users with unique functionality and speed that can't be achieved with a responsive website.

A mobile app offers the best user experience, taking advantage of the phone's native functionality, ability to engage while offline and the expectations of users using these devices.



As of last year, apps from retail businesses took up to **27 percent** of consumer's time.



At the same time, **67 percent** of consumers say they are more likely to purchase from a mobile-friendly website than they are from a website not optimized for devices other than desktop.

# Choosing an app development partner:

Primarily, brands should be sure that a potential development partner has deep user experience capabilities, the technical resources to execute fast and app development and design resources to manage a branded app.

**For tips and best practices for mobile UX. download our fact sheet here.**



## Checklist



- ☐ Track record of building successful apps
- ☐ UX expertise and knowledge of app best practices
- ☐ Strategic understanding of how apps fit within a larger mobile strategy
- ☐ Ability to deliver high-performing apps within a specific timeframe, budget and requirements set
- ☐ Technical skill to integrate the app with an existing platform, channel or APIs
- ☐ Flexibility to provide long-term support after launch, including updates to and refreshes of the experience

## In Summary:

# From Idea to Launch

### 1. **Weigh your options.**

Consider the benefits, possible disadvantages, resource expenditure and financial cost of executing a mobile app. Assess the possibility of simply improving your efforts on mobile web. A well-executed strategy is tailored to both users and brand need.

### 2. **Decide.**

Depending on budget, knowledge, resources and need, your brand's mobile strategy may or may not call for a mobile app, or one may not need one in the immediately future. Move forward according to the behavior of your users and the business objectives of your brand.



### 3. Strategize.

If you are simply enhancing or improving your mobile web experience, this may be as straightforward as pinpointing which parts of your mobile site need improving. If building an app, understand how your users are interacting with your brand and decide what purpose you would build an app for (engagement, gamification, brand awareness, loyalty)

### 4. Design and Launch.

Find an app development partner with the knowledge, skill and experience to build a platform that will benefit your brand. Work with them to design an app that will fit with your overall mobile strategy and iterate until you have a successful design and build in place. Launch your mobile app and monitor usage analytics. Update your mobile strategy as needed.







Usablenet is a global mobile technology company. Our powerful platform enables leading companies in all sectors to create compelling experiences for their customers on smartphones, tablets, kiosks and in mobile apps. Usablenet customers include Marks & Spencer, ASOS, JCrew, CVS Health, FedEx, Dell, JetBlue and The Ritz Carlton. Founded in 2000, Usablenet is a private company headquartered in New York City with offices in Los Angeles, Italy and London.

## About U-Campaign

U-Campaign is a Usablenet product that helps brands publish and manage mobile marketing landing pages quickly and easily. U-Campaign solves the problem of being able to create experiences on the fly and inject content into any page, including into responsive websites and mobile apps.

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### **New York**

142 West 57th Street, 7th Floor,  
New York, NY 10019

Phone: 1 212 965 5388

### **London**

11A Curtain Road,  
London EC2A 3LT.

Phone: 0203 617 3200

**[www.usablenet.com](http://www.usablenet.com)**