

COLUMNS

What is a mobile marketing platform and why a brand needs one

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Are you in the process of developing a new mobile application for your business or organization?

Then do not forget about the hidden, critical piece of technology that runs silently in the background and keeps everything operating smoothly. I am talking about your mobile engagement and retention platform, also called simply a mobile marketing platform.

Believe it or not, a good mobile marketing platform can be the key to building solid long-term relationships with your customers long after you have completed the design and delivery of your flashy new app.

Here are the ins and outs to finding the right mobile marketing platform for your business, including what to look for.

What is a mobile marketing platform?

So what exactly is a mobile marketing platform? It is the back-end technology that controls and monitors your app.

In fact, it is almost as important as the app itself, because it helps you connect with your customers and refresh your content after the app is launched. Think of it as a mobile engagement and retention platform, because that is what you will use to engage and retain your customers after launch.

Behind every great app is an excellent mobile marketing platform and you will need both to be successful in the mobile marketplace.

Why do I need a mobile marketing platform?

A mobile marketing platform allows you to control and monitor your app, so that you can:

Communicate with your customers

Monitor their buying/user behavior

Update products and pricing

Change your content

How do I buy a mobile marketing platform?

The mobile app development provider who created your app probably has one available you can use.

However, if you did not use a development firm for example, if your IT department developed your app you can also buy an off-the-shelf platform. This should integrate easily with your new app.

You might also choose to buy an off-the-shelf platform if you do not like the functions available in the mobile marketing platform used by your app development team.

Keep in mind that the better functionality the mobile marketing platform has, the easier it will be to manage content and track user behavior.

What can a mobile marketing platform do?

Your mobile marketing platform should come with a wide variety of functions that you can use to manage customer relationships and control the content and appearance of your new app.

A good mobile marketing platform can:

Add or update content

Update products and pricing

Create rewards programs

Communicate with your users

Run special deals and promotions

Promote sponsor offers

Manage user sign-ins

Run marketing campaigns

Track user purchases and behavior

Run reports on users or sponsors

7 things to look for when buying a mobile marketing platform

If your mobile app development partner does not provide a mobile marketing platform, or you are unhappy with the functionality it provides, then do not be afraid to buy an off-the-shelf one.

See if you can test-drive the platform before you buy. And it will be easier if the platform can run smoothly from your tablet, smartphone, or PC, so you can make changes on the fly.

Here is what to look for if you are buying a mobile marketing platform to run your app on.

1. Robust reporting: The mobile marketing platform is where you will get all your reports on your system and its users, so make sure it includes a wide variety of built-in and customized reports that meet your needs.
2. Easy control panel: This is where you will add/change products, pricing and more, so make sure you are comfortable with the layout and functionality.
3. Ability to integrate with your back-end systems: So you can exchange data between your customer management system, point-of-sale system, Web site and intranet.
4. Detailed demographics: You should be able to get detailed info about your user base, including who is buying, what they buy and who is opting in to your rewards programs.
5. Ability to add new technologies: To manage your ecommerce transactions, event registrations, in-store deals and on-the-spot promotions.
6. Flexible marketing communications: To manage all of your special offers, deals, coupons and messages.
7. Contextually targeted delivery of content: To your users, based on who they are, what they are doing, and why they are doing it.

REMEMBER, BUILDING STRONG mobile relationships with your customers is not just about designing a flashy app. It is about using your mobile marketing platform to understand your target customers and communicate with them over the long-term, in the way they need it.

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