

COLUMNS

New developer community to soon embrace mobile marketing

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By [Angelo Biasi](#)

As the mobile marketplace continues to experience staggering growth, there is a changing sentiment among content marketers that a do-it-yourself cross-platform application offering is a more viable option for return on investment than custom app development.

This sea-change in thinking, brought about by more accessible, cross-platform tools, open technology APIs, hyper-local search and a voracious content-consumption appetite, is giving rise to a new developer community.

The result will expand the mobile ecosystem dramatically, and create new revenues and business models, in the coming months.

Mobile marketing for the masses

Challenges that have traditionally plagued mobile content marketers of all sizes and budgets are being quickly overcome.

Ongoing fragmentation among device types, platforms and data plans, not to mention expense, skill set and time to market, are now being addressed by accessible, easy-to-use, cross-platform solutions made available via the Internet. And carriers are taking note.

One example is European carrier Telia Sonera's recently released [App Studio](#) in Sweden.

App Studio is a Web-based, software-as-a-service app creation solution for any phone. Within minutes and with little to no technology expertise, a content marketer can create, publish and distribute mobile content to virtually any phone.

App Studio is being offered to millions of subscribers and features convenient SMS/app creation payment bundling for around \$15 per month via the subscriber phone bill.

Certainly, some tradeoffs are made from sophisticated, more custom functionality such as location-based or CRM to a widespread reaching, template-based approach.

Nonetheless, this newfound mobile marketing independence to get in the game is giving birth to a new developer community.

New developer community

Large brands, enterprise, and agencies are no longer the sole beneficiaries of mobile marketing via apps.

Small to midsized businesses (SMBs) and affinity consumer groups are converting to developers in droves, leveraging the obvious advantages of engaging their key constituents.

Inclusion of all phones and ongoing sticky engagement tactics are becoming the standard for optimal results.

Take local business, Luigi's Pizza shop, for example.

Luigi knows that if he can get his app on the phones of all customers within a 10-mile radius of his restaurant, he will likely sell more pizzas and gain valuable mind and market share.

However, Luigi does not know what kind of phones his customers have, is not very tech-savvy and is tight on both time and budget.

After researching available do-it-yourself app creation alternatives, he quickly finds a service and creates a rich, engaging mobile app for any phone, featuring a menu, daily specials, coupon, easy click-to-call for customer ordering and more. He promotes the free app to his customer base via existing marketing channels.

Luigi places the QR code and call-to-action on collateral, from his storefront window to direct mail and employee T-shirts.

Within weeks, more pizzas are sold and his app is a success with customers.

It does not stop there.

Affinity groups such as churches, clubs, educators and bloggers, to name a few, are also taking advantage of available cross-platform app creation services to accomplish communication and engagement objectives among key stakeholders.

Ecosystem expansion imminent

This growth in a new developer community will dramatically expand the mobile ecosystem as we know it, and fast.

Imagine if 1 percent of the sum total of SMBs (11.8 million of 1-99 employees)¹, bloggers (34.7 million)² and Facebook users (149.4 million)³ in the United States all content marketers with a broadcasting voice converted to becoming mobile app developers?

That is 2 million new developers creating at least one new app for consumption.

Existing popular app store content would be dwarfed. And new revenues and business models such as pay per download, advertising, data usage and search would likely flourish.

However, this epic embracement and mobile ecosystem expansion cannot happen in a vacuum.

Marketing planning, engaging content, accessible tools and foresight will prevail among key players that embrace it and can execute strategically.

These players include carriers, SMBs, device manufacturers, marketing service organizations, affinity groups, and mobile technology companies, to name a few.

Similar to what Frontpage did for the Internet, Blogger did for blogging and email service engines Vertical Response and Constant Contact have done for email marketing, be on the lookout for rising popularity among tools and solutions that will revolutionize mobile marketing app creation among a new developer community, and change it forever, very soon.

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