

Mobile Commerce Best Practices

1. **Get mobile now.** A mobile optimized experience can mean a responsive site or a templated version of a mobile desktop site. Regardless, if you are playing in the ecommerce space, you 100% need to have a mobile optimized site.
2. **Either build your mobile optimized site in-house or find an experienced 3rd party to build it for you.** Whenever possible, you want to build a single website that works across platforms, i.e.; mobile and desktop. Some ecommerce providers support both and some require a third party. Ecommerce platform decisions today should include a mobile strategy.
3. **To mobile app or not to mobile app...** Many brands achieve great success with mobile apps. Not all do. Research your target audience and look at your site traffic to determine if you have a significant amount of traffic from mobile devices. Look at your competition, do they have mobile apps yet? The expense of developing and maintaining an app may or may not make sense presently. Continue to evaluate the costs-benefits to determine the appropriate time to implement.
4. **Focus on the mobile experience.** Most customers browse and discover products via the mobile platform. Mobile traffic exceeds desktop traffic at least 55% to 45% for most brands. To accommodate such high mobile traffic, you must create mobile optimized emails, mobile optimized click through landing pages and checkout processes, coupon redemption, and mobile optimized storefronts.
5. **Build mobile apps that add additional value on top of shopping.** There are so many apps available today and customers are choosy on which ones to download. The most successful mobile apps are built to entertain and build brand awareness. If your app does this, or has a real or innovative purpose that cannot be satisfied by a mobile site, then it is more likely to be downloaded and used.
6. **Consider technology platforms to leverage one mobile app across multiple devices.** Several mobile platforms enable building a single app for multiple devices by 'wrapping' the app in a device specific 'translator'. The net result is that you can create one app and roll it out to multiple devices quickly.
7. **Build your website with mobile in mind.** To effectively manage ecommerce and mcommerce on one site, take a minimalist approach to site structure, and arrange the site in such a way that it would make sense to read it top to bottom. You can change the structure with CSS or JavaScript in the presentation or behavior layer, but in XHTML, you want simplicity.
8. **Take advantage of native functionality of mobile apps.** The benefits of mobile apps are some of the native functionality that you can tap into. For instance, leverage geolocation data and push notifications to present valuable messages and offers at the right time and place. Think about presenting geo-location offers.
9. **Build features that are necessary for your mobile experience.** Allow users to manage their accounts via the mobile device and ensure that you include features that enhance the user-friendliness of your mobile app. Add to cart and wish-list features are also important for shoppers to bookmark products for purchase at a later date on their desktop.

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eCommerce Diligence™ Checklist

Mobile Commerce Key Questions to Ask Providers

Company

1. How long have you been in this business?
2. How many clients have you sold? How many have you lost, and why?
3. What size or types of clients fall into your “sweet spot”?

Products/Services

1. Is your solution offered as perpetual licensed software or on-demand multi-tenant solution?
 - a. What are the client support requirements for each?
 - b. What is the process to add features you currently don't have?
2. What is your solution built on (which OS, code base and database)?
3. Please describe your architecture.
4. How long to launch a basic site or campaign? A sophisticated one?
5. What type of training do you provide to use your solution?
6. What skills does my organization (or hired third party) need to implement this platform?
7. What technical support services are available?
 - a. Are there human beings I can reach during reasonable hours (chat or phone) or do I have to wait over 24 hours for an email response or callback?
 - b. Is your support team located in the US or abroad? What is your SLA for support issues?
8. Do you have a support knowledgebase, community forum, or applications that are shared by customers?

Features

1. What key features are included in your solution?
 - a. Is there a feature you have that no one else has?
 - b. What features are currently missing that many of your competitors have?
 - c. What features are on your roadmap?
2. What is your product's competitive advantage over other packages? Why?
 - a. Price? Features? Ease of use? Flexibility? Don't say “all of the above”.
3. Does your solution build mcommerce or mobile apps? Please describe their features.
4. Can I use your solution to build one app and use it across all devices? How is this done?
5. Does your solution depend upon the ecommerce features, e.g. map to its pages/processes, or does it have its own solution set independent of the eCommerce site?
6. Can I integrate my own ecommerce system with your mobile solution? Mcommerce and apps?
 - a. Is the data held on the mobile platform or on the eCommerce system?
7. Does your solution have B2B features?
 - a. Describe the features that you consider B2B.
8. Do you have a management console? What can I manage with it?
 - a. Does it include reporting and a dashboard?
 - i. Please describe your reporting capabilities, ad hoc reports, etc.
 - ii. Please provide a list of standard reports.
9. How does your mobile platform address the evolving security standards? Has it been certified by independent third parties as PCI DSS compliant or do you just promise it is?
10. What analytics tools does your solution include?
 - a. Does it provide the ability to analyze cart abandonment, quantify browser searches, tie product purchases to search terms, etc.?

Pricing

1. What is the license fee (if perpetual license)?
2. What are the pricing schedules and what features do they include? On what are they based? Provide an annual estimate of cost, based on some performance metrics.
3. How do you charge for annual support? What about maintenance?
4. Are there any additional fees (e.g., implementation, transaction costs, revenue sharing)?

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