

5 STEPS To Developing A Successful Mobile App





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GETTING STARTED



Are you ready to create a new mobile app for your business or organization? If so, then you're probably wondering...how do I get started? While developing a new mobile app can seem intimidating, it doesn't have to be. Our step-by-step guide can walk you through the entire process, from beginning to end.

GETTING STARTED

What Does an App Need to be Successful?

Successful apps have a few common traits:

1. They solve a specific customer or end-user need.
2. They align with your business strategies and objectives.
3. They provide contextual content and communications.
4. They deliver more personalized experiences—the more you use them.

What Are Your Goals for Developing a Successful Mobile App?

If you want to develop a successful mobile app, you'll need to define your goals. This is the first step of the process, and we'll walk you through this phase.

How Long Will It Take to Develop?

Depending on the complexity of the app, and who you choose to develop it—an app can take anywhere from 30 days to 1 year (or longer) to develop.¹

How Much Will It Cost?

An app can cost as little as \$50,000 to develop, or as much as \$1 million—depending on the complexity, and how you choose to develop it.²

1 State of Enterprise Mobility Survey. Kinvey, November 2014

2 State of Enterprise Mobility Survey. Kinvey, November 2014.



GETTING STARTED

What Factors Increase the Cost and Time for Development?

Why is there such a variance in cost and time to develop?

The biggest driver to the length of time it takes to develop an app is the feature requirements. The more features you want included in the app, the longer it will take to create—and the higher the cost.

Other important criteria that influence the time and cost of development are:

- Operating systems—how many operating systems will the app run on?
- Customization—does the app need to be 100% custom built, or can you use a pre-built app and “white label” it? (This means adding your own logo, branding, and features to a basic app that’s already built—which will save you time and money.)
- Integration—how much integration do you really need for the app to deliver the intended experience?

In general, the more features, customization, operating systems, and integration required—the more expensive it will be to develop the app, and the longer it will take.



THE 5 STEPS TO DEVELOPING A NEW APP

There are 5 basic steps to developing a new mobile app successfully:

- **Step 1—Plan** your business goals and user needs.
- **Step 2—Design** the app, including how it should look and operate.
- **Step 3—Build** the app to make it work.
- **Step 4—Launch** the app.
- **Step 5—Engage** your customers with personalized content and targeted communications.

STEP #1—PLAN

Describe your Business Goals

Every app has a business goal. What is yours? If you don't clearly define your business goal with the app at the beginning, you'll never achieve it. Do you want to:

- Increase product sales?
- Build long-term relationships with customers?
- Improve brand awareness?
- Get customers into your store?
- Simplify the purchase process?

An app cannot be successful if you don't clearly define its business goals before you start the design and development process.

By aligning your business goals with your customers' needs, you have a much better chance of creating a successful app.

Identify Your Customer's Needs in an App

How do you know what your customers really need in an app? By studying them, observing them, and talking to them—before you start app design.

Find out what you can offer your customers through an app that excites them—and keeps them coming back again and again, for the long-term. Is it rewards? Freebies? Deals? Coupons? Entertainment? "Insider" info? Ease of access?

Avoid the pitfall of making the app into a duplicate of your website—which companies often do. This is a big mistake, and will not work in most cases (although there are exceptions).



STEP #2—DESIGN

STEP #2—DESIGN

Create a Design That Meets Your Goals + Customer Needs

Now that you've established what your customer needs in an app, and you've defined your goals with the app, you can use that information to design a successful app. Designing an app starts with creating a solid list of requirements.

Determine App Requirements

What are requirements? Requirements are a list of:

- What you want the mobile app to do
- How you want it to look
- How it should interact with the customer
- What devices you want it to run on
- What other systems or databases it needs to pull data from (if any)

For example, you might want your retail t-shirt sales app to be able to:

- Show 125 different products
- Offer 10 unique colors
- Offer 12 different sizes
- Allow customers to personalize the message on front
- Pay through a mobile cash register
- Earn rewards for every t-shirt they buy
- Offer discount coupons for new designs
- Integrate with your current customer and product databases

If you've already created a requirements list, then you'll save yourself time and money with the app development process.

However, if you've never done this before, or are unfamiliar with the process of designing the user experience (UX), then it will benefit you to invest in a good company that can consult with you through the design process. They can help develop a requirements list for you.

STEP #2—DESIGN

The more detailed your requirements list—and the closer it matches to your original business and customer goals—the more successful your app will be.

Starting List of Questions

At a minimum, your requirements list should answer the following questions:

1. What do I want my users to do with my app?
2. Who will most likely be using the app?
3. Where will they likely be using it?
4. What should the app look like?
5. What do I want the app to do for my business?
6. Will I be selling anything on the app? If so, what? How many products?
7. Do I need the app to have any special functions (such as iBeacon, a shopping cart, event registration, etc.)?
8. What devices and operating systems do I want the app to run on? (iOS, Android, Microsoft)
9. Will my app need to access content from other existing systems (such as WordPress, a point of sale system, or a customer management database)?

