

9 Ways Mobile Apps Help Your Business During The Holiday Season

With the holiday season right around the corner, now is the time to ensure that your business is ready for the potential profits that mobile ecommerce has to offer. If you don't think you need to be ready to target that mobile audience, then here's a quick history lesson that might broaden your horizons. In 2015, **60 percent** of consumers used their smartphones to make holiday purchases. Without a mobile-optimized website or app, you could severely miss out on reaching these mobile gift givers.

To start, you need to make it simple for shoppers on a mobile device to make a purchase, or they are going to purchase from a competition that offers that flawless mobile experience. Alternatively, having that mobile experience yourself offers a substantial advantage over your competition if they have not yet adopted an intuitive mobile strategy.

Mobile apps now account for more than **52 percent** of time spent on mobile phones. So, if your business does not have an app, then it is missing out on arguably the best way to reach consumers in the digital age. Engaging target markets is hyper critical during the holiday season. If you can keep your brand and its products on the minds of customers, then they are almost guaranteed to give you some of their holiday business.

Here are some tips and strategies on how **mobile apps** can help you to prepare your business for the upcoming busy holiday e-commerce season.

Mobile Marketing Ideas for the Holidays

Implement a Loyalty Program

Mobile customer loyalty programs offer exclusive deals and early bird specials to customers. By leveraging existing customer data, through survey tools or a data analytics solution, you can begin effectively targeting customers with the rewards and products they are personally interested in. Keep in mind, **80 percent** of consumers openly admit that they will switch brands if offered the right incentive, so you need an app this holiday season simply to ensure that you are keeping your existing customers.

Reward programs also encourage return shoppers because more "points" means more rewards. Thus, this strategy will payoff even after the holiday rush is over. After all, it is easier to keep a customer than to find a new one, so reward your existing customers with a really great loyalty program.

Use Push Notifications

With a mobile app, you can include push notifications that let your customers know when you are offering special pricing or having an exclusive sale. Last holiday season, **75 percent** of mobile shoppers used some type of mobile coupon to make a purchase. So push notifications with coupons drive sales.

Only a small percentage of customers will open an email message and click on a link (about 5 percent but between **30-60 percent** of consumers will respond to and open a push notification that is included with an app. Push notifications are also a great way to keep your brand fresh in people's minds, even if they haven't opened your app in a while.

Improve the Customer Service Experience

Mobile apps introduce a new touch point for customers to access your services and products. With **68 percent** of US adults owning and using a smartphone and data usage increasing by **525 percent** since 2010, apps are an increasingly important touch point in the customer experience. It allows a customer to be able to contact and interact with your brand at any time of the day or night, without having to fire up their computer and visit the website.

Use it as a Marketing Tool

The mobile app can also be an invaluable marketing tool because it is easy to integrate it with social media sites, like Twitter and Facebook. Customers can share your app with a single tap and communicate the experience that they have had or are enjoying with your company, which provides you with free and valuable promotion. Additionally, a mobile app is a great environment to notify users about new products that will be of interest to them.

Access More Customers

Today's mobile-obsessed consumer is constantly on the lookout for the next big thing. We like to be the *first* to know about something and we get excited when we think we have discovered a new app that is particularly amazing. Thus, when you manage to offer a mobile app experience that is engaging, useful and fun for the customer, they are more likely to refer it to friends and family members.

Level the Playing Field

Developing a mobile app is becoming more affordable for smaller and mid-sized businesses. If you are a small business and you want to compete in your specific market, you have to adapt to changes and have a strong presence on mobile devices. The amount of time that consumers spend on mobile has increased by **21 percent** over the last year, so as an SMB, you have to be ready for what your consumers expect this holiday season. Those expectations include the ability to shop from their mobile devices.

Simply put, mobile technology helps small business owners to run their business more efficiently. More businesses are starting to implement internal apps which help their operations to run a lot more smoothly.

Make Payment Easy

Mobile apps can be customized by the user so that they can input their payment information. This makes the entire process of making a purchase much, much easier. **85 percent** of consumers admit that they prefer shopping on a mobile app than a website. Much of the reasoning behind this preference is in app payment methods.

Instead of having to get out their credit card or other payment information each time they wish to make a purchase, a customer can simply open up the app that has the information pre-loaded by them and make a purchase with just a few taps.

Generate More Revenue

Again, 60 percent of consumers used their smartphone for holiday shopping last year. That number is expected to be higher this year. Also, about **70 percent** of mobile searches result in the consumer taking action, often in the form of a final purchasing decision, which is higher than the traditional online shopper using a computer. In other words, there is a lot of transactions occurring in the mobile environment and developing a mobile app gives you the opportunity to get a piece of that revenue. It

is also worth mention that your business can earn more money by allowing agencies to run advertisements on your app.

Keep Your Business Relevant

Today's consumer spends a lot of time on their phone. If your business offers a mobile app, then you are automatically afforded the chance to get a piece of that customer's daily mobile time. Moreover, your app can be a lot more engaging than a website and the creation of an app will allow your small business to evolve with your customers, who are increasingly becoming more heavily reliant on their mobile devices.

Conclusions

If you want your business to be competitive during the busy holiday season, it is time to consider a mobile app. There are many different ways to incorporate these apps and make them work for your business. You owe it to yourself to find out more about mobile development and how it can help your business. When you start to investigate the possibilities, you can begin to level the playing field with your competition in the upcoming busy holiday market.

The possibilities are endless and app developers can work with you to determine what will work best for your business and how you can claim your stake in the mobile world.