



Fáilte Ireland

National Tourism Development Authority

MOBILE MARKETING

A guide to how you can market your business to mobile phone users

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Introduction

This guide is an overview of how you can promote your business to mobile phone users using various mobile marketing techniques.

Skill Level

Basic **Inter** The majority of the topics in this guide are suitable for anyone who has basic PC knowledge. Towards the end of the guide there are a few more advanced topics that are more suitable for intermediate users.

Terminology

You will come across the following terminology in this guide which you need to be familiar with:

Term	Explanation
iPhone Application	On an iPhone you have a web browser for accessing websites but you also have the ability to access services through a specifically developed application on the iPhone.
GPS	Global Positioning System – A way of figuring out what your location is at the moment.
Android	Android is a mobile operating system that is owned by Google. An Android phone is a phone that uses this operating system.
App	You will often hear people talking about an 'App' for a phone. They are talking about an application such as an iPhone application.
Smartphone	A phone which provides features such as e-mail and the ability to browse the web. In the future all phones will be Smartphone's.
QR Code	A bar code type image which can be scanned by software running on a phone and actions taken as a result. For example, scan an image and automatically display a website on your phone. QR stands for quick response.

Video Tutorials



Indicates a video tutorial. Click on the icon to watch the video. These videos demonstrate how to carry out a particular task. In order to watch the video tutorials in this guide, you will need to have Adobe Flash Player v9.0.28 or above installed on your computer.

Note: *When you go to watch the video, a check is done to make sure you have the correct software installed. If you do not have the correct version installed you will be provided with a prompt to download and install the correct version.*

What is Mobile Marketing?

With the growth and development of the Internet, how people book places to stay, search for things to do and much more has changed significantly. The tourist's behaviour has also changed. They are more informed and more connected than ever before, via their mobile phones.

The Mobile Internet is the fastest growing Internet platform and this is set to continue. Mobile users have access to information at their finger tips through their mobile phone. It's not just a device for phone calls anymore, it can be used for taking pictures and videos, playing games, accessing e-mail, browsing the internet and much more.

Phones that support e-mail and internet access are growing rapidly and these 'Smartphones' of today will become the standard phones of tomorrow. So it's going to be extremely important to consider how you will market to potential customers directly on the mobile.

Content provided on the mobile can be a lot different than content provided on the web. You have a smaller screen, less time and reading a lot of content is not suitable. So you need to consider the best way of delivering this content and how to take advantage of this.

Your Questions Answered

What is a smartphone?

A smartphone is a phone with additional functionality way beyond a traditional phone. It's like having a mini computer where you can browse the internet, access e-mail, create documents, take pictures and videos, and much more.

What is Android?

Android is a complete set of software provided by Google to run on phones. An android phone is a phone that uses this software. There are many phone manufacturers that have decided to use Android as their default operating system and that is why it is expanding so quickly.

What is an iPhone?

An iPhone is a phone provided by Apple. The iPhone has an application environment on them so you can build custom applications and it also has a mobile web browser.

What is mobile commerce?

Mobile commerce is about completing transactions using your phone. Increasingly people are becoming more and more comfortable using their mobile phone to buy products and services.

Defining a Strategy for Mobile

There are many ways of marketing to people on the mobile phone and some of them are very expensive. Do you develop an iPhone application, a mobile website, or use a texting service?

There are many options to consider. To help you figure out what is right for you the following steps will help you come up with a clear and effective strategy.

Determine your Customer's Needs

The best way of determining your customers' needs is to ask them directly when they visit or when they've gone home.

When you are doing your overall research you will need to consider:

- Are people accessing the information locally or internationally?
- Are they visiting your premises or already there?
- What type of information are they likely to be looking for?
- What other mobile sites do they use and what is the competition?

If you are deciding to develop a mobile specific website it's tempting to put your entire website on the mobile but is that what is really needed?

You also need to consider what other mobile sites and functionality is available and how you can benefit from these. For example, if I'm looking for a hotel to stay in I might use Google Maps on my phone to find places, so make sure you are registered on this and optimise your entry to give you the best chance of appearing high on the list.

Maybe you will decide that you will go one step further than your competitors. You will look to add significant value to existing tourists. For example, you could provide a mobile guide for finding places to eat and things to do. This information is very useful for existing customers but this information may also be shared with new potential customers.

Determine your Goals

You need to decide what are the goals for your mobile presence. For example:

1. Marketing your business – Do you want to promote and sell services through the mobile phone?
2. Providing tourist information – You may decide to get your name known by providing useful information to any tourists that arrive to the location where your premises is.
3. Customer service – Maybe if a tourist is within your hotel they use your mobile app to report any issue or contact you.
4. Alerting service – You may use mobile to alert people regarding offers you are running, either during or after their stay.

Determine the Platform

In this document we will discuss the various types of platforms that you can use. You need to decide if it is a texting service, an iPhone application, an Android app or other choices. The determination of the platform will depend on various items such as:

- Your budget – it can be very costly to develop some applications.
- Your goals – what you are trying to achieve?
- Your customers – what devices are your customers using and how do they like to use them?
- What type of interaction/functionality is required for the service you are planning?

Build the Software

Typically you will outsource the development of the software to an external company. Make sure this company have previous knowledge working in a mobile environment.

Determine your Promotion Strategy

When you deliver your mobile platform you need to have a clear and effective strategy for getting the word out about it. Promote it on your website, through your social media channels, via an e-mail campaign to potential customers, and so on. If your platform is new and innovative make sure to approach your typical PR channels to see if you can get some press about it.

Sample Mobile Applications

There are many examples of useful and popular mobile applications. When visitors are active on social media tools they will generally use them on their mobile when they are travelling. There are many applications available for the popular social media tools such as Twitter and Facebook. For example, customers could be using Facebook Places to check in to locations. It's important to monitor and respond to this as soon as possible.

Visit Dublin

Visit Dublin has an iPhone/Android application for visitors coming to Dublin. This application has extensive functionality including:

- **Audio Descriptions** — explanations and history for over 80 points of interest around the city.
- **Special Offers** in retail, restaurants and tours offering you fantastic value and options. Simply show the voucher on your phone and receive the offer!
- Use the **'Point to Call'** function to phone a restaurant, tour and make your booking direct.
- **'What's That? / What's Nearby?'** — Not sure what that building is in front of you? Point at the real world point of interest and retrieve information about it!
- **Daily Bulletin** — receive a daily update to your phone on what is happening in Dublin
- **Virtually explore** Dublin before visiting. Users can virtually move to locations in Dublin and explore and research in advance of travelling!



Food Spotting

Food spotting is available on the iPhone and on Android and it allows people to find and recommend restaurants in a specific area.

Discover – Good foods all around you

- Find – A particular food you are craving
- See – What's good at a restaurant
- Earn – Badges, title and credibility

Mobile Check-in Services

There are various mobile services available that now allow people to 'check-in' to a location. By checking in to a location you can be offered services relevant to this area, meet up with friends already in the area and much more.



This is a huge growth area and has amazing potential for tourism related organisations. The following outlines some of the tools you should be considering.

FourSquare

FourSquare is a location based check-in service where you use your mobile phone to check in to a particular location and write in some comments.



For example, you can check in to a restaurant and write a review of the restaurant. While you are checked in you can also see other people that are also checked in. When you check-in to a place you are awarded points and over time you can earn a badge. For example, when you are a regular visitor to a place your reward will be to become the 'mayor' of this place.

Businesses can promote deals for people checked in to an area. For example, if I owned a pub I could make an offer for a discounted lunch for anyone checked in to the area.

Facebook Places

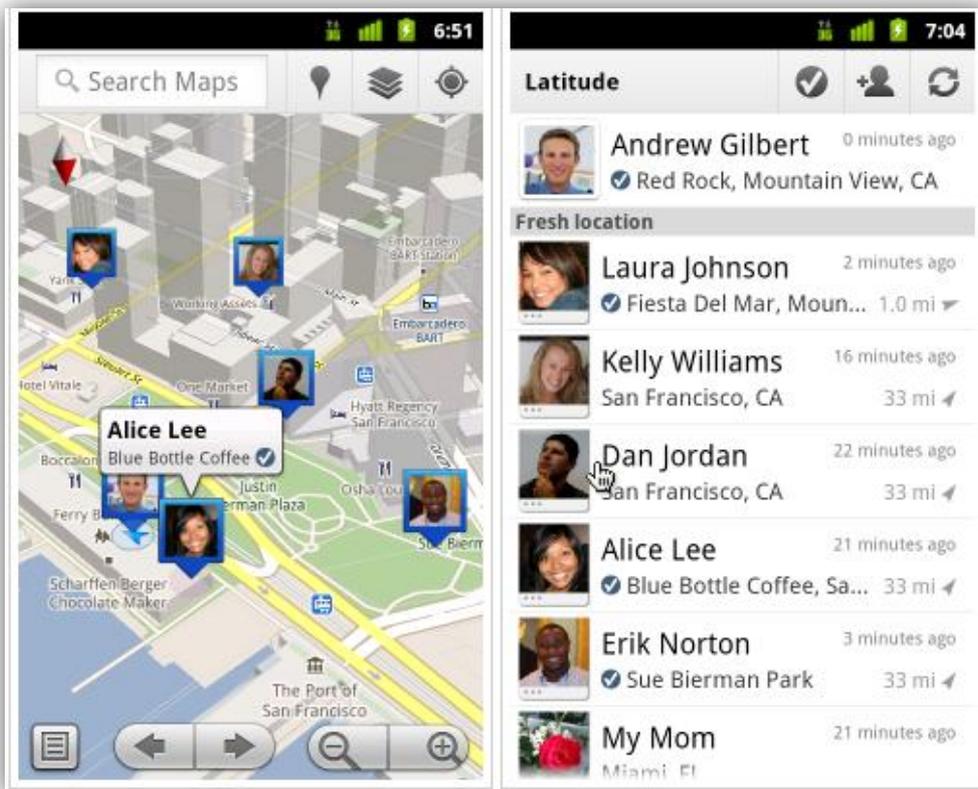
Facebook Places is an application that gets users to check-in when they arrive at a location. When they check-in this gets shared out to all their Facebook friends through their newsfeed.

Facebook Deals is an extension to Facebook Places, so that if a user searches for a particular place, that location can offer a deal to the user. Facebook Places is relatively new but is set to pass out Foursquare very quickly. Facebook deals is currently not available in Ireland.



Google Latitude

Google Latitude allows you to find friends that are close by and allows you to tell your friends where you are.



QR Codes

QR stands for Quick Response. A QR code is a useful way of marketing your services. By providing a visual code, such as the following, potential customers can scan this code in using their smartphone and this will display them relevant information.



So how can this be used?

You put an advertisement in a newspaper and include a QR code.

When a user has an application on their phone that allows it to read and understand the code they scan their phone over this code. The phone will then automatically bring them to a web address, which, for example, could be the web page where you have more details of the offer. This is similar to when a check out operator in a supermarket scans a bar code.

As more and more phones will be smartphones the QR codes could become increasingly popular.

Developing your Presence on the Mobile

When you want to make your website available on the mobile and/or you just want a new presence on the mobile you have 3 main options:

- 1.** Do nothing – There is a web browser on a lot of smart phones so although your website won't be designed for the web it will still work.
- 2.** Develop a mobile version of your website – This requires you to rethink how your information should be presented and what functionality you are going to provide on the mobile web. A lot of redevelopment work would be required.
- 3.** Develop applications specific to the phones – This allows you to take advantage of the functionality available on the phone, however, there are many types of phones you can develop applications for so which one do you choose, iPhone, Android?

The following discusses the options of building a mobile and/or app version of your product or service.

TIP: *Google Analytics shows you how many people are accessing your website using a mobile device. If this is a high percentage of your potential customers and your website is not optimised for mobile then you may be losing business.*

Mobile Website

If you have a smartphone (i.e. one that can access the web) you can browse through all websites that are available on your PC or Laptop. However, generally these types of websites are not suitable for browsing on a phone as they have not been designed for a phone.

With a phone your screen is a lot smaller so and generally you behave differently. For example, I may spend hours browsing and reading on the web but with a mobile phone I generally will only read a small amount of information over short periods of time. So how the information is displayed and the amount of this information needs to be considered.

When designing a mobile website consider some of the following:

- You can only view one screen at a time so design your navigation to take this into account.
- There is not much room for text, so don't use much!
- Use large buttons for key calls to action
- Think about your usage of fonts, make sure important stuff really stands out

- Try to make sure your website behaves consistently with what is expected from similar applications on the web. Users have very low tolerance so don't put them off.

Type of Functionality to Include

When on the phone I would expect functionality similar to the following:

- Location aware directions – Depending on what the phone supports it would be great to provide a mapping function that allows people to find directions to the hotel from where they are. They may have already booked into the hotel but it's a useful feature to provide. It would also be useful to show the location of the hotel relative to another place. For example, if I'm travelling over to an event I want to see how close the Hotel is. I may make my decision on booking based on how far the hotel is away from the venue.
- Reviews/Testimonials – As I won't read a lot of information about the hotel I may skim through the reviews to help me make a quick decision about whether to book or not.
- Pictures/Videos – As I'm on a mobile something visual is good. I would prefer to watch a video rather than read lots of text.
- Clear calls to action – I would expect big buttons that help navigate me to where I want to go or what I want to achieve. For example, a Book Now or Get Directions button.
- Booking Engine – I would expect to be able to complete the transaction there and then on the mobile in a simple way.

Mobile Application

A lot of smartphones provide a mobile application development environment that allows you to develop a purpose built application specific to that environment. For example, you can develop an iPhone application that works specifically on an iPhone.

There are several reasons you may consider developing a mobile application:

- The interface (how it looks) will be what the user is used to as they probably have other applications already on their phone.
- You may need to access phone specific functionality (e.g. navigation, camera etc) and this may not be available to you if you develop a mobile website.
- Applications are downloaded to your phone so you have an icon on your mobile desktop so it's likely that you will use it more often.
- Because you download the application a lot of the interaction with the application can be offline which means there are no roaming charges.

The big disadvantage with a mobile application is the cost. It can be very expensive to build an iPhone or Android application and if you want to attract smartphone users you really need to develop both.

Mobile Texting

Although there are many ways to market your business through a mobile with a nice graphical interface, SMS (text messaging) is still very popular.

How many of the text messages that you receive do you actually read? The answer to the majority of people is all of them. If you can get customers or potential customers to sign up to a mobile texting service where you keep them informed of offers that are available you will get business from this service if you build up enough subscribers.

Examples of how you could use a texting service:

- Send details of an offer with a web link for more information
- Run a competition, anybody that enters the competition for a product or service you are offering means they have an interest in them. For the people that entered the competition and didn't win, ring them up and make them an alternative offer.
- Text people to thank them for staying with you. By doing this they are more likely to stay with you next time and tell their friends.
- As an added service send directions to your premises.

It is useful to consider using a short code for responses. A short code is a special / short phone number. For example, you could have a message that reads

Text 52555 with your answer

'52555' is just a shorter phone number that's easier to remember. So for example, if you were promoting a competition or a deal on radio you would probably want to use a short code as it would be easier for listeners to remember.

When you are collecting information from people that sign up to your texting service you can get valuable information that can be used for targeting. For example, if you have a restaurant and you record that a person is a vegetarian then you won't be promoting meat dishes to them in your text!

Summary

People will increasingly access your website/services through a mobile device so it's important to make sure, at a minimum that your website works on a mobile device. Websites are not typically designed for small screens so a lot of websites are unusable on a mobile device. If you are developing a mobile version of your website simplicity is your key to success.

Make sure you have a mobile strategy in place which is a detailed plan on what you are going to do, when you are going to do it, who does it and your budget. Mobile is becoming increasingly important so it's not a case of if you will have a mobile strategy it's 'when' you will have it.



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