RADHA

A Need for Mobile Technology in State Government

Consumers continue to want more convenient services whenever and wherever they are and organizations are under continued pressure to reduce costs and do more with less.

By 2014, a majority of users will access the internet via a mobile device as opposed to a computer.

This presents a unique challenge for organizations and specifically for government agencies. How can you provide services to all your customers with increasingly limited resources? What changes or improvements can your agency make which have the greatest impact in terms of customer need and number of customers reached?

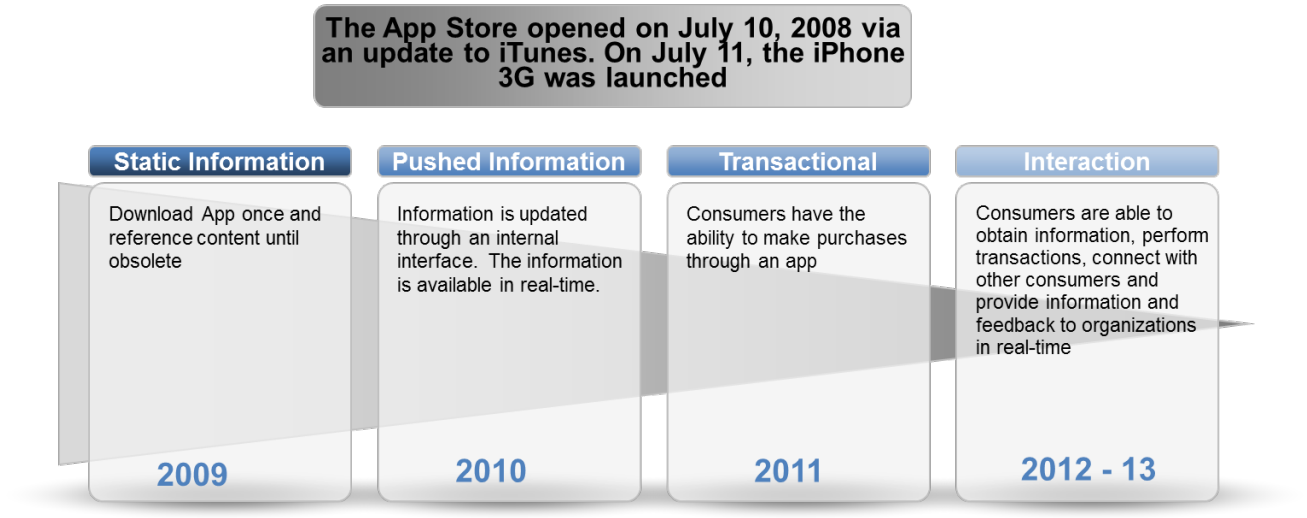
How did Mobile become so important?

Mobile Technology has exploded in the last decade going from a status symbol for the elite to a constant companion for almost all Americans – a full 87% of adults now own cell phones. The industry was further revolutionized with the advent of the smartphone and its acceptance by consumers thanks to Apple and the iPhone. With the launch of Apple's App Store in 2008, the ability to design and deliver mobile services to consumers has grown exponentially. In 5 years 50 billion apps have been downloaded – 20 billion in 2012 alone.

This colossal growth has had a significant impact on current technology. The smart phone is quickly replacing the PC as users' technology product of choice – especially for internet use. Smartphones alone are on pace to outsell PC's by 2015 solidifying their place as the number one method of electronic interaction with customers.

Category	PC	Mobile Device
Units Sold worldwide in 2012	350 million	1.7 billion
Frequency of replacement	4-5 years	2 years
Units per household	1-2 shared by all	1 per person
Mobility	Semi-portable when required	Constantly mobile at will
Internet Access & Use	Web browser using Ethernet or Wi-Fi router	Web browser, Apps, Location Services and through Wi-Fi router or Wireless
Software	PC based	Cloud based

Just as mobile devices have evolved and become more mainstreamed, so have the services provided on those devices. The figure below shows the timeline of the app evolution from basic static information apps to complete transactional and interactive apps where consumers are in constant contact with organizations.



What are other states and agencies doing?

While state agencies have not yet embraced mobile technology, some early adopters have begun to utilize it. Like the industry progress above, most of the currently available 180 apps for state agencies are strictly information based. Very few are capable of conducting transactions or provide interactive services. This does not mean, however, that the available apps are not useful. Some services do not require a transaction or feedback. For instance, "Watch Utah Legislature Bills" follows legislation in Utah providing citizens with real-time decisions made by their legislature. Other states are providing services for State Parks, Voter Registration, Motor Vehicle Services and more. A few examples of apps developed around the country include:

Watch Utah Legislature Bills: Allows users to search for bills and receive updates regarding changes in status of one or more bills.

CT State Parks & Forest Guide: Provides users with access to park locations, maps, activities, advisories and advanced GPS functions. This App provides some features both on and offline to support remote parks without cell service

Iowa SOS: A one-stop destination for Iowans regarding voter information. It includes polling places, voter registration, absentee ballot applications and more.

Virginia DMV: Allows users to complete vehicle registration, driver's license renewal, address changes, plate purchases, or title replacement. Provides office locations with wait times, sample knowledge exams, as well as news and alerts.

Why should my Agency go mobile?

Consumers are flocking to mobile apps and mobile technology. In order for your agency to meet consumer demands a mobile presence will be needed. As mentioned above, smart phones are on pace to outsell PC's by 2015 and mobile phones are already the preferred entry point for accessing the internet.

Private industry has already set the standards for mobile – and the bar has been set high. Banks, credit card companies, and retailers have already embraced mobile technology and provide a full range of mobile services with beautiful, easy to use interfaces.

Additionally, private industry has started to encroach on state business. Many businesses have already begun providing driver's test manuals and practice tests, state park guides, and transportation information through apps. These apps are outside of state control and in some cases the app creators are making a profit off of these apps.

One final reason state agencies should embrace mobile now is the idea of self-service. This idea is what is driving consumer demand for mobile – the ability to get what you want when you want it. The advantage to this for state agencies is that if consumers want self-service, it allows agencies to push work previously done by the agency onto the consumer thus creating a time and cost savings. With states continually battling budget challenges, mobile provides that unique opportunity where everyone wins.

How do I go mobile?

In order to create a mobile presence it is important to have a strategy – to identify the best course of action for your agency and your resources. An important first step for developing a mobile strategy is to determine whether the type of development you will employ as a standard. There are three types of mobile development: native, hybrid, and web.

- **Native:** Native development is using the tools and programming language specific to each platform. This means using XCode and Objective C for iOS and Java for Android. This is developing code in the manner the platform intended.
- **Hybrid:** Hybrid development utilizes software development tools to allow developers to write applications using HTML5 and JavaScript which can be used across platforms. These software development tools then wrap the code in a thin native container.
- **Web:** Web development is typical web development scaled to fit on a smaller screen. This method of development still relies on a browser to access features instead of utilizing an independent app.

Each type has its own advantages and disadvantages and it is possible to implement one or more types of development for different aspects of your business.

Factors to consider before going Mobile

- **Keep it simple:** Don't overdo it. A simple interface avoids confusion and facilitates ease of use. Multiple functions may require a separate app or system.
- **Be open to ideas**: Engage other departments within the agency in the design and functionality of the app.
- **Know your audience**: The Internet is accessed more frequently via mobile solutions by people below the poverty line (due to the low initial price point). You're involving a new group and need to plan your outreach accordingly.
- **Make it relevant**: Know what functions and issues are of concern to the community and make your app more than just a problem reporting program.
- **Location, location, location**: If your app doesn't have a spatial component to it and you don't have an ability to extract GIS information from the app, you're more than missing the boat — you don't know where the water is.
- **Data integration**: Make sure the mobile app can feed into your existing systems. You don't want to waste staff time trying to bridge systems manually.
- **Cross-platform support**: Don't leave two-thirds of your public unable to interact with their local government easily because you decide to only develop on one platform

Best Practices for State Agencies

- **Look inward and outward.** The benefits of mobile extend beyond apps that enhance citizen services to policies, practices, and applications that improve an agency's workforce performance.
- **Accept that mobile is everywhere and it is here to stay.** Do not dismiss or delay your adoption of mobile technologies because "it's just the latest trend."
- **Recognize that mobile is more than another delivery mechanism.** Mobile brings a new set of capabilities – such as GPS location services, cameras, remote control, and testing – that can

be leveraged to redefine how, what, when and where services are delivered.

- **Address security, compliance, and identity management.** Do not take shortcuts around the very real and possibly new security and compliance issues that the adoption of mobile raises.

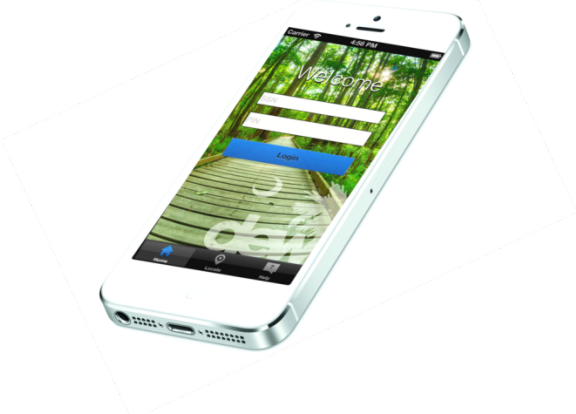
- **Evaluate mobile apps versus the mobile Web.** If device features are not so critical, a mobile Web approach may be better and vice versa. But apps can also take more time, money, and resources to develop and deploy. Identifying why you are developing and for whom can help you decide.

Case Study: I-claim App – A new way of filing weekly claims

Since its inception under the Social Security Act of 1935, the Unemployment Insurance Program has strived to serve its citizens by enabling them to meet their basis financial needs and also provided an important stimulus to local economies.

The great recession put an unprecedented strain on the program and has highlighted important issues and challenges in the administration and delivery of UI services.

With a decline in the overall funding for the program, UI directors across the country are faced with a daunting challenge of providing effective and efficient UI services delivered to claimants using technology tools that enable self-service and lead to claimant satisfaction while maintaining program integrity and solvency of the UI Trust Fund.



With a focus on enhancing the efficiency of delivering UI services, providing high customer service and improving UI program integrity, Radha has developed a mobile app for filing weekly UI certifications. For additional information please visit www.iclaimapp.com