MORLEY®

NEED AN APP FOR YOUR NEXT MEETING?

5 Insights on Making Your Event Mobile

With 182 million smartphones in the U.S. alone,[1] it's no wonder there has been an explosion of companies producing event apps for mobile devices. Meeting and event planners simply cannot ignore the "little screen."

If you're not familiar with the app-building process, it's easy to get distracted by the fun of picking out features and lose focus on the functionality that will achieve your objectives.

We've worked with many developers to build mobile apps for our clients' events. Our research shows that app pricing and functionality vary narrowly, but the differences can be important. Here are some of the things that should be on the top of your list when you're considering app sourcing options.

1. Identify "need" vs. "nice to have"

What's the primary reason you need an event app?

For example, do you want your app to …

› Enhance attendees' ability to network, socialize or interact
› Promote sustainability by housing meeting materials instead of printing them
› Serve as a digital guide with easy access to travel and meeting information

Keep in mind that some features may cost more than others, or have their own set of requirements. Live polling is an example. This is often considered an "extended" feature with a price over and above the standard features. In addition, it requires your facility to have Wi-Fi with enough bandwidth and access points to accommodate your audience.

Our advice: *Identify the outcome that is most important to you. Then, build your app's feature set around it. Start with the features you "need," and supplement with the features that would be "nice to have" as long as they fit in your budget.*

[1] comScore, February 2015

2. Decide on license length

When do you want your audience to use your app? Leading up to the event, during the event, after the event, all of the above?

Typically, you can buy licenses for 120 days, one year or multiple years.However, not all companies offer multiple options; some offer only a one-year license, for example.

Our advice: Think about how your app could help you achieve your objectives before, during and after your event, and weigh your license term options closely to avoid the hassle (and cost) of renegotiating.

3. Assess branding options

Does your app need to be branded for your company? How about for your program? In most cases, the answer is yes to one or both.

Be aware that app development companies vary in their ability to use custom graphics. Some are flexible, enabling you to provide your own logos, backgrounds and icons. Others allow you to use just one logo and pick a color scheme. The higher the creative flexibility, the higher the cost.

Our advice: Decide how heavily branded your app needs to be. If you need something other than "just the basics," communicate those expectations early on to ensure your provider can accommodate your needs.

4. Understand device usage

What kinds of devices will attendees use to download your app?

Standard platforms are iOS (iPhone/iPad) and Android. Some providers have the ability to offer BlackBerry at an additional cost.

Our advice: If your app needs to be available to people who are not on iOS or Android, be prepared for additional expense and more time for testing.

5. Determine distribution method

Will attendees download your app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store, or do you need a more private distribution method?

Note that if you're going through Apple®, there is a submission verification process that will add weeks to your production schedule. Also, if you decide on private hosting, your provider is required to use your Apple Enterprise Developer License if your attendees will be downloading the app on iOS devices.

Our advice: Have someone on your digital team ready to assist you and your provider to ensure your app launches smoothly.

Save time. Reduce costs. Share instantly. Contact Morley to create a custom mobile app for your next event.