



Euronet Software Solutions

A Division of Euronet Worldwide

Powerful Payment Solutions that Bring Currency to Life

A Euronet Software Solutions White Paper

Deploying a Cost Effective Mobile Banking Presence

*How the Mobile Browser can extend access and
future-proof investments*

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Executive Summary

Technology continues to grow in leaps and bounds with consumers demanding more and more. Looking back ten years ago to 2004, there were 817 million Internet users, and today, they number more than 2.9 billion.¹ The mobile channel has grown even faster and is now the consumer's top technology of choice for a wide variety of activities. Due to the proliferation and adoption of mobile devices, by 2015, there will be more people accessing the Internet via a mobile device than the traditional Internet.²

The numbers related to mobile usage are staggering. Globally, there are over 5.3 billion mobile phone connections³, 3.75 billion unique mobile users, with an additional 5+ billion "connected devices," i.e. tablets, game terminals, eBooks, navigation and related devices.⁴ Contrasting this to 1.4 billion desktops/laptops and the aforementioned 2.9 billion Internet users worldwide, mobile is the clear winner in terms of global reach.

Combined with social channels, mobile stands to rewrite the rules of consumer interaction. Research shows us that consumers are quickly leveraging their mobile devices and mobile media for all forms of commercial interactions. These interactions range from promotional and social media interaction, to loyalty, commerce and customer care, including digital engagement integrating mobile with traditional retail and media environments .

It has never been more imperative for organizations to understand the importance of the mobile device for their business and to take advantage of its growth and popularity. Simply put, the mobile device is now a staple in everyday living around the world, and businesses must have a mobile strategy to stay competitive.

Changing Landscape for Banking via Mobile

The customer attitude toward mobile banking has also undergone change. While initially being wary of performing financial transactions on a mobile device, people are now comfortable, and in fact, expect to be able to use their mobile device to check account balances, pay utility bills, transfer funds and locate the nearest branch or ATM.

Mobile banking began with banks offering services such as balance inquiries and check-book requests via SMS and later with the Internet browser. As mobility takes center stage in the technical infrastructure of banks, business processes are being reengineered and new models are explored in the financial services arena. New features such as mobile payment processing, location-based services, and remote deposit capture, have led to a greater extension of mobile solutions enabling banks to provide a comprehensive banking experience to their customers.

The popularity of Smartphones coupled with easy access, low cost, wireless capability and speed have catapulted the use of the mobile device. As a result, consumers are welcoming both traditional and innovative banking services on their devices. A report by Juniper Research⁵ predicts that mobile banking users across the globe will reach 530 million by the end of 2013, up from just over 300 million in 2011: making mobility a key strategic channel for the banks encompassing the entire set of banking operations.

¹ Internet Growth Statistics Chart, Internet World Stats

² Mary Meeker, Morgan Stanley, 2010

³ ITU 2011

⁴ Mary Meeker, Morgan Stanley 2010

⁵ Juniper Research, 2012

Clearly, the mobile channel is now the driving force of consumer engagement and is here to stay.

The primary focus of this paper is to explain the advantages and disadvantages of the two main roads to get to the same destination of a rich and rewarding mobile experience for your customers: the Mobile Web and the Mobile App.

Mobile Web versus App

If you're planning to establish a mobile presence for your organization, one of the first considerations is whether you want to create a mobile application for users to download (app) or a mobile website, or perhaps both. Mobile websites and apps can look very similar at first-glance, and determining which is most suited to your needs will depend upon a number of factors, including target audiences, available budget, intended purpose and required features.

Key Differences between a Mobile Website and a Native App

Before you can evaluate the benefits of a mobile website versus an app, it is important to understand the key differences between the two. Both apps and mobile websites are accessed on handheld devices such as smartphones (e.g. iPhone, Android and Blackberry) and tablets.

A mobile website is similar to any other website in that it consists of browser-based HTML pages that are linked together and accessed over the Internet (for mobile typically WiFi or 3G or 4G networks). The obvious characteristic that distinguishes a mobile website from a standard website is the fact that it is designed for the smaller handheld display and touch-screen interface.

Like any website, mobile websites can display text content, data, images and video. They can also access mobile-specific features such as click-to-call (to dial a phone number) or location-based mapping.

Native Apps are actual applications that are downloaded and installed on your mobile device, rather than being rendered within a browser. Users visit device-specific portals such as Apple's App Store, Android Market or Blackberry App World in order to find and download apps for a given operating system. The app may pull content and data from the Internet, in similar fashion to a website, or it may download the content so that it can be accessed without an Internet connection.

Finally, there is also an emerging model of the Hybrid App, which, as the name implies, is a combination of a native platform app wrapping around a common website.

Advantages of a Mobile Website versus Native Apps

A mobile website has a number of inherent advantages over apps, including broader accessibility, compatibility and cost-effectiveness.

- **Immediacy – Mobile Websites Are Instantly Available**

A mobile website is instantly accessible to users via a browser across a range of devices (iPhone, Android, BlackBerry, etc). Apps, on the other hand, require the user to first download and install the app from an app marketplace before the content or application can be viewed - a significant barrier between initial engagement and action/conversion.

- **Compatibility – Mobile Websites are Compatible Across Devices**

A single mobile website can reach users across many different types of mobile devices, whereas native apps require a separate version to be developed for each type of device.

- **Upgradability – Mobile Websites Can Be Updated Instantly**

A mobile website is much more dynamic than an app in terms of pure flexibility to update content. If you want to change the design or content of a mobile website you simply publish the edit once and the changes are immediately visible. Conversely, updating an app requires the updates to be pushed to users, which then must be downloaded in order to update the app on each type of device.

- **“Findability” – Mobile Websites Can be Found Easily via Search Engines**

Mobile websites are much easier for users to find because their pages can be displayed in search results and listed in industry-specific directories, making it easy for qualified visitors to find you. In contrast, the visibility of apps is largely restricted to manufacturer app stores.

- **“Shareability” – Mobile Websites Can be Shared Easily by Publishers and Between Users**

Mobile website URLs are easily shared between users via a simple link (e.g. within an email or text message, Facebook or Twitter post). Publishers can easily direct users to a mobile website from a blog or website, or even in print. An app simply cannot be shared in this fashion.

- **Time and Cost – Mobile Websites are Easier and Less Expensive**

Mobile website development is considerably more time- and cost-effective than development of a native app, especially if you need to have a presence on different platforms (requiring development of multiple apps).

- **Support and Sustainability**

The investment considerations of app versus website do not end with the initial launch; properly developing and supporting an app (upgrades, testing, compatibility issues and ongoing development) are much more expensive and involved than supporting a website over time.

- **A Mobile Website Can Be an App!**

Just like a standard website, mobile websites can be developed as database-driven web applications

that act very much like native apps. A “hybrid” mobile web application can be a very practical alternative to native app development.

When Does a Native App Make Sense?

Despite the many inherent benefits of the mobile web, apps are still very popular, and there are a number of specific use scenarios where an app will be the best choice. Generally speaking, if you need one of the following, an app makes sense:

- **Interactivity/Gaming** – For interactive games, an app is almost always going to be your best choice.
- **Complex Calculations or Reporting** – If you need something that will take data and allow you to manipulate it with complex calculations, charts or reports, an app will do that very effectively.
- **Native Hardware Features** - Mobile web browsers are getting increasingly good at accessing certain mobile-specific functions such as click-to-call, SMS and GPS. Today, if you need to access a user's camera or processing power, an app will still do that much more effectively, but new mobile browser standards are enabling the same functionality without the app.
- **No Connectivity** – If you need to provide offline access to content or perform functions without a network/wireless connection, then an app makes sense.

As with any project, when developing an app, you want to ensure that you are getting an optimal return on your investment. What you want to avoid at all costs is the needless and expensive exercise of building an app to do something basic that can be achieved with a mobile website.

Technology and the Future of Mobile User Experience

The emergence of secured and cost-effective mobile solutions will address key concerns such as technology costs and security fears. Applications powered with technologies like NFC, Augmented Reality, Location Based Services and others will get smarter and will occupy a larger role in consumer’s daily lives.

Mobility embodies engagement that is enabled by the latest technologies deployed in mobile devices, networks and standards. To harness the power of mobile technology and the engagement it offers, it is a strategic imperative that marketers understand and embrace relevant emerging mobile technologies and their impact on marketing.

One such technology is HTML 5, which is an evolving web standard/technology that will drastically reshape the Internet and consumer engagement as we know it today with global ramifications. What sets HTML 5 apart from the previous versions of HTML is that HTML 5 has the potential to bring together the last 20 years of the world's experience with the Internet, and unify it into a broadly supported standard.



HTML 5, once fully deployed, will help reduce device fragmentation issues in the market, enabling companies to unleash their creativity on innovative, intuitive and compelling engagements via mobile, such as:

- Cross-platform, cross-network, static and real-time rich media (e.g. video, audio)
- Streamlined social media integration and enablement
- Easier and more innovative customer care and relationship marketing
- Improved and enhanced user navigation, site usability and automatic content refreshing on mobile sites
- Ability to retain user selection, preference and history for a better user-specific and context-appropriate personalized mobile site experience
- New advertising and social media experiences utilizing local storage for context and history
- Native app experience within a browser, an experience also known as the "Hybrid App" or "Web App"
- Gaming, augmented reality and a wide range of other cloud computing based services which will evolve by leveraging HTML 5 standards and new features

Which is the Best Option for Your Organization – an App or a Mobile Website?

When deciding whether to deploy a native app or a mobile website, the most appropriate choice really depends on your end goals. If you are developing an interactive game, then an app is probably going to be your best option. But if your goal is to offer content to the widest possible audience, then a mobile website is probably the way to go. In some cases, you may decide you need both a mobile website and a mobile app, but it is pretty safe to say that it rarely makes sense to build an app without already having a mobile website in place.

Generally speaking, a mobile website should be considered your first step in developing a mobile web presence, whereas an app is useful for developing an application for a very specific purpose that cannot be effectively accomplished via a web browser.

As long as mobile remains a relatively new frontier, the "app versus web" question will remain a very real consideration for organizations seeking to establish a mobile presence. If your mobile goals are primarily to deliver content and establish a broad mobile presence that can be easily shared between users and found on search engines, then a mobile website is the logical choice.

The Power of Euronet

Euronet has more than 15 years of global experience in providing feature-rich Internet and mobile banking solutions. Our commitment to mobile products and to embracing technologies such as HTML 5 will continue to position us as a leading provider of relevant financial solutions.

Utilizing our solid base of highly integrated web banking, our solutions offer intelligent rendering of web pages tailored to the user's browser, regardless of the type of smartphones, tables or traditional desktop/laptop browsers they are using – all from a single, cost-effective platform. This approach avoids expensive and time consuming silo development and ongoing maintenance of native apps for multiple, changing platforms.

About Euronet

Euronet Software Solutions, a division of Euronet Worldwide, is recognized as a leading provider of software that powers electronic payment and transaction delivery systems around the world. Our solutions have reliably served the worldwide cards, payments and financial services markets for more than 35 years.

Ensuring quick time-to-market and delivering a quality experience, we enable our clients to provide secure electronic payment convenience to millions of people around the world. Whether your organization is a bank or a provider of processing services to financial services organizations, our proven solutions will support your critical business needs now and in the future.

We provide a fully integrated suite of solutions for issuing, acquiring, self-service, e-banking and card scheme connections. Utilizing our services-oriented payments hub architecture, our software offerings are designed to increase your revenue, reduce your expenses, improve your security and increase the value of your customer relationships.

For more information:

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