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Cocard is Helping Banks with Mobile Apps

"Just about half of the people in the U.S. own a smartphone. In the U.S., more than two-thirds of those ages 25-34 own smartphones, and 80% of those in that age group who buy a new phone choose a smartphone. Not surprisingly, income and smartphone ownership is also highly correlated, more than 75% of those earning more than \$75K across most age groups own smartphones: Eighty percent of those between 25 and 34 who make \$100K or more own a smartphone. Do Bankers want these Customers?"

These days, it is rare for someone to go anywhere without a cell phone. No, it is rare for anyone to be farther than an arm's reach from a cell phone at any time. It's also common for people to check their phones 150 times per day. 150 times! in our industry since the swipe machine. The smart-phone industry is now on track to have 200 million users by the end of 2012. And the **Mobile App** is the ultimate prospecting and business tool for helping companies and organizations communicate



CoCARD®

"Your concerns are our priorities"

with their customers, patrons and community in the language most familiar to them. Being able to conduct business over mobile devices is the greatest new tool.

This Reality Needs to be Understood

Currently, there are about 175 million smart-phone users who are already communicating with their favorite brands via their smart phones, whether it's through Facebook, Twitter or a company website. These smart-phone users have begun making business connections, doing marketing and sales through **Mobile Apps** because they see the weight the mobile channel holds with everyday customers like themselves.

Business owners now have the opportunity to get ahead and grow their businesses by creating **Mobile Apps**, because 95 percent of merchants do not yet have mobile phone apps for their businesses.

Smart Phone Capabilities

You've probably heard of the idea of "going mobile" but haven't really given it a second thought, let alone expended time or resources on it. You may think your company is well established and doing just fine, so why enter it into the edgy technological world of your children or grandchildren? I should probably tell you now that some of today's Fortune 500 companies have **Mobile Apps**: Geico Inc., Starbucks Corp., Whole Foods Market Inc., eBay Inc., to name several. You can find them all in the palm of your hand.

These companies don't need apps to be successful today. They were clearly well established long before they had **Mobile Apps**. But one day, every company will need such apps. And those who started early, like Geico and Starbucks, will still be on top. Those who are late to the game will wish they had jumped in sooner.



There's Much a Company can do With an App

Mobile apps are all about enhancing customers' lives. Consider the Geico app. Let's say you get in a car accident. You're frazzled and upset, and on top of everything, you can't find your insurance card. Well, stop fumbling through your papers because the Geico app can easily display your insurance card right on your smart phone's screen. The app will give you step-by-step instructions on handling your accident the right way, saving you time, money and energy.

Run out of gas? Locked your keys in the car? The app will take you to the nearest gas station or locksmith. (Just don't lock your smart phone in the car because then you'll have to thumb a ride. And even if there were an app for thumbing a ride, you'd be out of luck, because your phone would be locked in the car). Geico is known for excellent customer service, and with its Mobile app, its solid reputation will continue to the next generation.

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Now, imagine you're on the road again, and you need coffee. But just when you thought no locale could be without a Starbucks within two feet, you can't find one. That's OK, because the Starbucks app will direct you to the nearest Starbucks location. Once you get there, you can use the Drink Builder feature on the app to come up with a new creation, or just use it to help you order, as ordering at Starbucks can sometimes feel like speaking another language.

Mobile Apps Bring New Capabilities to The Workplace

Smart-phone apps enable meetings to take place anywhere, anytime. Individuals in your company can "meet" and connect spontaneously via smart-phone apps instead of just at designated meetings in swivel chairs around a big, glossy table at work.

This doesn't mean chaos, but rather more organization, more communication, and better utilization of your time and resources. Employees can better collaborate by interacting and sharing insight on current products, ideas, projects, etc., giving your company better output.

Your customers can better interact with you with a **Mobile App**, too, dramatically increasing the chances they will continue to do business with you. You will become more available to hear feedback you can share with others or use to improve your offerings. Opening the doors of communication by having an app for your business will give current and prospective customers access to you in a way that they haven't had before, creating a positive experience and community centered around your product or service.

Thinking Needs Reshaping for the Mobile World

The way people interact, learn, share information and just do life is changing rapidly. To engage with a potential client via social media might seem foreign to you, but if you are under the age of 30, this mode of outreach is a no-brainer. It's the way that not just friends are interacting, but also businesses. You really can get more clients online.

In this new climate, either someone will be your obstacle in the mobile evolution, or you will be someone else's obstacle.

You are either going to have to learn to work around those who don't embrace social media, apps and mobile websites, or someone will have to learn to work around you - and then leave you behind. Your choice. But know that doing nothing is still making a choice.

Following are questions to ask yourself when considering a mobile presence. Do your customers:



- Think of you as a leader in your field?
- Know they can easily reach you?
- Feel that you understand them?
- Believe you want to meet them where they are?
- View you as someone who understands them and the world they live in?

Chances are, if they don't see you as mobile-friendly or on social media, no matter how amazing your product or service is, someone else in your field is probably already savvy in this arena, and your audience will see your competitor as a more convenient and trusted party with which to do business.

Don't overlook the opportunity a smart-phone app can give you - not only in creating and joining communities surrounding your product or services, but in truly branding your business for years to come.

Mobile Apps Bring Advantages to Business

The Following are six perks having a **Mobile App** can bring to your business:

1. You can connect with customers as well as those just checking you out.

2. People can "test drive" your company, see the way you do things and see what it would be like to do business with you. When they have a positive experience on your app, they will be more likely to stick with you.

3. Social media is a must, and a **Mobile App** is the next step in presenting yourself as relevant to your audience. Unless you have a niche market for those who are over 90 years old, your audience really is online. Well, even then, I've heard of some tech-savvy grandpas, so I wouldn't overlook them.

4. You can have a mobile payment processing feature built into your app so merchants can accept customers' money right on the spot.

5. You can cater to the distinct needs of niche markets. For example, restaurants and hotels can use an app's "push notifications" feature to notify customers about special deals, and doctors can remind patients about upcoming appointments.

6. When your current and prospective customers send you messages or ask you questions, you can immediately be notified, making your response time fast. Quick responses really do build relationships and trust. People may want to sign up for an event or give to your cause or purchase an item, but they typically want to ask you a question or two before completing the transaction. Your opportune time to win their business may be very short before they forget you amid their busy, crazy lives. You've got to be available to them when they need you.

Since the invention of the website back in the early 1990s, we have not seen another opportunity like this. Here it is: **Mobile Apps.**

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