

# Why Mobile Apps Are a Must-Have Today in Private Clubs

**T**ODAY MORE THAN EVER, mobile apps are critical to how businesses interact with their customers. The same is becoming true in the Private Club world. This is why Private Clubs need to begin to think about how mobile apps can be a key differentiator to how they interact, serve and communicate with their Members.

If you think that mobile apps are solely for big-name brands like banks and retail, you are wrong. More and more small and midsize businesses are following the mobile trend, understanding that an effective mobile strategy today involves more than just an interactive mobile-friendly website.

These days you'll notice that many small businesses you interact with personally in your everyday life have their own dedicated mobile app—be it the corner coffee shop or local restaurant. These businesses are ahead of the game when it comes to taking interactions with their customers to the next level and personally connecting with them through mobile.

In case you are still not sure why a Private Club needs their own mobile platform, here are the top main benefits of going mobile sooner rather than later, as identified by Rathan Kumar, Founder and CEO of [MobiCom](#).

## ONE

### **An App allows the Club to be visible to Members at all times**

Statistics show that the average American spends more than two hours a day on his or her mobile device. While probably only a handful of applications make up the bulk of this total usage, it doesn't change the fact that each user has to unlock, scroll and scan their device for the apps they're looking for. This places your Club in daily visibility with your Members.



## TWO

### **Create a Direct Message for Events to the Entire Family**

Members are always saying if they were made aware of the events at the Club they would attend more frequently. This is particularly true for their spouse. One of the biggest benefits of having a mobile app is that all the information you would like to provide to your Members, including direct communication about and tournaments, is right at their fingertips. Through push notifications you're getting even closer to a direct interaction, and can easily remind Members and their spouses about your Club events.

## THREE

### **Provide a Value Offer to your Members**

E-mail is only checked occasionally. Apps allow you to digitalize short-term promotions and send them directly to the key audience whether it be golf-related (to Golf Members) or

a special promotion in the dining room (to Social Members). Instead of the Club newsletter or a poster displayed in the Club, with an App you can send messages in real-time to only those Members who should receive that message.

#### FOUR

### Build the Club Brand and Recognition

A mobile app for your Club can greatly contribute to your Club awareness and brand strength.

- **Brand.** A mobile app is like a blank billboard. You can do what you want with it; you can make it stylish, functional or informative. But what you really want to do is create an app that has features your Members will love, while at the same time is well branded and tastefully designed.

- **Recognition.** The more often you can get Mem-

bers engaged with your app, the more often they will be inclined to use the Club's facilities and services. In the app world this is called the 'effective frequency'. As a rule of thumb, hearing and/or seeing your brand consistently and conveniently is what will truly drive greater usage of the Club.

#### FIVE

### Improve Member Engagement

No matter what services or programs a club offers, your Members need a way to reach you, and equally important, connect with each other. Having Member-connect and messaging features within your app are critical and will make a big difference in the way you interact with your Members. Think about it,

OpenTable, for example, built its entire business model around this principle. Instead of calling a restaurant for a table, you can book it with less than five clicks on their platform. Now consider: How many Members would prefer to communicate with you and other Members through their app than via phone for reservations, tee times and billing questions?

#### SIX

### Differentiate Your Club from Competition

These days, mobile Apps at clubs are still rare, and this is where you can take a big leap ahead of your competitors. Be the first in your market or competitive set to offer a mobile app for your Members. They'll be grateful for the convenience and Member usage will increase.

#### SEVEN

### Cultivate Member Loyalty

The most important reason you should have your Club mobile app is Member loyalty. With all the noise out there on social media and e-mail marketing, clubs are finding it more difficult every day to connect with Members. A mobile app can be an effective tool in staying closer to your Members and communicating with them directly as well as being just a "fingertip" away at all times.

As we look towards tomorrow and the next few years, a mobile app is going to be a standard component of any business in the future. The choice you make today is going set the foundation for the future of your Club. ■

