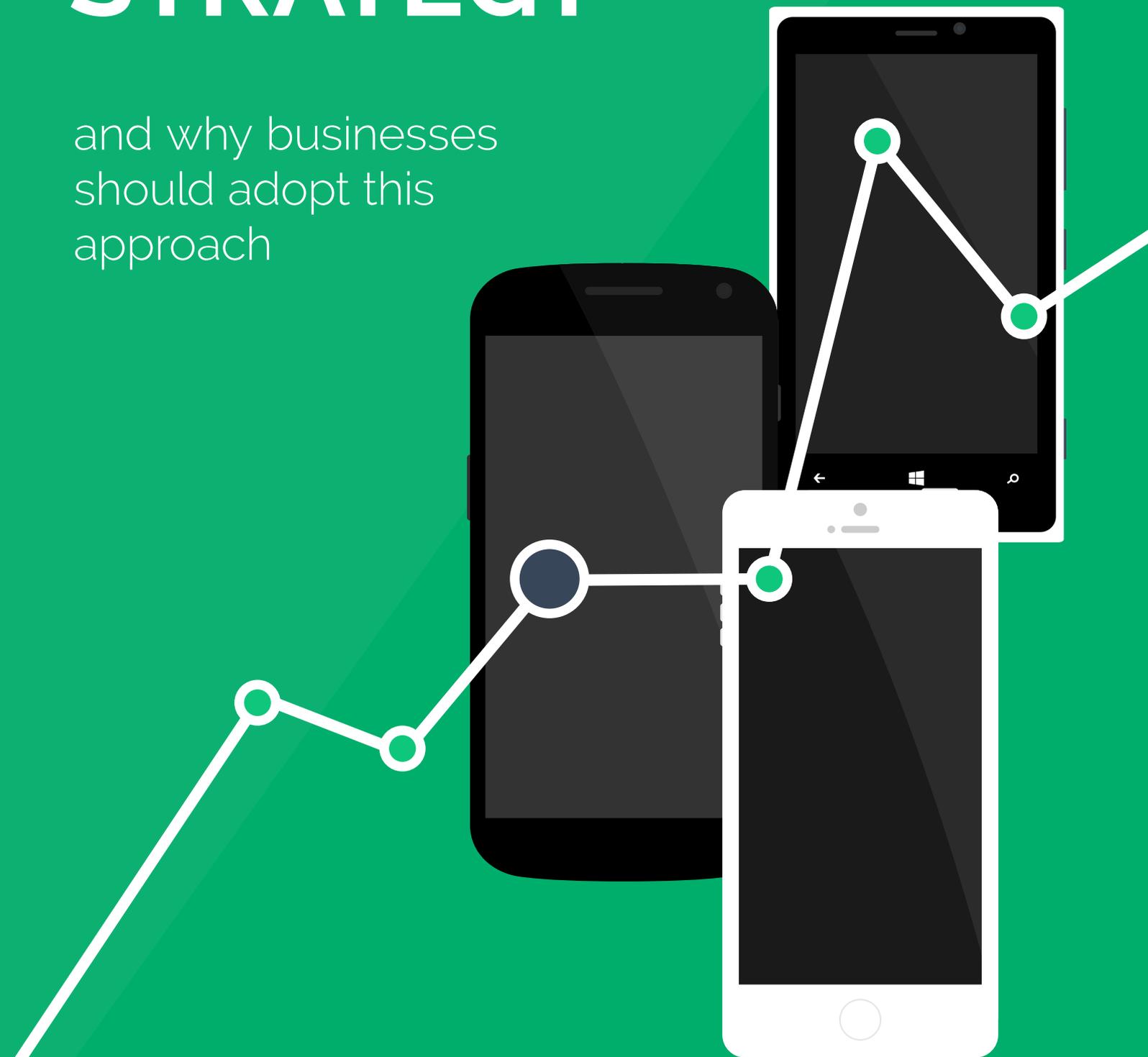


MULTI-APP STRATEGY

and why businesses should adopt this approach



WHAT IS A MULTI-APP STRATEGY?



Definition

Multiple focused applications that belong to a single brand, which have been segmented to achieve a specific set of functionality. This can be achieved for internal business applications and consumer based products.

This report identifies brands that have implemented this strategy and why we are passionate about employing this strategy across our client portfolio.

WHY A MULTI-APP STRATEGY CAN BE EFFECTIVE

People change, their expectations change, their lifestyles change and so do their preferences. So how do you tackle that and how do you keep up to date with an evolving technological product?

Do you take a single application approach by packing an app with lots of functionality so that it does many things? Or do you implement a multi-app strategy to deliver a better experience based on an individual's specific wants and needs over individual focused applications?

How it started...

With the advent of smartphones, the first generation of apps were feature light and very specific, but as the marketplace began to develop businesses wanted their apps to contain the same feature set as their websites. However, mobile with its limited screen real estate doesn't lend itself to this and overloading an app can have a detrimental effect on the user experience and ultimately overshadow the core purpose of the app.

Therefore, it is important to identify what the key function of an app is. Then, when you decide to add a new feature, ask if it's likely to overpower its initial purpose. If the answer is yes, then we recommend that you should consider a multi-app strategy.

FACEBOOK SWITCHED TO A MULTI-APP STRATEGY



Take Facebook as an example. Initially, Facebook was launched with an inclusive messaging feature, which allowed users to share links and content within their Facebook network. This was also included in the first incarnations of the Facebook mobile app.

Over time, Facebook changed their strategy realising that they were losing users from their messaging service to more feature rich offerings such as WhatsApp. Just recently, by removing the private messaging capability from the primary Facebook app meant that Facebook could create a standalone messaging brand, Facebook Messenger. This mobile app provides users with simple messaging features such as; instant messaging, the ability to make phone calls, create and send videos and create groups. All very similar, to WhatsApp's functionalities.

SO WHY WAS THIS A GOOD IDEA?

To introduce these offerings into the already feature rich Facebook app would have posed various implications from both a user experience and technical perspective.

By separating the messaging functionality from the main facebook application, a consumer would benefit from a more focused user experience, clearer user paths increased engagement, with less distractions attributed to extended or alternative functionality.

From a technical perspective, the individual applications will be lighter, have less individual functionality and therefore require less complex development. For future updates and upgrades, businesses will enjoy reduced development time and lower costs.

Developing in an overly complex and feature heavy application could prove costly as well as time consuming due to the intricate nature of adding in new functions to the existing app. Facebook's product portfolio diversification has a number of long term benefits, but a key advantage is that Facebook Messenger can easily build its own brand and compete with other instant messaging service providers in the market.

SKY'S APPROACH TO MULTI-FUNCTIONAL MOBILE APPLICATIONS

A key example of a brand that has adopted this strategy and implemented it exceptionally well is Sky (British Sky Broadcasting Group plc). They initially started out as a British Satellite Broadcasting Company, but now provide on-demand internet streaming media, broadband, telephone services and online gambling. With a broad range of service offerings, Sky clearly felt the need to adopt a multi-app mobile strategy and currently offer over 10 different services, all exclusive to the Sky brand.



In a fast changing market, Sky saw the need to embrace a multi-app strategy. Imagine all of the above services packed into a single mobile application... it has already taken your attention away from the single purpose.

This approach makes their apps very focused on what each app actually does rather than having a single app doing everything. Sky have firmly identified the complexity of their brand and understand that not all of their services appeal to all of their audiences. The multi-app strategic approach gives the user more control when it comes to the type of service they want from Sky. This is achieved by the delivery of specific content, design, functionality and branding through individual apps, whilst still maintaining Sky's overarching parent branding. Ultimately, this creates an enhanced user experience and the segmentation means that the user acquires what they want from a particular app.

WHY THE MULTI-APP STRATEGY WORKS WELL IN THE GAMBLING INDUSTRY



Degree 53 have significant experience in online and mobile gambling after being born out of Betfred's mobile development team, which built their own mobile sportsbook which replaced their existing third party service. This now accounts for more than 50% of Betfred.com's online profit. We also built the first ever gambling app for Windows 8, working closely with Microsoft throughout the process.

We established the multi-app strategy early on and today Betfred has nine different mobile apps. Everyone with it's own focused purpose and brand.

This includes, sports betting, games, lotto, live casino, bingo, virtual sports, pools and poker. Each app facilitates a wide range of features specific to the apps genre. Would it be right to combine all of these to cut down on the cost? Or was it more important to give users a better experience by allowing them to buy into the right service for them? This, as well as other key factors, discussed in the benefits of a multi-app strategy, outlines why we believe this was the ideal solution for Betfred.

SO WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ADOPTING A MULTI-APP STRATEGY?

Like anything, there are always costs and benefits. However, with many years' experience in mobile app development, we have seen that multi-app strategies have had a significant advantage over a single app approach. As a result, we at Degree 53 believe that brands which offer a wide range of services are best suited for this suggest this strategy. However we also consider that this can be a more expensive strategy that may not be within a client's budget.

Since the start of the relationship with Betfred, Andrew Daniels (Managing Director at Degree 53) has been keen to implement this strategy from the get go.

Did Betfred just have one mobile app and then branch out?

From the outset, Betfred followed a multi-app methodology in delivering their gaming experience. They started with a single application and then extended their app based product range as their portfolio expanded.

Working closely with Betfred we have identified a wide range of advantages within a multi app mobile strategy;

- **Tailored applications** - Building specific sub-brands that appeal across a focused demographic.
- **Marketing advantages** - Data collection specific to a particular product or service:
 - **Data Collection** - Number of users and downloads statistics identify product popularity. These users or individuals can be directly marketed to about the product and similar products within the group
 - **User information** - Identifying individual trends and behaviour within a single application

- **Product Specific Marketing** - Companies can have a number of app based products available, however as a customer who only uses one of the products, having an app that contains all the companies products could be overwhelming. It is also difficult for the business to track what the customers are using within the app, resulting in poorer statistical analysis and less specific marketing. By having dedicated apps which are focused on the users preferences, you can easily capture user data and preferences and directly market to those customers about their chosen product or other related products and services. This will result in a more customer focused marketing strategy.
- **User experience** - Specific and focused content and functionality that allows a clutter free, less distracting user experience.
- **Light applications** - With the removal of unwanted functionality, the app operates faster, more efficiently and takes up less storage space on a device. The developers and users will benefit from reduced upload and download times when updating or installing the app.
- **Specific branding** - Each product can build its own brand personality. E.g. Lotto app is branded to have a softer more unisex tone. It is designed to attract lotto players of both genders.
- **Selling or removing a brand** - Using separate applications, it is easy to switch off a poorly performing app or brand or sell of individual brand, without the cost of developing their separation from a single large scale application. This allows each micro business or brand to exist on its own, depending on the business requirements can be sold, switched off or improved without affecting any of the other applications.
- **Cross sell and upsell opportunity** - Advertise and introduce similar apps from your portfolio depending on customer behaviour.
- **Speed of development** - To react to changing requirements and functionality in a dynamic market place, individual apps can easily be updated and developed without consideration or impact of heavier functionality. Brand roll out and creation is a quicker and more cost effective as you are not developing a potentially bloated, complex and restrictive application framework.
- **Protection of the main brand, flexibility of entering and launching new brands** - New brands can easily be introduced within a group and do not directly affect the main brands, however, the larger brands can be used to leverage popularity and assist to marketing and success of these sub brand products.
- **Simplified performance monitoring** - Simplified analytics specific to each app or brand allows the performance to be monitored on a more granular level, leading to quicker decision making and strategy decisions.
- **Code sharing** - Some apps will simply be a branding exercise, so existing code bases can be used to replicate functionality and reduce the costs of extra app development.

- **Developing apps for specific devices** - Some products or brands may be better suited for tablet rather than phone, therefore, it is more cost effective to develop single brands or apps for alternative devices rather than a single, resource heavy proposition.
 - **Cost control and scalability** - Costs can be phased on a per app basis as a company grows, allowing for a smoother and more controlled deployment of functionality.
 - **Shared functionality** - Common or shared functionality can be deployed on an individual app and if successful can then be rolled out to the sister apps or brands. The cost of this functionality can be shared amongst the individual brands or business functions.
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SO WHAT ARE THE DISADVANTAGES OF A MULTI-APP STRATEGY?

Yes, it can be more expensive, but this is the obvious compromise when implementing a multi-app strategy. The initial cost to this approach is limited to the short term, as the long term vision of a multi-app strategy has many advantages:

- **Set-up costs** - Separating out light applications from a single heavy feature rich application. The development of individual apps can be expensive, as you would effectively be starting from scratch. However, much of the knowledge and code base could potentially be adapted.
- **Management** - There are more applications to manage and update when changes in operating systems occur such as, iOS major updates.
- **Development Partner** - You require a development partner with expertise and the available capacity to manage and update all the apps collectively within a robust development framework
- **Hosting and storage** - Multiple applications will require individual hosting requirements, which may incur individual setup and management costs. However individual apps with lower traffic loads will require a less complex infrastructure as there will be lower loads and less concurrent users.

SUMMARY

The benefits of successfully running a multi-app strategy significantly outweigh the demands associated with implementation.

- Hosting and storage on an individual app basis
- Requirements for an expert partner or development house
- Set up costs for multiple applications

This strategy, is ideal for larger organisations with a more complex product offering. This report has highlighted how leading brands, Sky and Facebook, have successfully implemented a multi-app strategy across their sub brands and products. We have also documented how this has been achieved with our gambling client, Betfred.

Adopting a multi-app strategic approach can improve your business operations with the following key benefits:

- **Responsive** - react faster to changing trends and technologies with reduced development times
- **Improved data and analytics** - granular statistical information for marketing and product development
- **Focus** - on successful brands, their specific requirements and ultimately customers' needs

The above outlines a customer led approach which will result in increased sales, improved customer engagement and greater retention.

GET IN TOUCH



Andrew Daniels
Managing Director

We specialise in all aspects of app and website development.

If you would like to find out more about what embracing mobile could do for your business, do not hesitate to get in touch with us:

Email: info@degree53.com

Tel: +44(0)161 359 4000

Address:

Degree 53, The Sharp Project,
Thorp Road,
Newton Heath, Manchester,
M40 5BJ
United Kingdom

THANK YOU

