



Don't Gamble on Your Mobile Solution

10 Top Tips for Offering Mobile Betting Services



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1. Introduction

It's the FA Cup final. Underdogs Wigan meet favourites Manchester City in a David versus Goliath battle for the trophy. Fast forward to 84 minutes on the clock. Pablo Zabaleta becomes the third man sent off in FA Cup final history and Manchester City are down to 10 men. Want to bet? Will Manchester or Wigan score first? Will it come down to a penalty shootout? Or will Ben Watson, a second-half substitute, win the match for the underdogs?

An exciting conclusion to the cup competition, but have you captured the market opportunity? Did your customers place in-play bets on the match as it happened? Were they getting notifications of new odds as the last six minutes unfolded? Did you give them all this functionality in the palm of their hand?

Last year, \$13 billion in bets were placed via mobile devices worldwide; a number expected to increase to \$45 billion by 2017. UK gamblers accounted for \$3 billion of global mobile betting growth with 40% of online bets placed in the UK from a mobile device, such as a smartphone or tablet. And 20% of all sports bets placed in the UK were from mobile devices.¹

William Hill reported growth of 145% in mobile sports betting in the Q1 results. Betfair said in its 'FY13 Trading & Strategy Update' that mobile is now front of mind in all communications, with group revenue from continuing operations up 5% to £200.6 million, driven by a strong sports and mobile performance. Paddy Power's 2012 mobile turnover in its online sportsbook increased by 121%.²

According to a recent report by the UK Gambling Commission, around 4.5 million people in the UK are already using smartphones to gamble on the go. That's over a third of people who have gambled online – and the number is set to rise.

If your mobile strategy is not already implemented, or if it is, but you are not benefiting from this growth opportunity, you have a problem. Jurgen Reutter, William Hill's director of mobile explains in an eGaming Review magazine article that in the past 12 months the sector has changed beyond recognition. "For many years we've seen that mobile has been a bit of an experimental add-on in companies' strategies, but in the past few years we have seen a paradigm shift."³

This white paper outlines our top tips for mobile betting. With a customer portfolio of six of the top ten UK eGaming companies and numerous others, we are well positioned to advise on what you need to stay competitive in this constantly evolving market.

¹Juniper Research, "Mobile Gambling Casinos, Lotteries & Betting 2012-2017" May 2012.
²eGaming Review magazine, "Mobile Sports Betting" May 2012, page 39.

10 Top Tips for Offering Mobile Betting Services

1. Give Bettors Fast Load Times and Real-Time Odds

Offer low latency and speed to distribute millions of messages per second to tens of thousands of clients on a single server on commodity hardware.

TIP

The millions of end users gambling online want speed, particularly fast load times. In fact, research shows that users expect mobile apps to launch not just quickly, but faster than mobile versions of websites. 78 percent expect mobile apps to load as fast as — or faster than — a mobile website. Four out of five app users expect an app to launch in three seconds or less, with an average two-second load time.³

Nothing is worse for a customer placing an in-play bet than the app not loading fast enough, or the bet not getting in because of poor performance.

Similarly, some customers will shop around for the best bet lines. If a site has a great line, bettors will want to place it quickly, but if the line has changed before the bet can be placed, that's irritating. You need to offer your customers real-time odds with minimum latency to ensure they have information to act on, now.

To serve your mobile customers, you need to deliver fast, instant access to bets. There is a huge demand to ensure stable technology. Tip number one is all about speed. You need to ensure you can get the odds out and the bets in or you risk losing your customers. How exactly can you do this? Prioritise data so that the relevant data is distributed over limited bandwidth environments. In this way, you will not clog the network with odds that are out of date and you also won't slow down the app by distributing too much data that causes it to crash or load slowly. You only have two seconds to perform, make sure data doesn't slow you down.

When accessing a gaming mobile app, latency becomes a problem as network components are not able to prioritise what is important. And while developers and network infrastructure support teams will understand all the technology and bandwidth necessary to get that customer the real-time odds, if the app loads too slowly, the bettor will go elsewhere.

Minimising latency from your servers to a bettor's device will ensure your mobile app has the ability to reliably handle high volumes of data and connections. You will increase speed to provide customers with data that is accurate and always in sync with betting opportunities.

2. Give Customers Fresh, Relevant Scores, News, Stats and Alerts

Provide more data, statistics and content to your mobile proposition to create customer loyalty.

TIP

Sending customers scores and news that are even minutes old when a game is rapidly changing, or horse racing alerts that are no longer current won't please bettors. You know you need to give them the perceived edge to retain them so give them fresh, relevant scores, news, stats and alerts.

³Compuware, *Mobile Apps: What Consumers Really Need and Want*

Jurgen Reutter, William Hill's director of mobile said in the eGaming Review⁴ article, "We want to offer more data, more statistics and more content. Technology is constantly evolving and it gives us the opportunity to give more content to our mobile proposition."

No longer should your system push data that is old by even a millisecond, you need to send the relevant most up to date information quickly. If bettors are confident in your ability to send relevant data at speed, you will create customer loyalty.

Handle increased data without affecting performance.

TIP

3. More Games, More Options, More Bets

Satisfy their appetite! Offer more games and more options within your mobile app to encourage your bettors to place more bets. But offering more in a mobile app can sometimes result in poor performance and latency issues. You need to ensure your mobile app can handle a richer experience that requires exponentially more data. Ensure your mobile app can handle increased data without affecting performance by selecting a data orientated solution that is bandwidth efficient. By doing this, you will ensure that only the right data is distributed so end users are not losing loyalty or patience waiting for stale information. This will help to ensure a rich user experience that traditional messaging approaches cannot.

Load data behind the scenes so your user won't need to wait.

TIP

4. Give Them What They Want

Your bettors will likely use your mobile app to place bets on specific sports or events. You should customise views per customer to give them only what they need to place their bets, or show them what they are likely to bet on with changes highlighted. This will give bettors the information required to commit to more bets.

Betfair's head of digital, Ben Carter said that personalisation holds huge potential for operators. "A very exciting area of mobile is increased personalisation. We know that customers use their mobile as a utility so we need to focus on making that as convenient and as relevant as possible. Whether that's by serving up relevant betting opportunities based on a customer's previous bets, sending tailored push notifications or geo-targeting customers based on their location."

You'll also want to factor in how mobile screen limitations can affect how you give your customers information. Bettors want to jump in and out of a price on a football match, then they want to see what is happening at Wimbledon and next how the cricket is going. How can you deliver this rich content on a screen that has limitations? How can you make in-play work on this device? And how do you do all this without impacting performance?

Tip number five is about giving your users what they want on any device regardless of limitations. You need the ability to distribute data and load it behind the screen. As the user accesses the information, you can show it immediately without the user having to wait for a typical request/response.

⁴eGaming Review magazine, "Mobile Sports Betting" May 2012, page 39.

Rapidly scale and scale for peak events.

TIP

5. Give Them What They Want, However Many

When Saturday afternoon rolls around, you need the ability to rapidly scale if customers are increasing bets. If a football match suddenly changes direction and your customers start hitting the system to place more in-play bets, you need to scale from 5,000 to 50,000 connections quickly to get bettors live data. If you cannot do this, they will go to your competitors.

Similarly, for peak events, you need the ability to handle vast numbers of connections without heavy investment in your infrastructure or network. If you invest in the infrastructure itself, the problem is the high cost of the hardware, network and the service time, and the majority of the time it will sit unused. The smarter way is to have technology that can help you scale your existing infrastructure by distributing data in a more efficient way.

Support customers on any Internet connected device to capture more bets.

TIP

6. What Devices Do You Support? – Doesn't Matter

One in five mobile phones sold last year was a smartphone, according to IDC⁵. In use today, there are approximately 6,500 different models of mobile device. From feature phones to smartphones and through to tablets, these devices are capable of accessing your website, and in the case of company phones they can also access your company network and systems.

To support your customers, you need to do it on any device, but managing the proliferation of mobile and tablet devices is a challenge. You need to have a single solution in place to reduce the complexities of developing for each device, and it needs to be financially viable as well.

If you can support your customers on any mobile device, tablet or ultimately any Internet connected device, you will capture more bets because customers will default to you. Simply offering these customers your services wherever they are and whatever device they are using will allow you to reach more of them.

Ben Carter, head of digital at Betfair says major growth in Betfair mobile is down to the anytime, anywhere nature of the channel. "It sounds too obvious, but the ability of mobile to enable sports bettors to place a bet wherever and whenever they want should not be underestimated. Mobile enables people to exploit dead time to place bets and this is time that betting companies did not have access to previously. We continue to see incremental uplift in the value of a customer on mobile while they're also more engaged than a non-mobile customer."⁶

Offer high performance mobile apps over less than ideal infrastructure.

TIP

7. Support Many Geographies and Emerging Markets

Next year's World Cup in Brazil is opening up new emerging markets for eGaming companies. Other emerging regions offer new customers and revenue. But these geographies come with their challenges – the core infrastructure isn't great, bandwidth is poor and expensive. Gaining traction in new geographies and markets requires sophistication in the development of your offer.

⁵IDC Worldwide Quarterly Mobile Phone Tracker
⁶eGaming Review magazine, "Mobile Sports Betting" May 2012, page 39.

When looking, for example, to support the nearly 260 million Brazilian smartphone users (as of end of 2012), and a country of people who have much more expendable income and are increasingly adopting m-commerce, you need to deliver technology that will reach these markets and offer a high quality of service. Adopt technology that lets you deliver performance over poor Internet connections and do so to any device on the market. You can also look to reduce the amount of data sent over the network to lessen bandwidth requirements. This will translate into lower costs for you and your customers. A win-win in generating customer loyalty.

Reduce the amount of data sent across the network.

TIP

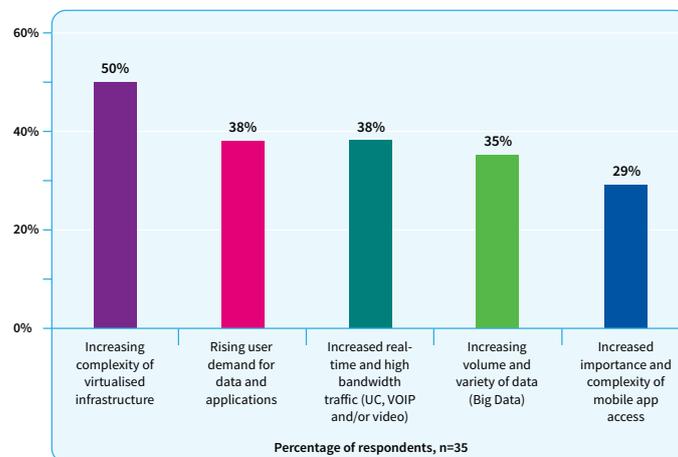
8. Massively Reduce Hardware and Data Distribution Costs

Hardware is expensive – not just purchasing it, but servicing it. At the same time, companies are faced with significant pressures on the network.

By intelligently managing and distributing data to your mobile app, only when it changes, you can reduce the network pressures and infrastructure costs. You will significantly reduce hardware requirements and bandwidth usage against a backdrop of ever increasing data consumption.

We predict that in the future, end users will only download mobile apps that do not impact too heavily on data consumption. Smart eGaming companies will rein in their application developers to reduce the

Figure 1: Top Pressure on Network Performance



Source: Aberdeen Group, May 2013

size of data sent over the network. Better yet, these developers will develop apps that only send the right data to the device – there is no need to send replicated or out of date information that only clogs the network and comes at a cost. Moving forward, incorporating the three capabilities below will allow eGaming companies to make a marked difference to the functionality and offers delivered to customers.

1. Remove redundant information from the two-way data stream
2. Intelligently and dynamically update data in transit
3. Support intelligent reconnect i.e. if connection is interrupted, can your applications seamlessly reconnect when you are back in signal?

Using technology that reduces bandwidth and radically reduces the hardware needed to serve your betting customers across mobile and Internet channels will help you to realise significant cost savings.

Combine historical BI with real-time insights for competitive advantage to generate customer loyalty.

TIP

9. Know Your Customer, Retain Your Customer

Delivering a high performance mobile app will help to retain customers – we’ve given you that tip already. But combining real-time insights with business intelligence gained over time from your web or mobile application offers you value. If you know that every year customer A spends £1000 on the Grand National, when that customer is on your mobile app, looking at stats and news from the event, you can target him and her with offers and vouchers. Similarly, when that customer is looking at other horse racing events, you can also encourage betting by again offering individual real-time deals and vouchers.

Logs are insufficient because they cannot combine this type of information at speed. You need the ability to see what your customer is doing, analyse that with your back-end intelligence and immediately get them the right offers and vouchers. That requires data distribution technology that can transport this information rapidly without impact performance.

Reutter, William Hill’s director of mobile said, “With the development of push notifications, we have the ability to inform customers of relevant information directly to their device and this crucially allows us to engage and build brand loyalty.”⁷

When using historical business intelligence (BI) with real-time activity, you get intelligence that offers customers value. And when offering value, you will retain customers. We all know that it is easier to retain than recruit new customers so this type of insight will help to achieve retention and loyalty.

10. Attract New Customers and Generate New Revenue

Most eGaming companies are expecting tremendous growth – some even predicting 300% growth of their customer base. But how will these companies achieve this amount of growth? Attracting new customers is one way, introducing new revenue opportunities and looking for alternative revenue sources are others.

Attract new customers – Beyond the traditional male, sports market, when targeting new customers, the ability to offer new services will help you attract more of them. Giving your users a customised experience where they can select the type of bets they want to place – winners of the Voice, X-Factor, Britain’s Got Talent, Eurovision, elections and more will allow you to attract new customers.

Use bettor behaviour analysis and real-time adverts to encourage more bets.

TIP

⁷eGaming Review magazine, “Mobile Sports Betting” May 2012, page 39.

New revenue sources – Combine the above points and you now have opened new revenue sources. Now add in real-time adverts to encourage more betting on similar activities. Be able to analyse how your end users are consuming your services as well – maybe they are looking at a rugby game, but you know they tend to bet on football – change the adverts to reflect the end bettor’s buying behavior.

Keep in mind your players are not your only source of revenue – Real time odds, scores and betting information all offer value to third parties. B2B opportunities can be realised by providing your own information to third parties. The ability to aggregate third party data for your customers, such as news, injuries, weather, selections, tips is a win-win for both you and your customers. By providing a distribution channel for external data you can increase the time spent on your site, provide additional information to generate more wagers and receive revenue at the same time. To achieve this you need to provide an API capable of both distributing and receiving data in real time.

Bonus Tip: Move to the Cloud

All of the mentioned ten tips will help improve your ability to serve customers whenever and wherever they are betting. You need to service customers quickly while delivering a high quality of service, at scale. By moving to the cloud, you can extend the benefits of these tips while reducing your CAPEX. You’ll be able to handle peak events without heavy and expensive infrastructure. Moving to the cloud, you’ll achieve more efficiency, flexibility and agility at a cost reduction that your management will enjoy.

Combined with intelligent data distribution technology and you’ll have a high performance cloud solution able to support you competitively in the market.



Diffusion™

How Diffusion from Push Technology Helps

As summarised in eGaming Review, “Mobile customers want fast, instant access to bets, which places big challenges on brands not just in having stable technology, but in building customer relationships with only a few seconds of interaction at a time. The upside, of course, is a rise in user activity. But it is an upside that needs to be carefully managed.”

eGaming companies need to deliver quality of service and speed at scale to any Internet connected device while reducing network and infrastructure requirements. Diffusion™ from Push Technology is a single technology that can help you meet these requirements. With Diffusion, you can deliver the right data, to the right device in real time, intelligently. It offers high performance and connected multi-channel solutions to distribute data without the need for significant changes to existing infrastructures.

Diffusion provides a one stop, end-to-end solution for delivering real-time data services to network connected mobile clients. It provides all of the components required to deliver a scalable, high performance solution across a broad range of client technologies. Diffusion offers a high throughput, low latency message broker; scalable, cross-platform connection infrastructure and intelligent traffic management and shaping.

Diffusion provides significant benefits to customers:

- Stream real-time, dynamic odds, online pricing and content over the Internet to any device
- Stream device-to-device over full bi-directional communication infrastructure – enabling a responsive and immersive customer experience
- Network-driven analytics to provide insight and understanding of real-time data
- Significantly reduce network and hardware requirements
- Elastically scale to meet peak demands and market / product complexity
- Analytics to provide insight and understanding of your real-time data, supporting new customer acquisition and retention
- Increased speed ensuring the betting data is accurate and always in sync with betting opportunities
- Real-time dynamic advertising attracting an ever-increasing number of new customers and enhancing cross-selling capability for existing ones.



Conclusion

Addressing the 10 tips for mobile betting outlined will help to increase your chances of obtaining a slice of the multi-billion dollar mobile betting industry. Following each of these tips will retain existing customers, help to attract new customers and offer ways to generate new revenue through innovation.

Diffusion by Push Technology offers the data distribution solution necessary to push the right data to the right device in real time and deliver a high quality of service. . With Diffusion, you will skip the complexity of developing a solution that won't get you to market in time to compete.

About Push Technology

We make the Internet work for our mobile-obsessed, everything-connected world. Leading brands like 888 Holdings, DAB Bank, IBM, and William Hill leverage our technology to power applications critical to revenue growth, customer engagement, and business operations. Learn how to deliver apps at scale and speed at www.pushtechnology.com

For further information

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