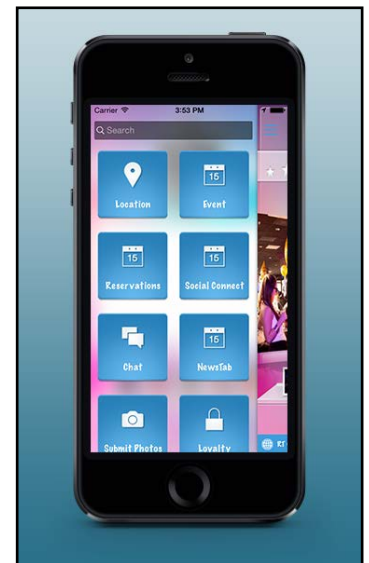


### Mobile Business Apps are the Next Best Marketing Tool for Bingo Halls (con't)

Technology marches on! Today, mobile apps are no longer within just the reach of the largest corporations. For the purpose of this article, we will not get bogged down in the technical difference between custom native apps, mobile web apps, hybrid apps, mobile websites, etal. The focus is going to be on what appears to be the best option for bingo halls. The target...an exceptional User Experience (now commonly referred to as UX), easily managed content and affordability.

There is no one best solution for every type of business out there. There are advantages and disadvantages to all the mobile options. The key is selecting the best fit, ie., the option that provides the greatest number of benefits to the business and their customers, at the best price. After doing the research, it's difficult to present an unbiased presentation of these facts when the best choice for a bingo hall is so clear. In short, for now, because of the nature of the gaming business, the engaging player features available, the ease of complete control of the content and the affordable price, the native mobile app built using a template (NMAT) is the next best marketing tool, to improve the bottom line and increase player loyalty.

To be clear, custom built native apps that are built from the ground up, require hand coding for each app on each mobile platform, Apple, Android, etc. This is a very expensive process. Coders are very well paid and the end result provides a great, custom, UX. The new alternative, NMAT, is building an app using an already coded template system that can be customized in appearance, function and content. This option provides similar features as the custom app, to choose from, at a fraction of the cost, with a very similar UX and can be totally controlled on-line. The templates are numerous and as attractive as any custom designs.



**Templated Design**

Here is a quick look at the comparison of benefits between mobile website and native apps.

**Device Features** - Apps have full access to all of a mobile devices capabilities including camera, GPS, data storage, etc. for the best UX. Mobile websites currently have limited access.

**User Installation** - No installation required for mobile websites. A bit of motivation is required to search and find a mobile business app. In the gaming industry, this should not be an obstacle. Most players will be motivated to find your app to benefit from the content including offers and discounts.

**Speed** - A mobile app is much faster then a mobile website creating a better UX.

**Owner Maintenance** - The maintenance of a NMAT is much simpler these days with the app hosted in the cloud. Online Content Management System Dashboards (CMSD), allow clients to change the content of their app and send messages 24/7. Custom native apps are much more complicated to update. Mobile website are updated as easily as a web page.

**Offline Functioning** - Without a wifi or cell service connection, mobile websites are not accessible. Native apps have offline accessibility giving them the edge in this category. →

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**Development Costs** - Custom native apps are extremely expensive. Both Mobile websites and NMAT's involve the least cost and are very affordable.

Possibly with future technological advancements, mobile apps for small businesses may go the way of betamax, and mobile websites may overcome many of their current shortcomings and become the dominate mobile format. But for now, and probably for the foreseeable future, native apps are the best marketing tool available for all bingo halls. For maximum benefit, your app can be used in conjunction with your mobile website and gain additional user benefits such as the ability for players to log in to their personal accounts.

Now to the good part. Here's a look at what benefits a mobile app can bring to your business and your players. The power of the mobile app to engage and communicate with the players, is in it's features.

### Mobile App Benefits

The features currently available that can be built into an app is what 'powers' the benefits and makes it such a perfect fit for bingo halls. In addition to the traditional listing of your businesses' general information including facility amenities, promotions, event calendars, contact info and directions, etc. that you would find on any standard mobile website, apps offer features that better engage players and fully utilize their mobile devices capabilities making for a very personal and fulfilling UX...that they will want to share. To be clear and further illustrate the benefits of an app over a mobile website, this summary of features will include only those that are available in a mobile app format, and not a mobile website. There are dozens of features available for businesses to choose from to use in their app. We will look at just a few of the more beneficial ones here.

**1. Content Management System Dashboard (CMSD)** - This gives businesses complete control over the content of their app 24/7. Managing an app is very much like managing your social online presence. It requires daily attention and creative management. The CMSD makes it easy and efficient to make changes to your apps content and appearance, and an easy to use preview feature allows you to view your changes instantly.

**2. Push Notification keeps your players well informed** - This feature allows you to send graphically attractive, instantaneous messages to your players with offers to encourage their immediate or future attendance in your facility. The geo-fencing targeting option within this feature makes targeting your players more like using a scalpel then a sledge hammer. Strategically used, push notification can keep your players well informed, connected to your business and continually coming back.

**3. Offer QR Code Coupons** - This feature requires player attendance a predetermined number of times before unlocking the value of this coupon. With attractive offers, this feature has the potential to increase player attendance and increase revenue. QR codes are easily created within the CMSD and available for printing on any and all marketing materials that can be placed in the various departments around your facility. →



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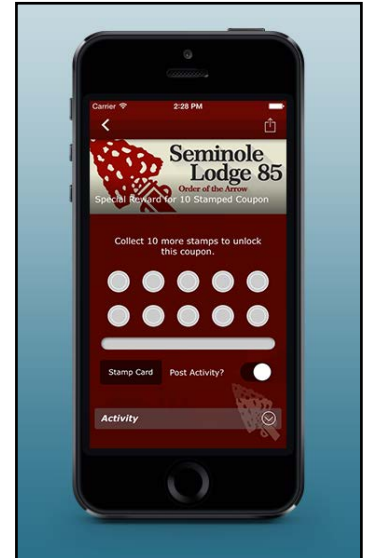
## Featuring the Bingo Resource Guide

4. **Offer Loyalty Cards** - This feature is a virtual stamp card designed to reward your current players for multiple purchases or actions. It is a simple task using the CMSD to design the number of player actions required to redeem the offer. This helps remind your current customers that you appreciate their business and helps solidify their loyalty.

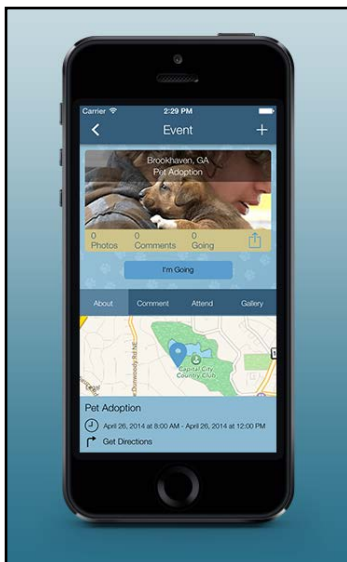
5. **Offer GPS Coupons** - GPS coupons are made accessible when players are within a predetermined distance of your facility. The number of check-ins required to redeem these coupons, and the time frame, is created using the CMSD. Creative and strategic thinking will make this feature very useful.

6. **Detailed Analytics** - Be completely informed on all aspects of your players usage of your app. See what's working and what's not and make adjustments. The analytics available directly on the CMSD provides valuable information to app managers.

7. **One Touch Calling** - A simple feature that makes calling more convenient for your players. A good customer service.



**Virtual Loyalty Card**



**Event Attendance**

8. **Event Attendance** - Want to highlight a special or recurring event to your players and get a sense of how many players will be attending? This feature will provide that benefit and also help get the word of your event circulated by allowing users to notify their friends and family of their plans to attend.

9. **Third Party Integration** - There is a wide variety of 3rd party websites that can be integrated into any app. Players can sign up on your email list directly into services such as Constant Contact, iContact, Get Response and others. Also, integration of all the popular social media and advertising web sites is available.

One other very big benefit of having a well managed and informational rich app, is that it will cut down on the time currently required to give out the same information to players calling on the phone. Another is the directions feature. One touch and the app will guide them to your location from wherever they are. An app is like every other online presence channel that you currently manage...you do get out of it what you put in. When you plan to create an app, be sure to also plan the personnel and time required to manage it to

reap it's maximum benefit. It will make your business better.

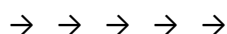
Now that they are affordable, we are firm believers in business apps for bingo halls, as is probably obvious. The magnitude of the potential benefits a mobile app can bring to a hall and, wanting to continue to fulfill our stated mission for over 7 years now, convinced us to jump in the mix and offer mobile app development and hosting. We have the credentials of knowing bingo and knowing bingo players. Visit our [website](#) for all the details.

Mobile apps are now like where websites were 15 or so years ago, you had to have one to keep up with the competition. In another 5 years or so, every serious small business will have a mobile app. Now's the time to lead the way.

Gary DeNoble

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Since writing this article, it has become apparent, that this subject would make a worthwhile series. There is a lot of information to cover on how to introduce your app to your players, as well as strategies for encouraging players to download your app and on how to best manager and maximize the player communication features of your app. If you are currently not on our mail list, sign up on the home page and you will be notified when each new article is posted. If you have questions, comments or would like more information, give us a call or drop us an email. We'll be glad to hear from you. If your hall already has an app and you would like to share your experience, we definitely would like to hear from you.

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