

The Bootstrapper's Guide to the Mobile Web

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Mobile App Strategy for QuillDriverBooks.com

Retail and online book sales

Quill Driver Books is an independent publisher of nonfiction books. The main goals of Quill Driver's mobile app is to make their book catalog available to buyers on mobile devices and to promote their books within the catalog using multimedia and other mobile app features.

I. Target Market, App Category, Platforms

Describe your target audience:

Quill Driver wants to target wholesale and retail book buyers first, and eventually reach out to retail customers. Additional target market may include media sources.

What type of app will you create (native or web)?

Quill Driver will create a web app that can eventually be converted to a native app.

II. Type of App, App Functionality

What type of app will you create?

Quill Driver wants to create a branded utility app to serve as an extension of their catalog.

Describe the functionality and purpose of the app you plan to create:

Quill Driver's mobile app will be a full-featured catalog, offering bookstores, wholesalers, resellers, and retail buyers an opportunity to browse Quill Driver's catalog, download book excerpts, watch videos, view author event calendars, mark the books they are interested in ordering, and ultimately place an order.

How will the app benefit the user?

This app will help book buyers make more informed buying decisions regarding Quill Driver's titles.

Does the app fill a specific niche relevant to your business? How?

Yes, the app will serve as a one-stop utility for book buyers and media professionals who want to learn more about Quill Driver's books and authors.

How will the app extend user engagement with your business?

The app provides a way for users learn more about Quill Driver's authors by offering videos, event calendars, and blog posts.

What functionality does the app offer that is not available on your website?

The ability to watch videos, "favorite" books, and eventually order directly from the app.

How will you personalize the app experience for the user?

Offer ways for the user to save their favorites, make notes, and maintain an ongoing order form.

How will you keep the app content dynamic and engaging?

By adding new books, videos, calendar updates, etc.

III. Native Features

Select the native device features that should be accessible by your mobile app.

The Quill Driver app will eventually take advantage of push notifications to inform users of new books and events, file storage to keep track of customers favorites and order information, and the accelerometer that can be used to “favorite” books.

IV. Budget

What is your budget for app development and maintenance? Will you create the app in-house or hire a developer?

Quill Driver has a small budget to put forward for development, but would prefer to host and maintain the app themselves to save money. They may hire a developer for some of the more sophisticated features.

V. Native App Options

If an HTML5 app, what tool or service will you use to prepare the build (convert)?

Quill Driver will use appMobi XDK to prepare their native app builds, so they can eventually take advantage of appMobi's add-on shopping and other native features.

VI. Web App Options

How will you create your web app? If you plan to use HTML5, which JavaScript library will you use?

Quill Driver will create its app using HTML5, CSS3, and JavaScript, and utilize the jQuery library.

VII. Mobile App Stores

Depending on the platforms you plan to develop for, in which stores will you distribute your app?

While their app is still a web app, Quill Driver will submit to independent app stores like GetJar, Handango, and others that accept web apps. Once the app is converted to a native app, they will distribute the app in Apple, Android, and possibly Blackberry and Windows Phone stores.

VIII. Solution Criteria

Since Quill Diver has decided to create a web app using HTML5, the goal at this stage is to find a “build” service that will help them convert their web app to a native app and add the device functionality required. It is also important that the solution offer features that will allow the app to evolve over time. One advantage to creating an HTML5 web app is that changing build services over time is not difficult.

Specifically, a solution that:

- *Fits within their budget constraints.*
- *Aligns to their vision of the app's main purpose and functionality.*
- *Offers accessibility to the desired native device features.*

Additionally, a solution that:

- *Offers ways to upgrade or grow their app in the future.*
- *Offers ways for you to monetize their app.*

IX. Weighing Options

List your final choice(s) here. If you are considering more than one solution, list the pros and cons of each option.

Solution	Pros	Cons
Phone Gap	Free service Has many native features to utilize	Recently acquired by Adobe – service may not be free for much longer
Phone Gap Build	Free service Easy, quick build process	Limited native features
appMobi	Free service Has many native features Offers add ons that could be useful, like shopping solutions	Cost of add ons

X. Conclusion

What is your final choice?

For now, it seems the best choice for Quill Driver's web app is to use Phone Gap Build just to create the native app builds.

What are your plans for subsequent phases of the app development?

Quill Driver will migrate over to appMobi once the app is ready to take on native device functionality like push notifications and shopping features.