

# CONTENT MANAGEMENT

*It must come first, not last*

Before we dig in to this question, consider what makes up the mobile space these days. First there are **mobile sites** – scaled-down versions of websites with scaled-down functionality for smartphones and tablets. Then there are **mobile apps** – native Internet applications that work on individual smartphones and tablets. And finally there are **hybrid apps** – a combination of a mobile site and a mobile app (a mobile site on the inside wrapped with a pretty, native app on the outside).

Before you begin programming for all three styles of mobile, decide how content will be managed. Here are some issues to consider.

1. Make sure that the business – your back office – is able to maintain the content for mobile sites, mobile apps and hybrid apps. Changes to the title page of an app, for example, should be made on back-office servers so changes are reflected in the mobile site automatically. The back office also should manage the site's branding: color, logos, and look and feel.
2. Smartphones and tablet devices should pull content from back-office servers; content should not be embedded into the application itself. For example, if you build a flexible framework for your mobile app, Web services can pull data from your data management systems. There are ways to control changes to the content and structure of an app from a central authority and eliminate frequent app updates.
3. Content for a mobile app designed for a specific department, such as Catalog Fulfillment, should be managed by that department. For example, mobile elements of a catalog must be tagged appropriately. Product descriptions and images should “fit” in the mobile environment, formatted for handheld devices.

One final note: Companies developing apps are miles ahead if they're able to reuse the content management system they already have.



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If you're programming for mobile – mobile sites, mobile apps and hybrid apps – how are you handling content management?