

What to look for in a

Healthcare Staffing Mobile App



Healthcare Managers Need a Staffing Solution

It's estimated that 50 percent of healthcare settings are still using paper or spreadsheets for staff scheduling. Healthcare management can be a time-consuming, tedious and frustrating process, but it doesn't have to be.

An automated staffing solution allows a healthcare manager to do a better, more efficient job and make smarter data-driven decisions. Employing a staffing mobile app helps create next-level efficiency.

Automate Your Staffing Solution

In the past, there were many good reasons not to take the leap into electronic staffing and scheduling tools. They were expensive, hard to implement, difficult to use and required resources to keep them running and current. But those days are gone.

Today, it's easy and affordable to make the move to a modern approach to scheduling so that everybody wins. Staff can manage their schedules electronically, managers can input scheduling data to make more cost-effective and informed decisions and executives get more efficient and optimized operations, saving time and money.



The Importance of a Mobile Staffing Solution

As younger employees enter the workforce and seasoned staff continue to look for more efficiencies in their day, having workplace tools that are mobile and easy to use are no longer considered a luxury. It's now an expectation. It also provides a level of flexibility that your employees are seeking to make their jobs easier and provide a better work-life balance.

One of the most critical areas to address flexibility and technology in the workplace is staffing automation. By using technology to aid in creating a flexible staffing environment, you invite employee engagement and support a healthy relationship between staff and managers. The easiest way to empower your staff and management is to provide the technology on platforms that are already well-integrated into their lives – tablets and smartphones.

A recent survey by Deloitte showed some surprising statistics at just how embedded mobile technology already is in our lives, as represented by survey respondents:

- Smartphone ownership is at 82 percent.
- 89 percent check their phones within an hour of waking up.
- 81 percent check their phones before going to sleep
- On average, smartphone consumers check their devices 47 times a day. The youngest consumers (18 to 24) check phones 86 times a day.

Although almost half of the Americans surveyed indicate they are trying to reduce or limit their smartphone usage, the reality is that they collectively check their smartphones almost 12 billion times a day. Instead of resisting this technological integration into our lives, it's time to take advantage of it.

Understanding Mobile Technology

If you're not a technologist but you are a smartphone user, you're already a step ahead of the game. You're well aware of the ability to download mobile apps. And you're probably acutely aware of websites that are mobile-friendly and those that miss the mark.

When a software company is developing its mobile presence, there are very specific choices that need to be made to create an optimized product that is best suited for the end user. Understanding what these choices are will help you make a more informed decision about your mobile staffing solution.



Mobile Technology Choices for Software

When a cloud-based software solution looks to provide mobile access to its clients, it typically has a few options. It can create a mobile version of their existing website. This version is typically considered a “responsive or optimized web design” and can be created fairly quickly and inexpensively.

Another option is to develop a mobile app. A mobile app is designed to take the same functionality as a cloud-based solution but offered in the native operating systems of the smartphones. Understanding both types of mobile technology can help you make a more informed decision about the right mobile technology for your staffing solutions.

Mobile-Optimized Websites

Responsive mobile design, also called mobile-optimized websites, generally indicate that a sub site of an existing website is designed specifically for mobile use. Adapting web content to mobile devices through responsive design has two main advantages: time and money.

A mobile-optimized website delivers the key functionality of the full version, but delivers the data arranged for a smaller screen. That means that it’s coded for a variety of smartphones and tablets depending on how the end user is logged in.

There are a few drawbacks to this mobile-optimized solution.

- It requires an internet connection. A mobile website will require a wifi or cellular data connection to offer any functionality.
- Performance isn’t great. Even when fully connected to the internet, mobile websites usually suffer from poor performance on mobile devices because certain components, such as images and animations, are too slow and heavy. Additionally, users have to wait for the browser to download the entire page and its elements in order to see it.
- They can be difficult to navigate. Functionality that is easy-to-use and makes sense on a desktop or laptop computer may not render properly or may take up too much screen real estate to be efficient on a mobile device. This often leads to frustration from the end user.

While many websites are optimized for mobile consumption, a web-based software solution has more complex requirements for the end user that may be better suited for a dedicated mobile app.

Mobile App Advantages

For every drawback a mobile-optimized website offers, there's an advantage to using a mobile app.

The most obvious is that a mobile app is built for the system in which it's operating. Mobile apps are built and customized specifically to each device's Operating System (OS) and feature unique designs and codebases. Here's why that's so important:

- Greater functionality can be integrated into the app. Developers can take advantage of and integrate native device features like push notifications, alerts, automatic updates, camera images and GPS.
- Apps can be accessed offline. While an internet connection may be required for full functionality, mobile apps can still be accessed offline. Instant access is available so users can find information they need. And any updates made offline will be stored locally on the device and committed once the device reconnects to the internet.
- It's faster! Mobile apps are designed top to bottom with efficiency in mind. Apps usually have faster loading times than web pages as they aren't cluttered with unnecessary site elements.

For these reasons and more, native mobile apps are becoming a popular choice for many sites that want to offer users a top-shelf experience.

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Not All Mobile Apps Are Built the Same

The right mobile app can mean the difference between an app that causes frustration or poor user adoption by tech-savvy millennials to one that improves user experience, supports strong user adoption and streamlines operations.

At the most fundamental level, it is the difference between a mobile app that has been built with modern tools and architecture that are able to leverage features that are inherent (native) to mobile devices and those that are simply a wrapper around someone's older architecture and unable to access native functions.

Both are apps, both are in app stores, but it's what you can't see that makes the difference.

Here's an example using something as simple as logging into an application:

When you use an app that is built on a modern multi-tenant architecture, you can seamlessly interact with the app. This means you are free at any time to glance at your schedule, send in PTO requests or search for open shifts.

A wrapper app requires you to login every time you want to do anything on the app. Just picture having to enter account information, a username and password every time you want to see your schedule.

It is pretty easy to see how important the right app can be to maximize the benefits of scheduling automation. Choose products that will optimize performance and make the user experience simple.





Overall Efficiency of a Healthcare Staffing App

When looking for an automated staffing solution in the healthcare space, it's highly recommended that you consider the mobile implications of such a decision.

Consider some of the biggest benefits of mobile apps.

Communication is faster: They can make communication easier and quicker for all staff members.

Increase in productivity: A recent study showed that enterprise apps running reliably on devices lead to increases in productivity of up to 40 percent.

Staff appreciation: There's also the human factor. Staff love the ability to manage their schedule on their phone. They can see their schedule, pick up shifts, swap shifts and get instant text/email notifications when new shifts become available.

Access data easily: Managers love mobile scheduling as well. They have instant access to real-time scheduling data, they can assess situations instantly and take actions such as approving requests, all from their phone.

Untethered from desk and computer, you can view and manage house-wide schedule changes from wherever you happen to be.

About ABILITY SMARTFORCE™

ABILITY SMARTFORCE, the leading provider of cloud-based Staff Scheduling and Workforce Management Software, offers a native mobile app for both Android™ and iOS® (iPhone®, iPad® and iPod Touch®) devices, providing a familiar user experience in each environment.

“Ease of use is a key differentiator for ABILITY SMARTFORCE’s Staffing solutions,” says Doug Bertozzi, senior director of engineering for ABILITY Network. “Our relentless commitment to usability has been carried over and optimized for the ABILITY SMARTFORCE mobile app. Managers can now easily attend to staffing needs from anywhere on any mobile device.”

**Ready to improve your organization’s efficiency and productivity?
See ABILITY SMARTFORCE in action with a demo!**

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ABOUT ABILITY NETWORK

ABILITY® Network, an Inovalon company, is a leading information technology organization helping providers and payers simplify the administrative and clinical complexities of healthcare through innovative applications and data analytics.

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