
The Ultimate Guide to Mobile Apps for Fitness Businesses



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Learn everything you need to know about having an all-in-one mobile app for your gym or club.

If the fitness industry has learned anything from pandemic times, it's that mobile and digital fitness experiences are what health-conscious people want — and what gyms and clubs need to succeed.

Fitness app downloads increased by 46% in 2020, according to a [Grand View Research market report](#), with more people turning to fitness apps for virtual trainers, live workouts, personalized nutrition plans, customized workouts, progress tracking, social sharing, and more. To top it all off, the fitness app industry is valued at \$4.4 billion and is expected to explode to \$15.5 billion by 2028.

But how do you create an all-in-one mobile app that lets members take the reins on their fitness journey, keeps them engaged with your club, and streamlines your business while growing revenue? In this guide, we'll explain why you need an all-in-one club and member management mobile app plus what your app must have to ensure you and your members achieve your goals faster.



Why You Need an All-in-One Mobile App

Today's consumers rely on their smartphones for everything, from buying groceries, paying bills, and streaming movies, to putting together a work presentation, chatting with family, and sharing life's milestones. In the United States, 85% of people own a smartphone, according to [Pew Research](#). Nearly every aspect of our lives is tied to one of the more than **5 million apps** currently available between the Apple and Google app stores — and that app number is rising every day.

The average person has more than **80 apps on their phone**. Interestingly, only nine of those apps get used on a daily basis and **88% of that time** is spent on non-native apps users have installed from an app store (e.g., Facebook, WhatsApp, Target, Spotify). Considering how much time people spend on apps, it's no surprise that 84 million Americans have a health or fitness app on their phone, according to [Statista](#). With that number expected to explode in the coming years, now is the time to get onboard and ahead of the competition.

And if you're thinking that it's enough that your website is optimized for mobile, think again. Although most websites today are built with mobile users in mind, there is no comparing mobile web and mobile app experiences. With a mobile app, your club members can set their preferences from the moment they download the app, which lets them take control of their experience more than they'll ever be able to on the mobile version of your website.

If it's not obvious yet, your club needs an all-in-one mobile app to keep up with the needs of a fast-growing fitness-minded market. Here are a few other reasons why offering a mobile app is more important than ever:



Gain Deeper Insight into Member Behaviors

When your mobile app is in your members' pockets, you have a direct connection to them every day of the week. This helps you understand what your members need and want. For example, you can A/B test user experiences in order to deliver a better, more personalized in-app experience.

Apps also let you track member engagement and identify where people are when they're interacting with the app. So, for example, if someone hasn't been into the gym in a few weeks but they're nearby, you can send them a notification inviting them to come back in to get a free smoothie.

Communicate More Effectively with Members

With your app on their phones, your members can receive push notifications, which are a cost-effective, high-impact way to interact with your members. Instead of relying on your members to read their email or opt-in to text messages, a mobile app is the perfect way to ensure they're getting communications from your club. In fact, average email **open rates are nearly 21%** (depending on the industry), whereas push notifications have a **90% open rate!**

We'll talk more about the power of in-app and push notifications in a few pages, but the most important thing you need to know is to be thoughtful about what you push out to members so they don't turn off notifications and block you out completely.

Use Mobile to Build New Experiences

Think of all the features and tools a mobile phone has that you can leverage with a mobile app: camera, GPS, contact lists, integrations with other apps. The list goes on and on. Your members can do so much more — and faster — from a mobile app than they can on a website. For example, if your mobile app has a community feature, members can take photos natively in the app and share their progress with the community or share out to their social media channels.

Another benefit of an app is that, if the internet drops, the app will still work as close to normal as possible whereas a mobile website will be unloadable and unusable.

Spend Less Time on Administrative Tasks

An all-inclusive mobile app ensures your members can do more on their own time from anywhere, whether that's [scheduling a class](#) or updating their credit card on file. This gives back valuable time to your team — time that they can devote to what matters most: your members!

You can also boost the accuracy of member information with in-app joining. Instead of spending time deciphering handwriting on a paper membership form, you'll get accurate member info every time. In-app joining also boosts member confidence in your club, because they can easily punch in their own credit card number rather than handing over their card information on the phone or in your club.



What You Need to Know About App Fatigue

Now that you're sold on creating an all-in-one mobile app for your club, there's probably one nagging question on your mind: Do my members need or want another app?

App fatigue is real, particularly when there's an app for everything — and sometimes more than one app for everything. Just look at Facebook, which practically forced users to download its Facebook Messenger app on top of having its standard Facebook app. People download apps to make their lives easier, not harder, yet most fitness businesses have separate apps for account management, another for personal training, another for virtual classes, and so on.

Despite there being millions of apps already available, Apple continues to receive [1,000 new app submissions](#) to its store every day. With the number of apps increasing and fatigue on the rise, it's more important than ever to have one app that does everything your members need. Yes, it's easier — and maybe even cheaper — to build separate apps that get one single service perfect, but if the cost is that people will delete your club's apps because there's just too many of them, you could lose a club member permanently.

To make their lives easier — and give your team back valuable time to spend on member engagement — you have to dedicate a little more time and money to giving your members one app that does absolutely everything.

The Top Features Your Club's Mobile App Needs

Now that you know your club has to meet your members where they are, it's time to talk about the features your mobile app must have. According to research by [CleverTap](#), the No. 1 reason people uninstall apps is because they're viewed as non-essential and taking up space. If someone who's downloaded your app doesn't feel like it's a valuable addition to their life, they'll likely delete it within six days of downloading it!

Your club members deserve a feature-rich, all-in-one mobile app that lets them take control of their fitness journey while proving that your app is an app they can't live without. At a time when [84 million Americans](#) have a health or fitness app on their smartphone, you've got to prove your worth quickly.

Let's dig into the key features your club's mobile app needs to avoid getting deleted before your members see just how valuable it is for helping them achieve their goals.

Make it glitch free and easy to use.

First and foremost, your app has to work. It's believed that 71% of app users [delete an app](#) within the first 90 days of downloading it, oftentimes because it's glitchy or buggy and makes life harder, not easier. If you want to give your members one app with everything they need to achieve their fitness goals, it has to work.

But more than that, your mobile app has to be intuitive and deliver a great user experience from the moment a user downloads it. Whether your member is a mobile app novice or seasoned pro, your mobile app needs to be easy to navigate for a frictionless experience every time someone taps in. Also, make it easy for your app users to contact your tech team with [support questions](#) to avoid spur-of-the-moment app deletion out of frustration.

Communicate with users wisely.

When a member has your app in their pocket, you've got a direct connection to them all day every day — so use it wisely! An all-in-one mobile app not only lets members control their gym experience, but it also lets you send them important messages and push notifications in a non-intrusive way. In fact, mobile apps that use in-app messaging to communicate with users report a retention rate increase of 61% to 74% nearly a month after the app is first installed, according to [research by Localytics](#).

In addition to in-app messaging, you can also use push notifications, which typically show up on your members' phone home screen and can be used to send a variety of messages. Whether you're sending an in-app message or a push notification, here are some things you might send out:

- Payment or past due reminders
- Personalized promotions or offers
- Class or appointment reminders
- Price or fee changes or discounts
- New merchandise or classes

Whatever you push to your members' smartphones, make sure it's relevant and don't go overboard. The second biggest cause of app uninstalls, according to [CleverTap](#), is notification and advertising overload. On the other hand, 57% of people are willing to share personal data in exchange for personalized offers or discounts, according to [Salesforce](#), and 62% say it's acceptable for businesses to send personalized offers or discounts based on purchases they've made.

It's important to segment your app users based on their preferences and interests so that you're not double dipping and sending the same message as a push notification and as an in-app message. You may end up frustrating a user to the point where they turn off push notifications and in-app message notifications, which would shut down a powerful and profitable stream of communication.

Ultimately, the key to a great mobile app experience is balance. When you communicate with your members, every interaction is an opportunity to build trust and get to know them better. The more you can curate and personalize your interactions with them, the better their overall experience will be and the easier it will be to retain them.



Let members track their progress.

One of the most effective ways to ensure long-term success with health and fitness goals is through progress tracking. According to [Stanford University](#) research of more than 40 studies, more than 70% of people who monitored their progress digitally lost weight successfully.

Your mobile app should encourage members to stay on track toward their goals by letting them track steps, nutrition, workouts, body measurements, before-and-after photos, and so on. Tracking progress not only helps members see how far they've come, but it also lets your club identify ways you could help members achieve their goals faster.

Put trainers in your members' pockets.

Integrate personal training into your club's main app and use your mobile app to nurture the relationship between your members and personal trainers. With a mobile app, you let trainers assign workouts, motivate clients, and train members virtually. Here's what you need your mobile app to do:

- Create workouts that are personalized to each client.
- Let trainers and members interact anytime from anywhere.
- Give trainers access to member nutrition and workout information (with the member's permission of course!).
- Let trainers schedule recurring workouts and training sessions.

Integrate with wearable tech.

It's more important than ever to deliver a mobile app that lets your members fully control their club experience. With 21% of smartphone users in the United States using a fitness wearable, according to [Pew Research Center](#), today's gym goers demand a mobile app that integrates with their Apple Watch, devices using [Wear OS by Google](#), and other wearable tech. When your app plays nicely with popular wearable tech devices, you can send push notifications and reminders and let members track their workouts and monitor their vitals.

Let the people shop.

Digital buyers in the United States are more likely to make a mobile purchase in an app than on a website, according to [mobile commerce data from Statista](#). Many websites aren't optimized for mobile in the same way that a mobile app's user experience is tailor-made for people on the go, so it's no wonder that people prefer to make quick, in-app purchases rather than wrangle with a frustrating mobile web experience.

If you offer merchandise, equipment, childcare, or other offerings, make sure your mobile app lets members easily make purchases in the app instead of forcing them onto your website. For example, if someone wants to buy a branded water bottle, they should be able to purchase it from the app and pick it up when they come in for their next workout or have it shipped to their home.

Make your app secure.

Although smartphone users are absolutely obsessed with their apps, 70% of people are worried their personal information will be shared without their permission, and 81% of people would [uninstall an app](#) and find another provider because of security concerns.

Your app should make it easy to stay on track and engaged with your club. If one of your members feels like you're doing nefarious things with their data, you'll lose their trust and, worse, you'll pass off their membership to a competitor.

Keep your branding consistent.

Your app can have all the bells and whistles in the world, but it has to match your club's vibe and personality to create a seamless member experience. Consistent branding boosts brand recognition and builds trust and awareness, and the more your members trust your club and see your brand consistently across all platforms, the more likely they are to recommend your gym to their friends and family.

Additionally, brand consistency can play a huge role in achieving your revenue goals. According to the [Lucidpress State of Brand Consistency report](#), survey respondents reported an average 33% business growth when they maintained brand consistency, with 25.7% reporting that brand consistency contributed substantially to overall revenue growth.

Deliver helpful content to help members succeed.

You want your club members to be wholly devoted to your club, and they want your club to be wholly devoted to them. As they work to achieve their health, wellness, and fitness goals, it's important for your app to give them everything they need to succeed. Your mobile app should help members monitor workouts, schedule classes, book training sessions, ask questions, and track their progress, but it should also give them valuable, personalized content to complement their journey.

It's important to remember that the average person gets dozens of push notifications every day, so you have to deliver content that makes sense to your members. Here are some ideas of content you can push to members:

- Blog articles with nutrition tips or new fitness trends
- Videos of your trainers demoing popular stretches
- Spotify playlists built for different types of workouts
- Podcasts from your instructors featuring wellness tips

When you send something out to your mobile users, be sure to monitor how they're engaging with different types of content. If podcasts resonate with your members but they aren't using your playlists, you might want to devote more time to podcasts and less to curating music.

Empower members to take the reins.

Lastly, your mobile app should allow members to easily monitor every aspect of their account, from scheduling payments and upgrading or downgrading their membership to changing their contact info and reaching out to your club staff with questions. With your mobile app in their pockets, your members have an easy way to engage with your club and manage their fitness journey without having to call or email.

Give members the convenience and flexibility they need to make schedule changes on their own time from anywhere. The easier it is for them to modify their class schedule or personal training sessions — to really own their fitness journey — the more likely they are to stick around for the long haul.

When you empower your members to manage their membership and journey in your mobile app, you'll regain precious time your team once spent on answering calls, making member account changes, scheduling and rescheduling classes, and more.

PRO TIP

Keep an Eye on Analytics

Be sure to keep tabs on how people are engaging with your app. Talk to your app users and collect their stories (qualitative data), as well user metrics (quantitative data). It's important to understand what your members, trainers, instructors, and other staff expect and need from the app so you can keep delivering the best experience possible. With qualitative and quantitative data in hand, you can make modifications to the app's user interface, modify the frequency and types of push notifications, and more.

Launch Your All-in-One App with ASF Mobile

Give members full control of their club experience and empower them to take control of their fitness goals with [ASF Mobile](#). Our all-in-one, fully customizable mobile app helps fitness businesses streamline operations, boost revenue, and help members achieve their goals faster. We offer a secure solution that integrates with the fitness industry's top wearable tech and gives you the tools you need to elevate the member experience.

ASF Mobile is a best-in-class member app that you can brand to match your club's vibe and personality. Fully integrated with Apple Health, MyFitnessPal, Google Fit, and others, ASF Mobile lets members track a workout, add nutrition, and more. Here's what your members can do with ASF Mobile:

- Check in for a training session.
- Book, cancel, or reschedule a class.
- Reserve gym equipment.
- Get push notifications and reminders.

You can also enhance the trainer-client relationship by reaching your members wherever they are. ASF Mobile puts personal trainers at your members' fingertips and lets trainers assign workouts, motivate clients, and train members virtually. ASF Mobile also gives personal trainers and clubs better insights into opportunities for boosting member engagement. Here's what else trainers can do with ASF Mobile:

- Create personalized workouts and quickly push them out to members.
- Check in and interact with clients anytime from anywhere.
- Access member data about nutrition, heart rate, and workout.
- Schedule recurring workouts and training sessions.



Ready to see what ASF Mobile can help your club accomplish?

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