

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a white tablet computer. The person is wearing a grey sweater. The tablet is held over a brown leather bag with a textured surface and a strap. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a desk or table. The overall lighting is soft and slightly dim, with a blueish tint.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE OFFERING A MAGAZINE AS AN APP

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Reading a magazine on a smart phone or tablet is a great thing. There are many buttons you can tap, cool videos you can watch, interactive infographics to play with and great photo slide shows to discover. Sounds good. Good for the reader? Most definitely. Good for the publisher? Yes. Given that he/she knows about a few things before hiring somebody to create an app magazine.

A FUNDAMENTAL DECISION

The first question you as a publisher should ask yourself: What do you want to achieve with an app magazine? More income from advertisements? An image boost? Substantiating your position as a market leader? A stronger connection to your readers? A geographic expansion of your readership? (There are no country borders in the world of apps. However, a national magazine might not be known on an international scale and thus has to be promoted, which can be costly.) These are fundamental factors you have to thoroughly think about beforehand. Next question: What devices shall the app magazine be made for? Smart phone Android, iPhone, tablet Android, iPad ... The more mobile devices you want to cover, the more money you have to invest. This is why an analysis on devices among your current and future readers can be of help.



THE DETAILS ...

... FOR THE READERS

- | Do you want to feature several magazine issues or only the latest issue in your app?
- | A print magazine is delivered to your readers by mail. The app magazine, however, has to be downloaded manually by your readers (single issue app). Or shall your readers be informed about updates ("push notifications") and an automatic background download of the latest magazine issue shall be initiated (multi issue app)?
- | Shall the app be fee-based or free? (Apple gets about a 30% cut of every app sale. And also Adobe, the software most magazine apps are published with, demand EUR 0.22 per download for multi issue apps *(as per December 2015)*.)

... FOR THE PUBLISHER

- | You as a publisher have to provide staff, time and financial resources for managing an app magazine.
- | The internal organisation and editorial department have to be made sensitised for the app. Investing just a few more hours on top for the app magazine won't bring you a lot of success with it. An app magazine is totally different to a print magazine and the editors have to understand this. For every story, they have to find the best way to boost the user experience. This can be done by including audio files, videos, pictures etc. into the app. Calculate time and money to get these sort of files. **The editors' understanding for a great user experience in an app is essential!**
- | An app magazine should generally have less text and more pictures than the print issue. Multimedia features (pictures, videos) and interactive elements (interactive infographics etc.) make an app magazine really interesting for the readers. As an app is read on a screen that is lightened from the back, the eyes become tired more quickly than reading a print magazine. Shorter texts are important here.
- | Make sure your print and app magazines do not compete but promote and push each other. You can make print readers curious when mentioning more photos, a video or an interactive infographic in the app. Conversely, you can promote a long and detailed report on a specific topic being fully covered in the print issue, in the app ("order the print issue here").

CAREFUL!

There are some magazine apps that are a 100% copy of the print magazine, whereas the PDF print file is imported into an app. Additional value for the reader: zero. This is of course the cheapest way for a publisher to offer an app. But the question comes up, if and how the readers interact with such a "PDF app", as they have exactly the same content on paper already. So why spend extra time and money on an app? It is not recommended to 100% convert the print magazine into an app magazine. As a publisher, you don't do yourself any good with this. Your advertising clients won't be much interested in investing in such an app magazine. With just placing a print pdf file into an app, you miss your chance of converting valuable print advertising clients into paying app advertising clients!



"For publishers, the tablet magazine opportunity is game-changing, but the last thing they should do is simply shovel their printed titles on to tablets. Consumers demand more, and the rich new interaction paradigm means amazing engagement and storytelling opportunities for editors and marketers alike."

The Guardian

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hello, my name is Helene Clara Gamper. I'm a graphic designer that believes in a common thread – as illustrated in my logo. I help businesses build a visual identity, translate data into graphic landscapes and help publishers make their magazines look great.

I grew up in a publisher family. About ten years ago I started working in the creative field what in 2010 made me start my own business called HCG corporate designs.



Since then, I've designed for companies of many sizes from the German speaking area but also from other countries such as the USA or the United Kingdom. I created corporate design concepts for business start-ups, established editorial designs for publishers, designed and implemented rich media magazines for tablets and smart phones and visualized complex data for some great infographics.

When creating designs, I always try to get to the very essence of the character and the philosophy behind my clients' businesses and their products. This essence I include in a holistic design approach, that follows me through the entire creative process. Collaborating with my clients and exploring what makes their businesses and their products unique and stand out, I believe is an important part of my job as a designer. This is how I can develop unique visual concepts with a common thread running through them, which is something I'm really passionate about. It puts a smile on my face when I see people respond and interact with my design creations – and when my clients tell me about that.

Some of my clients say they appreciate my flexibility and transparency. I believe that being open and straight with my clients is a matter of fairness and respect and contributes to a positive and successful collaboration.

When I'm not designing you can find me doing sports, exploring nature or travelling. I get a lot of inspiration from seeing different places, doing new things or trying out new recipes with exotic spices I bought from different corners of the globe. In 2014, I fulfilled one of my biggest dreams: travelling through Peru and Ecuador and visiting the giant tortoises of the Galapagos Islands.

I live in the wonderful city of Innsbruck, Austria, the so-called "Capital of the Alps". The lovely scenery here inspires me every day.

Want to get in touch?
I'd love to hear from you.

DESIGNS FOR DIGITAL AND PRINT

