



The Ultimate Guide to Using Push Notifications to Improve Retention



Introduction

Today, more small business owners are harnessing the power of branded apps for their business. An asset like a branded app enables companies to boost branding and improve client retention. And while many business owners use top app features like those for booking, they often overlook the power of push notifications.

Push notifications can be a powerful tool for client engagement. Sending the right message at the ideal moment can spur a strong connection and active engagement with your brand. But overdoing it, or not using push notifications as strategically as you should, can turn your customers off, resulting in unsubscribes, or worse, client churn.

The goal is to strike a balance and to leverage push notifications in a way that's helpful and valuable to your app users. In this guide, we'll delve deeper into the best way to utilize push notifications and how these handy little messages can support engagement and retention.





What are push notifications?

By now, we've all seen our share of push notifications—the messages from individual apps that appear on your home screen. Push notifications are utilized in different contexts: to send a reminder, provide an update or promotion, or offer some kind of helpful information for users. When clicked, users are led back to the app for more details.

Now that users spend more time on their mobile devices than ever before, sending a reminder about your business's offerings, special deals, or schedule updates helps keep your business top of mind and provides a perfect opportunity for clients to engage. According to [one study](#), Americans check their phones a whopping 80 times a day, and time spent using mobile apps now accounts for 51% of total digital media engagement. That's a lot of opportunity to create connections with customers while encouraging loyalty and retention.



DOs: Promote your app

Before you start sending out push notifications, there are a few tips and best practices you should know. First, the dos:

DO promote your branded app and encourage downloads. Consider the following strategies to get the word out:



Engage with new customers at their first visit and ask them to download the app



Put up posters promoting the app around your business



Spread awareness through your website and in automated emails



Put together a simple email or blog explaining the value of your app

DO request that users enable push notifications. After all, if users don't allow notifications, they'll never get your special deals, reminders, or messages.

Why a branded mobile app?

A **branded mobile app** gives you the ability to boost your branding and improve client engagement and retention with features like:



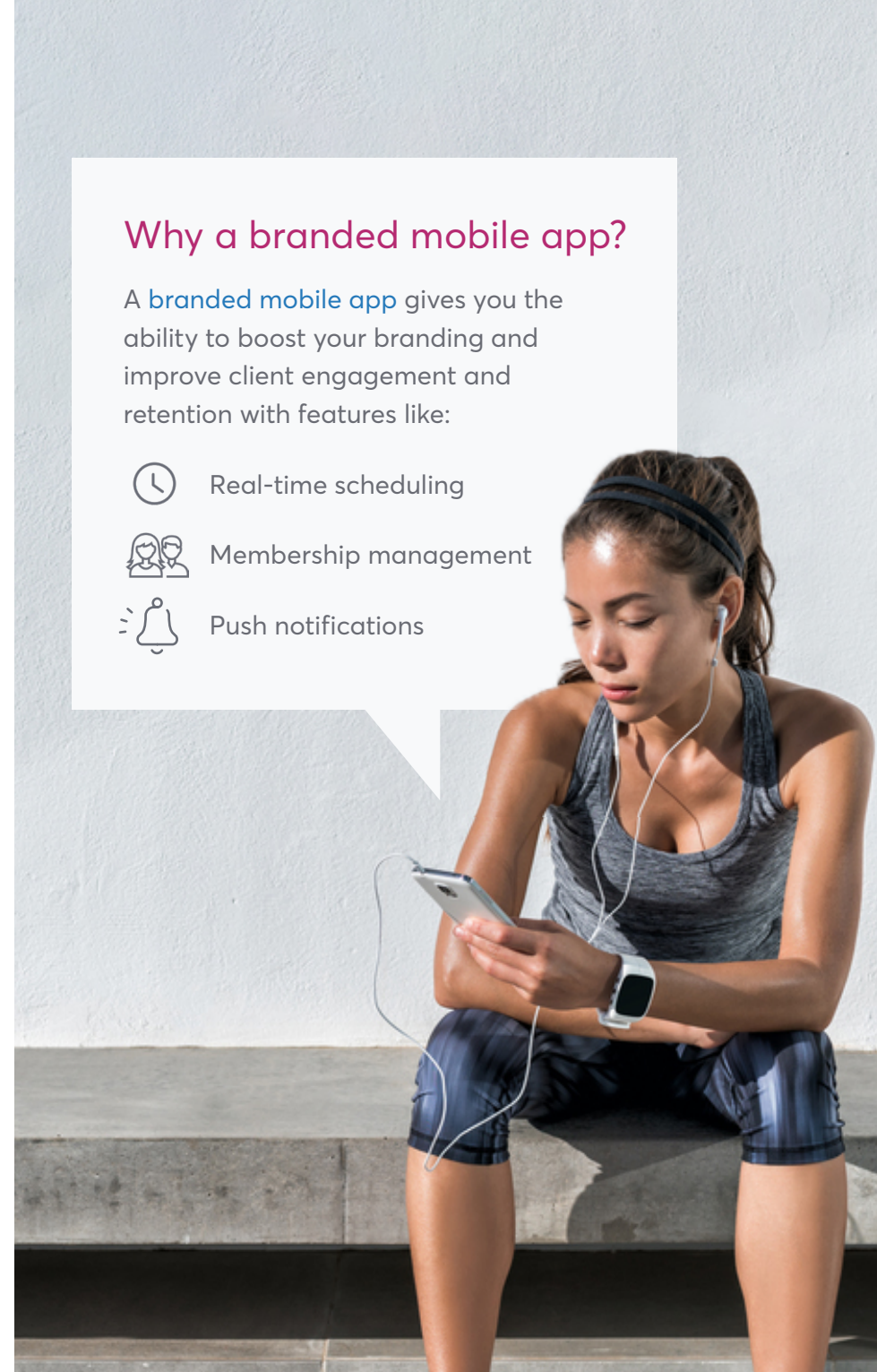
Real-time scheduling



Membership management



Push notifications





DOs: Optimize and set expectations



DO optimize the content of your messages by aligning notifications with your brand's usual tone. Make sure to keep messages under 140 characters—**10 words or fewer is usually best.**



DO consider emojis! Did you know **that more than 200 new emoji characters are coming this year?** And did you know that using a relevant emoji or two can boost your open rates? **One study** found that including these relatable little characters in push notifications improves open rates by 85%!



DO support transparency and set expectations. If you plan to send a daily or otherwise regularly scheduled push notification, make sure users know this before signing up.

DOs: Support your retention



DO enable automatic notifications. When users haven't opened your app in a while, send them an automated, "Don't you forget about me" reminder to encourage continued engagement.

If you have a MINDBODY branded app, you can easily automate reminders through [The Retention Center](#). Here, you can craft the perfect message to bring inactive users back to your app and back into your business. You can select when this message will be sent based on the last time users interacted with your app, and voila! It's sent automatically.

This way, you can engage with customers who haven't used the app in, say, two weeks or a month, for example. Keep in mind that these are automated once set up, which means less work for you and more opportunities to retain your customers.



DON'Ts: Overdo it

Now that we've gone over the best practices, here are a few don'ts you should also keep in mind:

DON'T overdo it. Push notifications that come too frequently or are too long can quickly become annoying and repetitive for users. Make sure you're strategic about when you're using push notifications and that you keep your messages short, sweet, and to the point.

DON'T get too complicated. When you do throw emojis or other flourishes into the mix, do so in a way that's relevant and supports your message. Including too many bells and whistles can detract from what you're trying to say.

DON'T forget to test! Before you hit send, make sure to test out different styles of notifications, the use of emojis, and other elements to help your messages stand out. You'll never be sure of what resonates with your audience if you don't take the time to test.





Push for retention: Campaigns that work best

Push notifications can be a great tool for encouraging retention and engagement with your brand. MINDBODY customers have found that these often work best for letting clients know about things like:

- Last-minute schedule changes, cancellations, or substitutions
- Short-notice sales
- Special promotions
- Holiday events

"We'll let people know about different sales that we're having through push notifications, and sometimes we'll just let people know for relationship building," said Laura Alexiou of Steamtown Yoga.

"This way, people aren't being bombarded by push notifications but they're being informed in a way that's useful."

Setting up push notifications with MINDBODY

If you're a MINDBODY customer, setting up push notifications for your branded mobile app is easy. [Here's how to do it.](#)

To find out more about the best ways to leverage push notifications and how they work within [MINDBODY branded app](#), connect with us today!





For more educational resources, including guides, webinars, learning paths, templates, and online courses, visit: business.mindbodyonline.io/education

To learn first-hand how MINDBODY can position your business for success, schedule a guided tour today at www.mindbodyonline.com/business-software, or give us a call at 877-755-4279.

