

Medical journal offers app for subscribers with iPad

BMJ (British Medical Journal) is reportedly the first general medical journal to offer a Web application to its subscribers. It produced its first app with PressRun, a tablet and mobile publishing solution that uses HTML5 and XML-based workflows to deliver an interactive experience across multiple devices. The HTML5-based app was produced with Quark's cloud-based digital publishing solution.



The *BMJ* tablet app is optimised for use on the iPad and is free to subscribers and British Medical Association members without an iTunes account. With key content from the weekly print issue designed for tablet reading, the *BMJ* tablet app also allows offline reading. It has so far had 40 000 downloads.

David Payne, editor of bmj.com, explains, "The future of medical information is mobile and the *BMJ* is investing in its mobile presence. Following the launch of our iTunes app 18 months ago, the journal is now available free to tablet users as part of a personal or institutional subscription. With the new Web app our users can read the *BMJ* on the iPad without the need for an iTunes account, without having to download an entire app on to their device or wait for the entire issue to download before they can read an article."

With about 40% of mobile traffic to bmj.com coming from iPad users and just over 17% originating from mobile devices with Android operating systems*, the group opted for Apple's tablet as the first device to implement its digital publishing strategy. Thanks to the HTML5 cross-platform capabilities, the journal can be quickly and easily deployed to new devices and operating systems in the future.

"The journal has a proud history of 'firsts' when it comes to digital access. It was the first major general medical journal to have a full text website in 1998, the first to create an iPad app in 2010, the first to move to the Apple Newsstand in 2011 and the first to offer a Web application. Our digital publishing partnership with PressRun means that we can confidently look forward to extending our reach to other tablets in the near future," concludes Payne.

Content published direct to iPad

Thanks to an XML-based content production workflow, the journal could easily migrate to the new platform by repurposing media-independent components of information without using further internal resources or building in extra time for the new publishing channel. Its content strategy allows for articles, pictures, videos, audio and graphics to be output to XML and delivered automatically to the Web app via PressRun, thus eliminating costly manual operations. The ability to publish its content directly on the iPad, bypassing the App Store approval process, also means that its tablet app readers have the most up-to-date content and timely app updates.

Shaun Barriball, vice president of mobile at Quark, comments, "It is a pleasure to work with innovative publishers like this, who are determined to give its readers the best experience in digital and mobile. In our organisation, we are passionate about the future of HTML5 and take full advantage of what it offers. It is simply the fastest and easiest way to create a highly customised, rich and consistent experience across many platforms - all driven from tools publishers use every day like InDesign and XML feeds. Because PressRun takes advantage of what the device already does best, the lead-time to support a new device is extremely low, which means our customers can roll out custom app experiences on new devices faster than ever before."

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