

# HuntFish OH App & Notifications



RECREATIONAL  
BOATING & FISHING  
FOUNDATION



TAKEMEFISHING.org

## RBFF State R3 Program Grants



### Overview

In 2020, the Ohio Division of Wildlife (ODW) built a mobile app, assessed the users of the mobile app, and evaluated the impact of in-app notifications.

Technology is changing fishing and hunting license sales and how customers interact in the outdoors. A mobile device now enhances the outdoor experience for customers, yet many state agencies are hesitant to develop and produce content beneficial for customers in a native phone app due to cost and expertise. Native apps provide useful tools to the customer such as mapping and geolocation services, easy to navigate purchase and harvest reporting processes, and access to important offline resources such as fishing regulations that a traditional browser does not support.

The primary objective was to implement a mobile phone app and determine the demographic profile of customers who download the app based on their customer profile.

The secondary objective was to understand how a native mobile app may retain and reactivate customers by evaluating the license renewals and revenue resulting from in-app push notifications during the first three months.

### Results

The HuntFish OH app was available to the public on August 12, 2020 in the Play store and August 18 in the Google Play store. In the first week, 4,043 customers downloaded the app and by December 31, the app was downloaded almost 60,000 times. By the end of the year, sales in the app accounted for 4.7% (\$900,000) of all revenue during the time frame. Approximately 10% of all harvests were reported through the app. The HuntFish OH users are generally males between the age of 20 years and 40 years. Conversely, internet customers and license agent customers have a much older customer profile. The profile of the users is expected to change once the spring fishing season begins and more anglers are represented.

The push notification feature of the app was enabled in mid-December. A give-a-way notification to encourage everyone with the app to enter a drawing for one of ten \$25 gift cards resulted in a 20% open rate and 15% of customers entered the give-a-way.

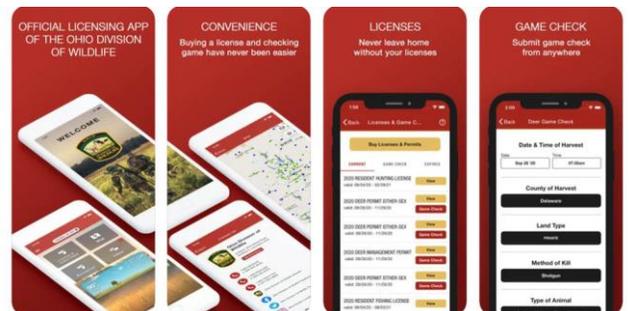
### Partners

- Sovereign Sportsman Solutions (S3)
- Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF)

### Support

“Our customers and staff have well received the HuntFish OH app. Many people shared their experience and usability of the app, frequently commenting, “it’s about time!” Convenience and design are key factors to the success of this app, and we accomplished both goals. We are truly thankful for the RBFF funding and the opportunity to work with S3 on this wonderful addition to our customer service platform.” -Chief Kendra Wecker

Images of the HuntFish OH app including, licenses, harvest reporting, the home screen and maps.



## Benefits

For the agency, a native app provides opportunities for greater customer engagement through push notifications. The agency can not only send customized push notifications to encourage purchase and reactivation of licenses, but notifications can also be used to promote strategic communications such as events or opportunities that resonate and engage customers.

The customer benefits from the mobile app by having their own and their family member's accounts stored on a single device. This eliminates the need to search for customer accounts when purchasing or completing a harvest report. In addition, the geolocation services can autocomplete some fields and identify nearby agency points of interest to make the interaction with agency easy and informative.

## Methodology

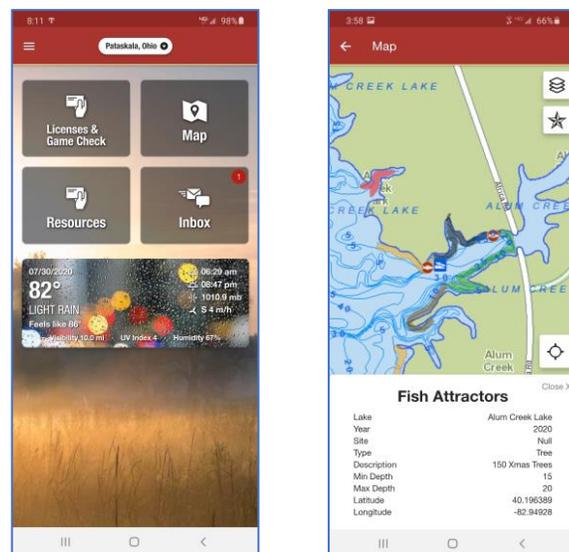
The Ohio Division of Wildlife partnered with their license vendor, Sovereign Sportsman Solutions, to build a mobile app integrated with the License System. The mobile app became another license path for customers like internet sales or sales through license agents. Map data was provided by the state through publicly available agency mapping services. In-app notifications were built into the app in the form of an inbox, but also included with the ability to send push notifications to various customer groups based on their sales history.

Other features of the app include:

- Convenient and easy purchase of licenses
- Electronic display of licenses
- Game check reporting even when mobile data is inaccessible
- Ability to store family member information on the same device
- Maps to display agency property and important sportsman features like boat ramps and license agents
- Quick access to many other resources

Once available in the app stores, the number of downloads, the user profiles, and their response to notifications were analyzed and characterized.

The HuntFish OH home screen and a view of features available in the map.



## Future Plans/Lessons Learned

The HuntFish OH mobile app was developed as a new tool to improve customer service and to keep the customer engaged with the agency. For the app to be successful, customers must find the app easy to use and beneficial while they are in the outdoors.

Due to timing of the app release and delays in enabling notifications in the app, the notification feature could not be fully evaluated. Some of the delays in the project development were related to developers working through and understanding the interaction of the app with the license system.

Timing and messaging is very important when engaging customers. In this study, the timing of the notifications was less than ideal. Moving forward, it will be important to plan out all notifications and to make sure the design and appropriate resources are in place to run a campaign and to analyze the results of a mobile app notification campaign.

As ODW enters a new license season, effectiveness of notifications will continue to be evaluated and tracked so the impact of the mobile app can be more accurately determined. Just as with any campaign, management of the mobile app and its evaluation as a tool takes dedicated staff and resources to manage.

**Andy Burt | (614) 265-6330 | Andrew.Burt@dnr.ohio.gov**

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