



SOLUTION GUIDE

Key Mobile Considerations for Expense Management Solutions

INTRODUCTION

Expense management solutions are, by their very nature, one of the business apps with the greatest requirement for deep mobile functionality. Many enterprise software solutions are mainly used in-office, and can often get by with relatively limited mobile functionality. However, the very nature of expense management solutions requires them to have deep mobile capability—from capturing receipts to creating, submitting and approving reports—to effectively support the organization.

Therefore, mobile functionality can't simply be a checkbox on an RFP response—it should be assessed as an integral part of your review of global expense management solutions. This requirement is heightened by the fact that business travelers are increasingly abandoning laptops for business trips, in place of tablets and the ubiquitous smartphone. Not only can tablets be left in your carry-on bag at airport security, but with the introduction of web apps, it's possible to have the same functionality and look-and-feel on any device—from a mobile phone to a desktop computer.

With all that said, what should you expect your expense management solution to offer when accessed from a phone or tablet?

Receipt capture

The first and most critical element of any mobile expense solution is receipt capture, so you don't need to keep your receipts until you get back to the office. While many solutions offer this to some extent, there can be differences in how you can enter them into the system. Look for a solution that offers you multiple ways of sending receipts and that supports automated, near-real-time data extraction, such as direct one-click upload from the device, or the ability to forward electronic receipts to your receipt wallet via email.

Equally as important is what happens to the receipts once you've submitted them into the expense app. Having to manually type in the date, expense category, merchant, currency and amount against each receipt image can become a real drag. A solution that uses fully-automated, intelligent OCR (optical character recognition) to automatically read the receipt and populate the expense form is a big help in streamlining the process and minimizing the need for manual data entry from the traveler.

For expenses such as hotel bills, these capabilities can go even further: simply forward the check-out email with your hotel folio from your phone, and it will be automatically parsed and mapped directly into your expense report, so that each expense type (room, tax, parking, food, etc.) appears as individual line items in your report.

CHROME RIVER PROOF POINT

Chrome River offers several ways to capture receipt images via a mobile device, including quick phone photos using our Chrome River SNAP utility app and simple "Forward & Forget" emails of emailed merchant receipts to your expense account (either to create the expense item in near-real time, or simply to complete the item later). Users can also import photos from a device's photo stream directly into the web app on the mobile device, in order to complete the expense item in real-time.

Expense report creation and submission

Getting reimbursed quickly requires submitting your expenses promptly—and this can be slowed down if you have to go back to the office to do so, because with some applications it can be challenging to create and submit your form on a mobile device. Using a solution that employs a web app with responsive design to give you the same user experience regardless of what device you use means that it's just as easy to work on a mobile phone, a tablet or a laptop, eliminating this concern.

CHROME RIVER PROOF POINT

Chrome River's web app-based hybrid solution can be accessed any mobile device, regardless of operating system or screen size, and provides the same deep functionality and look-and-feel as on a desktop. This enables users to create expense items as easily on their phone as their laptop, by simply dragging and dropping receipt images onto an expense report. By using Chrome River's intuitive OCR capabilities, travelers do not even need to enter item or vendor details, as these are all automatically imported. Reports can also be easily submitted via mobile device, so the approval process can start before travelers even get back to the office.

Expense report approval

Although most users only need to create and submit expense reports, line managers also require the ability to approve reports on the go, to avoid slowing down the reimbursement process. Therefore, approving expenses needs to be simple and hassle-free. This means having the ability to approve directly from an alert email, or being able to easily approve within the app.

CHROME RIVER PROOF POINT

Chrome River's solution makes expense report approval just as easy on a mobile device as a desktop or laptop. Emails received in a mobile mail app enable reports to be approved in a single click. Alternatively, approvers that log onto Chrome River onto their phone or tablet can simply drill down and view, approve, or decline individual line items.

Full access to all capabilities

While most of us have grown to rely on richly designed apps for a variety of functions, from games to entertainment to productivity, when it comes to accessing business tools, native apps (i.e. apps specially designed to run on a mobile device) rarely give the same level of functionality as the full, desktop browser-based solutions. In addition, the ever-growing line up of handsets, combined with several mobile operating systems, means that there could be a range of different versions of the same app across a large organization.

Not only does this present a considerable training and support headache, but it also means that your users may well be missing out on much of the solution's functionality unless they are back at their desk. Therefore, you should look for an expense solution that allows you to deliver full functionality on any device, simply by tapping the icon.

CHROME RIVER PROOF POINT

Chrome River is built using a single-page application (SPA) architecture with HTML 5/CSS 3 and responsive web design (RWD), which makes a web app solution incredibly fluid. It scales the size of the application layout to the resolution, shape and orientation of the device it is displayed on - from phones to tablets to laptops to large monitors. Users benefit from a consistent experience with full application functionality, across all devices.

Chrome River offers a unique solution—a hybrid mobile app. This combines all of the functionality and usability of a full web-based app, but combines it with the ease of use of a native app. It can be downloaded from the Apple and Android app stores, and allows either biometric authentication or single sign-on. However, unlike native apps, it doesn't restrict users with a stripped-down version, which forces them to use a laptop to complete many functions.

Mobile integration with booking tools

Although most trip elements are booked in the office, almost every business traveler has a tale of having to change plans halfway through a trip: extend or cut short the stay; tack on another stop on the itinerary and so on. Although online booking and trip management tools enable you to make itinerary changes from your mobile device, if it's not integrated with your expense management solution, it can make the process of updating your expense report unnecessarily complex.

CHROME RIVER PROOF POINT

Chrome River's deep integrations with online travel technology leaders such as Amadeus, Egencia and Sabre provide more streamlined mobile interactions between booking and expense solutions. The ability to seamlessly move booking and travel receipt data between the booking tool and Chrome River's expense management solution can make travelers' lives significantly more straightforward.

Innovation, support and training

Expense solutions which rely on a native app for mobile users need to build two completely different products—a full web version for laptop users and an app version for mobile users. This can present a variety of challenges for users and businesses:

- Delayed release of new features
- Functionality and language gaps between full and native app versions
- Different UI look-and-feel, as customer-specific configurations on the full version don't transfer to the standard version of the app provided by the software vendor
- Incompatibility with old devices

All of these issues add to the usability challenge that native app users face every day. For employers, this means difficulty in supporting the solution. For users, it means a clunky experience. For everyone, it means frustration and reduced value from their investment.

CHROME RIVER PROOF POINT

Chrome River's hybrid app approach enables mobile users to access the same, full version of the solution that they benefit from on a laptop. Customer- (and even user-) specific UI configurations carry through on a mobile device. Chrome River's mobile solution looks and acts the same as the full version because it is the full version—and our hybrid approach brings users all of the ease and security benefits of an app, with none of the drawbacks.

Capabilities snapshot

Mobility Attributes	Chrome River	Other Vendors' Native Apps
Accessible through Apple and Google App stores	●	●
Accessible directly via home screen icon on mobile device	●	●
Support biometric authentication	●	●
Support single sign-on	●	●
Accept receipts by email or within the expense solution	●	●
One-touch receipt image upload	●	◐
Capture and extract receipt data via OCR	●	◐
Use of rules to interpret and improve OCR data accuracy	●	◐
Same functionality on mobile as full desktop version	●	◐
Complete customer/user configurations on mobile app	●	◐
All UI languages available on any device	●	◐
Approve/reject individual line items on expense reports	●	◐
Always on the latest version	●	○
Single version of app for all users (train users once)	●	○
Same user interface across every device/operating system	●	○
Seamlessly move between any device for task completion	●	○
No need for mobile app updates to access new innovation	●	○

● Yes ◐ Varies ○ No

Chrome River



Chrome River provides expense and invoice automation solutions that let business flow for more than 1,000 organizations worldwide. The company's easy-to-use, enterprise-scale solutions enable future-readiness for its customers. As a result of this focus on innovation, Chrome River is [rated as a Leader in expense management](#) by analyst firm IDC. Chrome River's commitment to delivering a superior customer journey by creating long-term value for its customers, makes it a preferred choice of CFOs, CIOs, AP teams, travel managers and business travelers. Details on Chrome River's customers can be found on the company's [web site](#).

To find out why more than 2 million business travelers around the world trust Chrome River, contact the company at 888-781-0088, or visit chromeriver.com and its social pages on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).



info@chromeriver.com
+1.888.781.0088



info-ca@chromeriver.com
+1.416.697.7590



info-uk@chromeriver.com
+44 (0) 20.7846.0166



info-de@chromeriver.com
+49 (69) 5680 7178



info-au@chromeriver.com
+61.2.9331.6809