

Development Tools Are Critical for Portable Device Success

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Consumers are now using smartphones and tablets in many aspects of their lives. Not surprisingly, there is also a growing demand that home medical and fitness devices work in conjunction with smartphones and tablets.

From our perspective, the greatest obstacle in this area is to get an Apple iOS or Android OS-based medical device to market in a timely fashion. Without the aid of an efficient development-tool portfolio, the design and integration process has typically been filled with multiple schedule delays.

Designers should look for a company that not only provides the right silicon, but also development tools, software, and support that are tailored for two main phases of a typical smartphone/tablet-based medical design. The first phase consists of the smartphone interface, and the second phase is the design of the medical device itself. For example, Microchip has a complete development portfolio that addresses both phases.

For the smartphone-interface phase, designers need a common hardware development tool and an extensive set of software libraries for Apple iOS and Android OS. It's also useful to have the development-board Gerber files, which can be used as the basis for the hardware design. For the medical-device phase, designers need medical reference designs with application hardware and software.

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