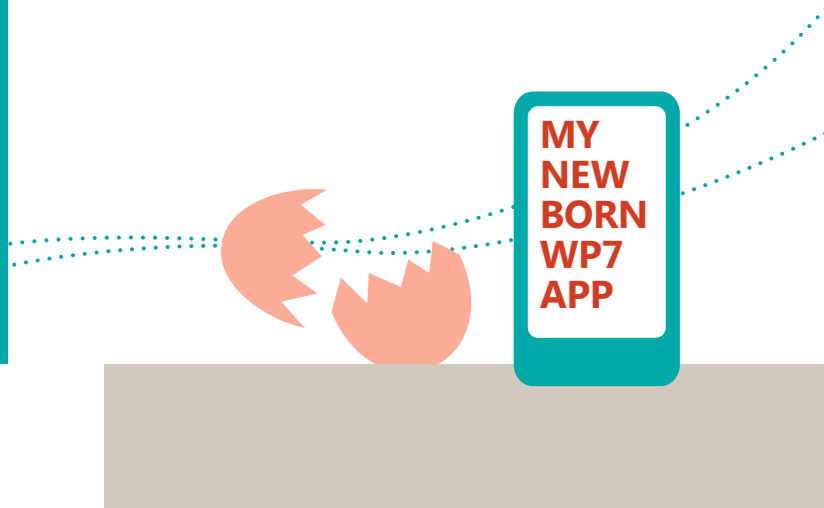
HOW TO PROMOTE YOUR WINDOWS PHONE APP

ON A TIGHT BUDGET

Tips & Tricks

FROM THE DEV & MARKETING TEAM OF
TELERIK RADCONTROLS FOR WINDOWS PHONE



YOU'VE BUILT YOUR WINDOWS PHONE APP and now you are probably out of your comfort zone facing the question how will I promote my app on a tight budget, or no budget at all?

THIS PAPER WILL GIVE YOU TIPS from both the developer and marketing perspective, which if executed well together will bring guaranteed tangible results over time. Let's not fool ourselves – there are no magic moves which will make your app go stellar. The process of promoting a product is very similar to learning how to do a 360 on a snowboard. It takes effort, time and persistence. But eventually, it pays off.

AND BEFORE I START ... ATTENTION STUDENTS!
Be part of the new movement in mobile that's happening on campuses worldwide.

This guide will point you to professional-level developer tools, resources and memberships – at no charge to students, so that you can start developing for Windows Phone now and hopefully get use out of this paper later on.

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RADCONTROLS FOR WINDOWS PHONE

RESOURCES SUMMARY

MAKE YOUR APP'S PRESENTATION SEXY

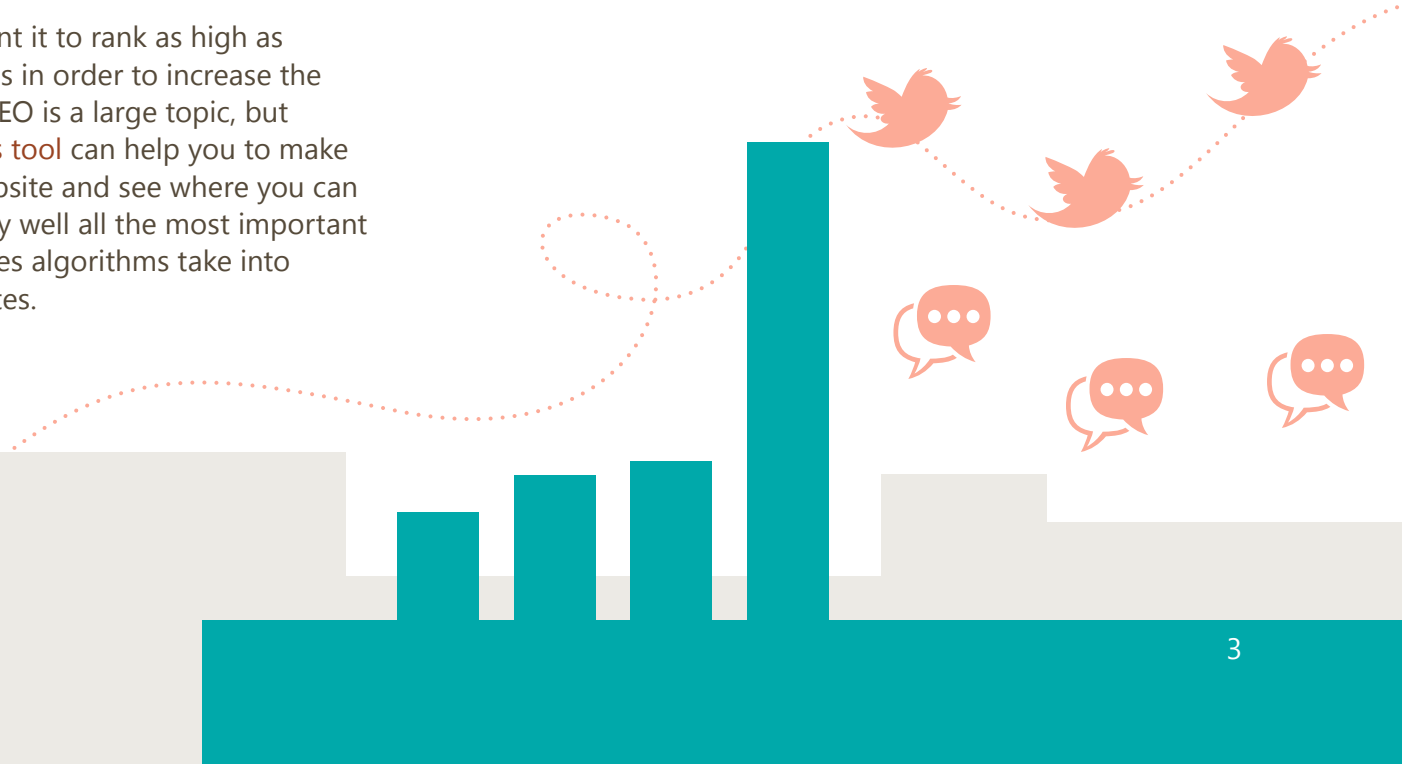
1 MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR LANDING PAGE

If you do not have a dedicated website, then your landing page is your app's page on the marketplace. Treat it as if it is your home page. Take some time and submit nice screenshots to the marketplace. This is the first thing your users will see.

If you have a website you want it to rank as high as possible in the search engines in order to increase the discoverability of your app. SEO is a large topic, but Woorank – a website analysis tool can help you to make a quick diagnosis of your website and see where you can improve. It summarizes pretty well all the most important factors that the search engines algorithms take into account when ranking websites.

2 MONITOR THE STATS

Monitor the statistics for your landing page(s) daily. A sudden increase in downloads usually means that your app has been featured somewhere. It might be the marketplace or some Windows Phone apps related media. Congratulate yourself then find out where the app is featured and tweet or blog about it.



3 GOOGLE ANALYTICS? NOW POSSIBLE

The Marketplace Dashboard is obviously your main tool, but Google Analytics can give you great insights into how people are interacting with your app.

HOW TO IMPLEMENT GOOGLE ANALYTICS IN A WINDOWS PHONE APP?

Use the Microsoft Silverlight Analytics Framework – updated for the Windows Phone Mango. This blog post explains how to do it.

4 YOUTUBE IS YOUR FRIEND

Creating a video and uploading it on YouTube is a must. If you don't have resources for a nice, polished video – make a simple one. Here's an example of a simple video of one of our customers, which has accumulated more than 1700 views so far.

VIDEO CAPTURING AND EDITING TOOLS YOU COULD USE:

- Camtasia or Jing – they are both paid.
- Microsoft Expression Encoder 4 Pro

UPLOADING THE VIDEO ON YOUTUBE: SEO TIPS

When writing the video description make sure the following requirements are met:

- The most important keywords are present in the title.
- You have an "exact keywords match" between the title, description and keywords. For example if your title is "My Budget Windows Phone App" you should have this exact same wording somewhere in the description and you should enter all these 5 keywords in the tag list.
- Write a nice, detailed description. Write it for humans, not bots. Writing quality content always pays off.
- Put the link to your app's landing page on the top of the description, because it's the only thing users can see without clicking on "show more".
- If you have two videos, link them using the video response feature. It will help you increase your video's exposure.
  Log in -> Click in the comments box -> Click on "Create a video response" -> Follow the instructions.
  You can create a video response to another user's video, but you'll need approval first.
- I recommend you record the video at minimum resolution 1280 x 720 px and export it to avi or mp4 format.

You should have an "exact keywords match" between the title, description and keywords.

If you have two videos link them using the video response feature. It will help you increase your videos exposure.

BUILD YOUR CORE OF MOST LOYAL USERS

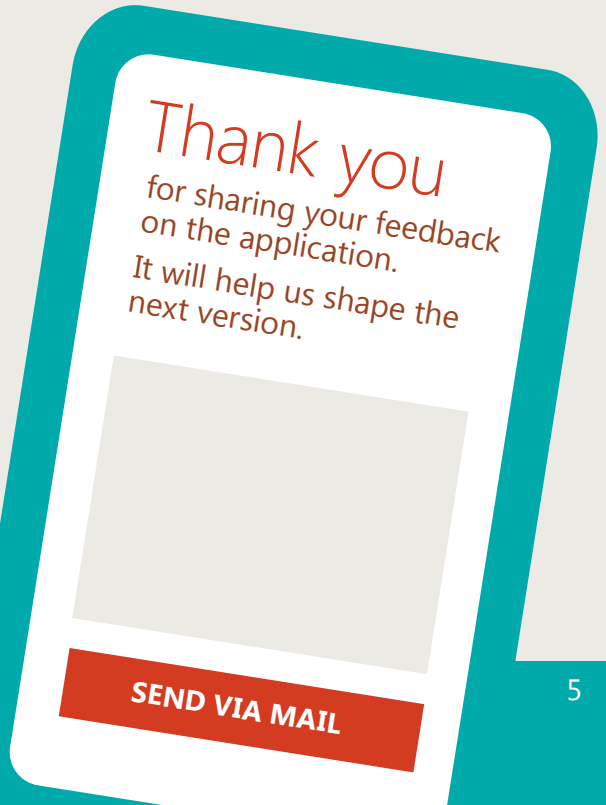
The biggest challenge in the battle for users is to differentiate your app from the hundreds of other similar apps out there. Come up with at least one feature that makes your app special, show it with a screenshot and make sure to always include this in your communication.

5 START OFF WITH A FREE VERSION

This is the underlying principle in any new product launch in a market that is already saturated. Give it out for free for some time to hook people and then launch a second, paid version with more advanced features. Or leave it free and try to monetize from in-app advertising. I hear a lot of Windows Phone developers say that they've earned more from free apps with in-app advertising than from their paid apps.

6 ADD SUPPORT/FEEDBACK LINK TO YOUR APP

Adding a feedback link in your app will keep you in touch with your users, which is priceless. It will also help you improve your app. Take good care of your first users' questions and requests. Quality support pays off big time.



7 BETA TEST YOUR APP

Beta testing will help you achieve at least 3 different goals:

- You will release a higher quality application after applying the feedback from your beta testers
- Higher quality first version will bring higher customers satisfaction
- The testers of your app are also your first end-users

You can find detailed info about the whole process of Beta testing your app through the marketplace here.

This is all very good if you have a bunch of people who would be willing to test your app.

WHAT IF YOU DON'T?

You can then try www.windowsphonebeta.com - this site acts as a direct portal for developers to get in touch with consumers and to get feedback for their applications.

Or if you have a blog you can ask your readers to become testers of your app. You can also use the #wp7 and #wpdev channels on Twitter.

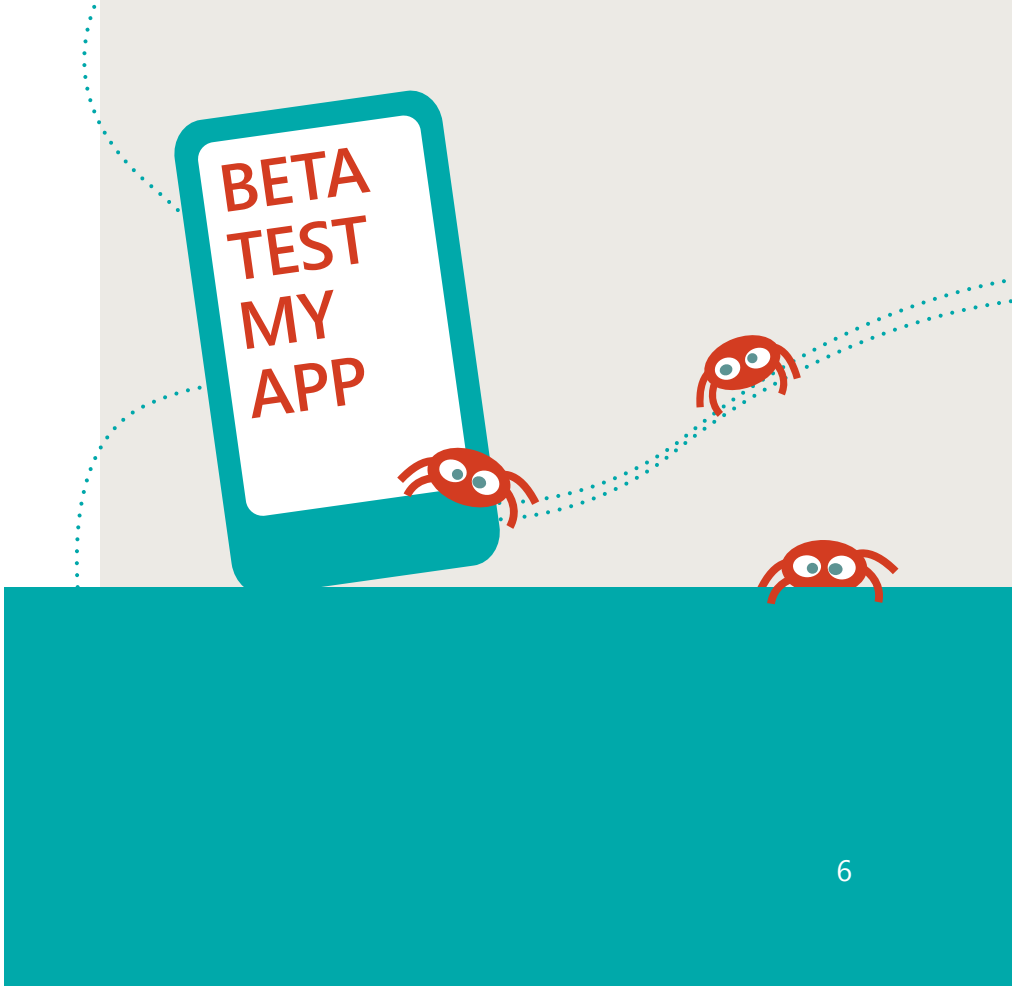
8 GET IN TOUCH WITH THE MICROSOFT USER COMMUNITY

The Microsoft User Community facebook page and Twitter account @usercommunity can be super useful to you. You can ask questions – and you will get a personal response, get help resources and even promote your app through that page.

9 GET IN TOUCH WITH LOCAL USER GROUPS

Check out the events near you and get in touch with the organizers. Ask them to let you present your app and talk to other developers about the challenges you're all facing. You can even find beta testers for you next application.

Check out these links for related events near you:
www.communitymegaphone.com
www.ineta.org



INCREASE DOWNLOADS THROUGH IN-APP TRICKS

10 REGULARLY UPDATE YOUR APP

Updating your app not only makes it richer and better, but it acts as free promotion. Each user who has downloaded your app will get a notification and chances are he'll check it out again.

11 ADD "RATE MY APP" MESSAGE TO YOUR APP

The number of ratings plays a big role in the algorithm that the marketplace uses to rank the different apps. My experience shows that if the users are reminded to do something, chances are that their response rate will be higher than if they are not reminded. That said, add a "rate this app" pop-up to your application. Depending on the type of app, decide on a certain timeframe in which the app should be used on a regular basis and then set the pop-up message.

If you have a pre-Mango application, don't forget to take advantage of the new countries that became accessible with the 7.5 Mango update. Just add them from your developer account on the marketplace.

IN-APP ADS

12 MICROSOFT ADVERTISING SDK

The Microsoft Advertising SDK for Windows Phone offers an easy way to run ads in your app. The higher your CPM, the more money you make. The Mobile Ad Exchange takes into account various parameters when deciding on the value of your app's impressions, such as ad unit categories, location of the device/user and active advertising campaigns.

13 ALTERNATIVE ADVERTISING NETWORKS

AdDuplex

Google AdMob

Inneractive

Millennial Media AdView

MobFox

HERE ARE SOME BEST PRACTICES THAT WILL HELP YOU MAXIMIZE REVENUE:

- Show relevant ads – advertiser are targeting certain audiences and the most information you can provide about your apps' users, the more relevant the ads you're showing will be. Make sure that: you have set categories for your ad units in pubCenter to best match the content in your app; If your app is location-aware, provide those details to the Ad Control (change to highest setting = GPS)
- The Marketplace is possibly the most valuable advertising real estate you have access to. When publishing several apps in the same categories, allow for at least 2 days between each submission, you don't want your own apps competing with each other in the "New" feature slot.

Learn more about the importance of selecting your application type/category, Ad Unit categories and Settings and Ad Unit placement here, under the GetStarted section -> Drag & Drop -> Best Practices. Follow this link.

EXTERNAL PROMOTION

14 LET TELERIK PROMOTE YOUR APP

If your app is built with Telerik RadControls for Windows Phone, send us the marketplace link at windowsphoneapps@telerik.com and we'll upload it on our Showcase Gallery.

We feature our customers' apps in various other campaigns: events materials, videos and even print ads.

15 WINDOWS PHONE WEBSITES SELLING ADS

If you do have an advertising budget here are a couple of websites where you could promote your app:
www.wmpoweruser.com
www.winrumors.com
www.wp7applist.com
www.1800pocketpc.com
www.windowsphoneapplist.com
wp7rocks.com
wp7rocks.rpod.ru

Some of those websites allow for direct app submission for free. Don't forget to also check out www.wpdevpodcast.com and their weekly podcasts as well. They can help you promote your app if they like it.

You can manage your advertising on some of these sites through www.buysellads.com. Search for wp7 and windows phone in the inventory search.

It's very hard to tell what is a good CTR (click through rate – one of the ratios we use to measure the effectiveness of online advertising). In some cases, 5% CTR is very good where in other cases 0.50% CTR is considered excellent. Sometimes I see better ROI from a banner with lower CTR. The only piece of advice here is: test as many different banners as you can and stick with what's working best for you. Don't let your personal opinion decide what users will like. Let them decide.

A good CTR might be 0.1% or 5%. There is no formula. Test as many creative approaches as you can to find out what's working best for you.

CURRENT ACTIVE COMPETITIONS FOR WINDOWS PHONE APPS

This last point is very important. I found three competitions that are still open for submissions.

WINDOWS PHONE APP OF THE DAY

Get Daniel Egan himself to promote your app. Simply send him a link to your app on the marketplace and a link to your Youtube video. As you can see YuoTube is inevitable when it comes to promoting your app ☺ Follow this link for more details.

For those who don't know him, Daniel Egan is Developer Evangelist at Microsoft and very, very active in everything Windows Phone related. Check out his blog or follow him on Twitter.

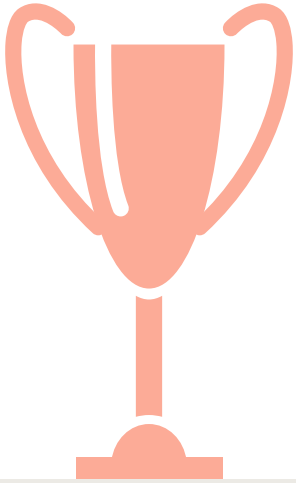
WINDOWS PHONE WANTS TO FEATURE YOUR APP

The prize is advertising for free.

SUBMIT 2 QUALITY APPS AND GET A FREE WINDOWS PHONE 7.5

FOR UKRAINIAN WINDOWS PHONE DEVELOPERS

FOR RUSSIAN WINDOWS PHONE DEVELOPERS



TELERIK RADCONTROLS FOR WINDOWS PHONE

DESIGNED TO CREATE THE APPS USERS LOVE

THE PRODUCT

The suite offers 28 controls and among them a number of controls and capabilities that are not available in the UI Toolbox and not even in the OS. RadControls are engineered to help you create an intuitive and fluid application experience and to add a touch of delight, which your users will love.

THE TEAM & THE SUPPORT

With RadControls you get support from the very people who have built the controls. It might come as a surprise that you are entitled to support even during your trial.

THE LEARNING RESOURCES

Check out the RadControls Examples on the marketplace.

Subscribe to the Windows Phone 7 team blog RSS for the latest tips & tricks in Windows Phone development.

Check out the two sample apps with free source code and how-to-build-those-apps blog posts – the ToDoLists app and the Exchange Client app.

THE CUSTOMERS

The suite is trusted by a number of customers with top selling apps on the Windows Phone Marketplace. More than 100 customer's apps are featured on our Showcase Gallery. Join them!

YOU?

If you haven't tried RadControls for Windows Phone yet:

Learn more	Download a free trial		
Play with the controls	Ask your questions	And decide for yourself	Go

RESOURCES SUMMARY

GUIDE TO PROFESSIONAL-LEVEL DEVELOPER TOOLS, RESOURCES AND MEMBERSHIPS – at no charge to students

www.microsoft.com/student/en/us/findyourcolony/default.aspx

WOORANK – a website analysis tool to help you work on optimizing your app's website for search engines

www.woorank.com

MICROSOFT SILVERLIGHT ANALYTICS FRAMEWORK – updated for the Windows Phone Mango

msaf.codeplex.com/workitem/16474

BLOG POST ON HOW TO USE GOOGLE ANALYTICS for your Windows Phone app

mark.mymonster.nl/2011/10/21/statistics-for-your-windows-phone-application-google-analytics

CAMTASIA AND JING video capturing and editing tools

www.techsmith.com/camtasia.html

MICROSOFT EXPRESSION ENCODER 4 PRO video capturing and editing tool

www.microsoft.com/expression/products/encoderpro_overview.aspx

HOW TO BETA TEST YOUR APP ON THE MARKETPLACE

msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/hh334585%28v=VS.92%29.aspx

A WEBSITE FOR BETA TESTING your app

www.windowsphonebeta.com

THE MICROSOFT USER COMMUNITY FACEBOOK PAGE

www.facebook.com/MicrosoftUserCommunity?sk=wall

LOCATE WINDOWS PHONE EVENTS NEAR YOU

www.communitymegaphone.com

www.ineta.org

LEARN HOW TO BETTER USE THE MICROSOFT ADVERTISING SDK

advertising.microsoft.com/mobile-apps

ALTERNATIVE ADVERTISING NETWORKS

AdDuplex
www.adduplex.com

Google AdMob
www.admob.com

Inneractive
www.inner-active.com

MillennialMediaAdView
www.millennialmedia.com

MobFox
www.mobfox.com

TELERIK RADCONTROLS FOR WINDOWS PHONE

www.telerik.com/products/windows-phone.aspx

TELERIK RADCONTROLS FOR WINDOWS PHONE SHOWCASE GALLERY

www.telerik.com/products/windows-phone/getting-started/showcase.aspx

WINDOWS PHONE WEBSITES THAT SELL ADVERTISING

www.wmpoweruser.com

www.winrumors.com

www.wp7applist.com

www.1800pocketpc.com

www.windowsphoneapplist.com

wpdevpodcast.com

wp7rocks.com

wp7rocks.rpod.ru

MANAGE YOUR ADVERTISING THROUGH

www.buysellads.com

CURRENTLY ACTIVE COMPETITIONS FOR WINDOWS PHONE APPS

Windows Phone App of the Day

www.thesociablegeek.com/2011/11/08/windows-phone-app-of-the-day

Windows Phone Wants to Feature Your App – the prize is advertising for free

windowsphone.promo.eprize.com/appdevelopercontest

Submit 2 quality apps and get a free Windows Phone 7.5

www.microsoft.com/canada/offers-promotions/mango-app-challenge/Default.aspx

For Ukrainian Windows Phone Developers

www.wp7rocks.com/2011/11/windows-phone-wp7rockscom.html

For Russian Windows Phone Developers

blogs.msdn.com/b/mikcher/archive/2011/11/29/marketplace.aspx

RADCONTROLS FOR WINDOWS PHONE examples on the Marketplace

www.windowsphone.com/en-US/apps/fd55f526-d6f7-df11-9264-00237de2db9e

SUBSCRIBE TO THE WINDOWS PHONE 7 TEAM BLOG RSS

blogs.telerik.com/windowsphoneteam/Posts.rss

TELERIK TODOLISTS SAMPLE APP with free source code

www.telerik.com/products/windows-phone/getting-started/todolists.aspx

TELERIK EXCHANGE CLIENT SAMPLE APP with free source code

www.telerik.com/products/windows-phone/getting-started/exchange-client.aspx

THOUGHT THIS WAS HELPFUL?

Share this paper with your fellow developers if you found it valuable.

For any feedback, drop me a line at windowsphoneapps@telerik.com or get in touch with me on Twitter @pakostina.

Ina Tontcheva
Brand Manager at Telerik
RadControls for Windows Phone