Introduction to Apps

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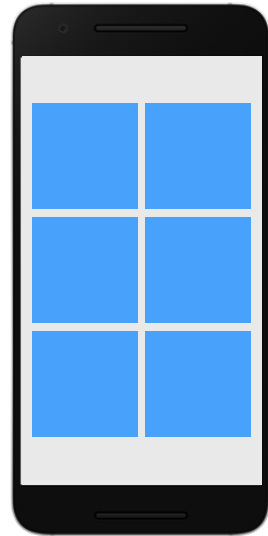Gold Application Integration

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What is an App?

app

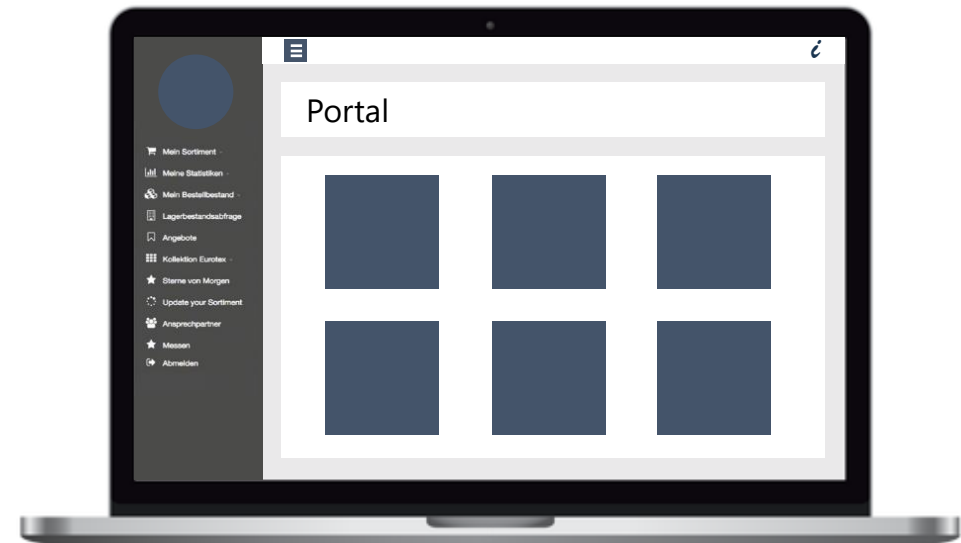(n) a piece of software that has been designed to perform a specific function.

The term was originally coined for programmes running on PCs, however, they're now more commonly associated with software running on mobile devices.

Types of Apps

• Broadly speaking, apps can be broken down into two variants:

Mobile Apps

Portal

Web Apps

Mobile Apps

- As the name suggest, a mobile app is an application designed specifically for mobile devices, the two most popular operating systems being iOS & Android.

- However, these apps can only be downloaded from app stores and can't be accessed through a normal PC.

examples of widely used mobile apps

Pros of Mobile Apps

✓ A mobile app can leverage the internal capabilities of the device, for example the camera, GPS and push notifications.

✓ A mobile app can be developed to still function whilst offline, whereas a web app must have constant access to the internet to work.
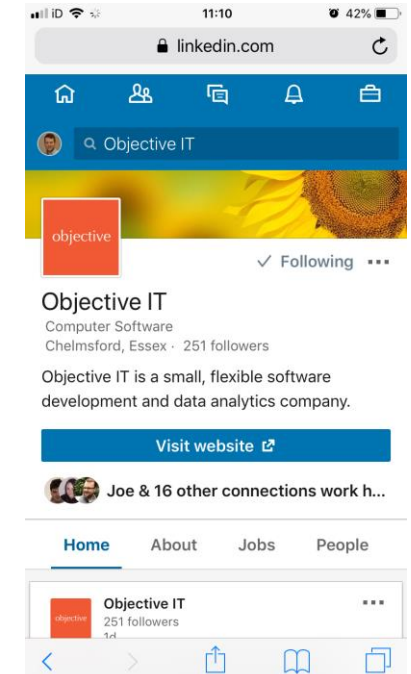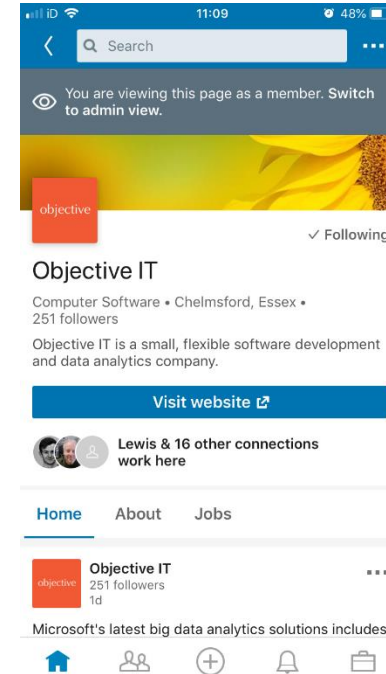
✓ Mobile apps are often more convenient for users, as typically they offer a better user experience.

✓ It is far easier to personalise to someone using a mobile app.

Web Apps

- A web app is basically a dynamic website, which is accessed through an internet browser such as IE or Google Chrome.

- Whilst web apps are designed for PC use, they can be responsive and therefore can be accessed through a mobile device.

Linkedin's mobile (left) and web (right) apps both accessed through a mobile device

Pros of Web Apps

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A responsive web app will work perfectly on all devices, adapting to any screen size.

It's easy to setup, as there's no requirement to submit it to an app store or something similar.

A web app is instantly available for a user, there's no need to manually download anything to the device.

Web apps have a broader reach, and through search engine optimisation are easier to find.

Summary

FAQ	Mobile Apps	Web Apps
How is the app accessed?	The app is installed onto a device from the app store. This allows the app to leverage inbuilt features of the device, such as accessing the camera, accelerometer, thumb print scanner etc., thus providing ultimate performance for an app.	The app is accessed through a web browser and not installed onto a device. This means that little to no memory space is required to access the app, however, the app cannot harness the devices' features, resulting in potentially inferior performance.
How many versions can be live?	If the device has an internet connection, you can force the app to check if it is the latest version and download the latest version if it is not.	Only a single version of the app can ever be live as the app is accessed from a remote server, which you will have control over.
How will app support work?	Depending on how your app has been developed can make support a lot easier. If you can ensure only one version is live, support would be much simpler than if not.	As only a single version of the app is ever live, full support can be offered at all times to all customers.
What about an internet connection?	The app has the capability to function without the need for an internet connection, however this is not as standard. Internet connectivity could add additional functionality however.	The app runs from a remote server, which means internet connectivity is a necessity for any functionality. This can cause problems, especially when travelling (lack of signal / 4G / Wi-Fi).
How about maintenance and updates?	Because of multiple platforms, comparatively this takes significant time. This can be reduced however, through the use of a cross platform implementation tool.	This is reasonably quick. As web apps have a common code base across multiple mobile platforms, updates and maintenance are much simpler.
Can I get an icon for my app?	Yes, and setting this up is simple. You can have your exact choice of logo also.	Yes, however this requires additional steps for each user individually and you will have no control over the choice of the logo itself.

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Get in touch:

+44 (0)1245 330360

interested@objectiveit.com

@objectiveit

linkedin.com/company/objective-computing-limited/

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