

# **Application Platforms & Types of Apps**

**by**

**Derik Greeff**

---

## **Introduction**

The general definition of application software is computer software created to facilitate a user in executing specific tasks. An application or an app therefore are software that we found and use in our everyday life, may it be for entertainment or to make our life and daily tasks easier. This range of apps may vary from graphic software, media players, accounting software, enterprise software, and office suites.

The following app. platforms are now going to be looked at, namely:

- Web Applications
- Mobile Applications
- Server Applications
- Tablet Applications
- Desktop Applications

## **Web Applications**

A web application is an app which is accessed over networks such as an intranet or the internet, coded in browser-supported language and for implementation is dependent on the rendering of a universal web browser. An example being JavaScript joint together with a browser-rendered mark-up language such as HTML.

Web applications are well-liked since support for them are cross-platform compatible, and the aptitude to maintain and modify them does not necessitate the install of software or interruption of other client computers.

The most common web apps are online retail sales, online auctions, online banking, wikis, social networking, and webmail among others.

## **Mobile Applications**

The mobile app segment of the global market is rapidly developing as it is still a very new market. The apps execute specific tasks for the mobile user when running the software on the platform.

The software in general are reasonably priced and found on most entry-level mobiles. The app ranges from the most basic app which includes messaging and telephonic services to the more advanced video, gaming, social and web browsing apps.

According to the research firm Gartner<sup>i</sup> the most popular apps currently are:

- Money Transfer
- Location-Based Services
- Mobile Search
- Mobile Browsing, i.e. Opera Mini
- Mobile Health Monitoring
- Mobile Payments
- Near Field Communication
- Mobile Advertising
- Mobile Instant Messaging
- Mobile Music

Mobile advertising as mentioned above is a fast growing marketing method which makes most mobile apps free for users.

## **Server Applications**

A server application function is devoted and able procedure implementation for practical app support. The server app can therefore either be a server segment of a specific execution request, or a software outline offering a global approach to generating an application-server implementation.

The server app acts as a component set which is accessible through a platform defined API to the software developer. The server applications main function is web apps is to support dynamic page construction when simultaneously running in the

same Web server environment. The generation of web pages however is not the only server app function, as they also help developers focus on business logic realization through load-balancing, fail-over, and clustering service implementation.

With Java app servers, the server handles Web client connection and database connections. This is accomplished through the Java apps performance as a virtual machine extended for running apps.

The core features of Java Application Servers and API are defined through the Java Platform EE.

## **Tablet Applications**

Although the first tablet computer originally surfaced about 10 years ago with the Microsoft tablet, it has only now become a popular device for users with the recent more successful Apple iPad. The tablet is consequently the newest platform for a variety of apps, giving more opportunities with being a flat touch screen computer. The same is true for the recent addition of Smartphone to the mobile application platform.

The variety of applications for the tablet can be categorized accordingly:

### ***Communication:***

- E-mail Clients
- IM Clients
- Browsers
- News & Info Clients
- Social Networking

### ***Games:***

- Puzzle & Strategy (e.g. Sudoku, Chess, Tetris)
- Action & Adventure (e.g. Role-Playing Games)
- Cards & Casino (e.g. Solitaire, Blackjack, Poker)
- Sports (e.g. Tennis, Soccer, Racing, Skiing)

- Leisure Sports (e.g. Bowling, Pool, Darts)

***Multimedia:***

- Graphics & Image Viewers
- Book Readers
- Video Players
- Audio Players
- Streaming Players
- Presentation Viewers

***Productivity:***

- Calculators
- Diary
- Notepad, Word Processors, Spreadsheets
- Calendars
- Banking/Finance
- Education

***Travel:***

- City Guides
- Currency Converters
- Translators
- GPS/Maps
- Scheduling
- Weather

***Utilities:***

- File Manager
- Address Manager
- Task Manager

The above list of different tablet apps are also to a huge extend applicable to the mobile platform with the introduction of the Smartphone, and to a lesser extend to the

older desktop application platform. The tablet however has taken apps to a whole new level by giving users a more enhanced interacting experience. As technology will head more and more into this direction, the tablet platform is promising to be a huge commercial field for future new apps and will be the future marketing and advertising method.

## **Desktop Applications**

Desktop platforms are the basis for where most applications originated, although not as rich as with Smartphone's or Tablets.

The desktop make use of apps such as word processors, spreadsheets, accounting programs, utilities, browsers, and games, diaries, email-clients, and calendars to name a few.

The software widget and gadgets also originated on this platform, and is most probably the first more advance app as we know them today. The widget or gadget is a generic type of software app comprising of portable code intended for one or multiple software platforms. It is an easy and simple app for users to utilize. Examples include the clock, calendar, CPU-usage, and puzzle widgets.

## **Conclusion**

Apps have become part of our everyday life as we encounter them on almost all platforms we use, may it be desktop, server, web, tablet, or mobile. The new 'e-generation' of people have become one with technology using apps for communication, multimedia, productivity, utilities, games, and travel in their everyday life.

---

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.gartner.com/it/page.jsp?id=1230413>