

Ola partners Google to launch Progressive Web App

Informacje o publikacji: Voice & Data ; New Delhi (May 19, 2017).

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BENGALURU: Ola, India's most popular mobile app for transportation, has announced the launch of its Progressive Web App (PWA), a lightweight mobile website that offers users, especially in smaller towns and cities, an app-like experience on simple smartphones, requiring a fraction of the data used by native apps.

Ola's PWA will enable the use of its platform across hundreds of cities in India and addresses a significant market opportunity of customers and driver partners.

Announced at the Google I/O developer conference in San Francisco today, Ola says it is strategically leveraging cutting edge technology that has the reach of the web and offers a native-app-like immersive customer experience. PWA will overcome technological barriers to entry in key markets and make Ola the first ride-sharing platform in hundreds of cities across India, where there is limited connectivity and a prevailing use of low-end smartphones.

Although smartphone usage in India has increased in the last couple of years, it still lags behind most other emerging economies. With the majority of the Indian population using low-end smartphones, the presence of too many apps tends to slow down the functionality of the phone due to higher RAM and data usage. Ola's PWA, which consumes only 50 KB data on first payload and 10 KB on subsequent loads, will emerge as the preferred option for cab booking for thousands of non-frequent app users.

Ankit Bhati, co-Founder and CTO of Ola, said, "The launch of PWA technology represents another milestone in Ola's commitment to building innovative technology that is made for India. As the first ride-hailing app in the APAC region that is using PWA technology, this represents an important development that will enable us to reach an ever greater number of customers and driver partners in rural India. We have always said that addressing market needs is a key priority and this launch takes us one step further in our commitment to providing mobility for a billion Indians."

"At Google, we are deeply committed to making the mobile web better for everyone. Our PWA journey began a few years ago and we are delighted to see the traction this technology has had, especially in mobile-first countries like India. It's exciting to see Ola create their PWA, which will ensure their users have an engaging experience from the very first moment," said Rahul Roy-chowdhury, VP Product Management - Chrome, Google.

PWA will operate in ways that address the local consumer needs and provide light and agile functionality, enabling Ola to magnify its reach to tier two, three, and four cities across India.

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Credit: VoicenData Bureau

SZCZEGÓY

Temat:	Smartphones
Lokalizacja:	India San Francisco California
Firma/organizacja:	Nazwa: Google Inc; NAICS: 519130
Tytu:	Ola partners Google to launch Progressive Web App
Tytu publikacji:	Voice &Data; New Delhi
Rok publikacji:	2017
Data publikacji:	May 19, 2017
Wydawca:	Athena Information Solutions Pvt. Ltd.
Miejsce publikacji:	New Delhi
Kraj publikacji:	India, New Delhi
Temat publikacji:	Communications, Computers--Data Communications And Data Transmission Systems
Typ rda:	Trade Journals
Jzyk publikacji:	English
Rodzaj dokumentu:	News
ID dokumentu w serwisie ProQuest:	1900289905
Adres URL dokumentu:	https://search.proquest.com/docview/1900289905?accountid=27375
Prawa autorskie:	Copyright 2017 Cyber Media (India) Ltd., distributed by Contify.com
Ostatnia aktualizacja:	2017-05-20
Baza danych:	ABI/INFORM Collection; Advanced Technologies &Aerospace Database; SciTech Premium Collection; Technology Collection

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