

Aim -

To write meta data of your Ecommerce PWA in a Web app manifest file to enable “add to homescreen feature”.

Theory -

Regular Web App

A regular web app is a website that is designed to be accessible on all mobile devices such that the content gets fit as per the device screen. It is designed using a web technology stack (HTML, CSS, JavaScript, Ruby, etc.) and operates via a browser. They offer various native-device features and functionalities. However, it entirely depends on the browser the user is using. In other words, it might be possible that you can access a native-device feature on Chrome but not on Safari or Mozilla Firefox because the browsers are incompatible with that feature.

Progressive Web App

Progressive Web App (PWA) is a regular web app, but some extras enable it to deliver an excellent user experience. It is a perfect blend of desktop and mobile application experience to give both platforms to the end-users.

Difference between PWAs vs. Regular Web Apps:

A Progressive Web is different and better than a Regular Web app with features like:

1. Native Experience

Though a PWA runs on web technologies (HTML, CSS, JavaScript) like a Regular web app, it gives user experience like a native mobile application. It can use most native device features, including push notifications, without relying on the browser or any other entity. It offers a seamless and integrated user experience that it is quite tough for one to differentiate between a PWA and a Native application by considering its look and feel.

2. Ease of Access

Unlike other mobile apps, PWAs do not demand longer download time and make memory space available for installing the applications. The PWAs can be shared and installed by a link, which cuts down the number of steps to install and use. These applications can easily keep an app icon on the user's home screen, making the app easily accessible to the users and helps the brands remain in the users' minds, and improving the chances of interaction.

3. Faster Services

PWAs can cache the data and serve the user with text stylesheets, images, and other web content even before the page loads completely. This lowers the waiting time for the end-users and helps the brands improve the user engagement and retention rate, which eventually adds value to their business.

4. Engaging Approach

As already shared, the PWAs can employ push notifications and other native device features more efficiently. Their interaction does not depend on the browser user uses. This eventually improves the chances of notifying the user regarding your services, offers, and other options related to your brand and keeping them hooked to your brand. In simpler words, PWAs let you maintain the user engagement and retention rate.

5. Updated Real-Time Data Access

Another plus point of PWAs is that these apps get updated on their own. They do not demand the end-users to go to the App Store or other such platforms to download the update and wait until installed.

In this app type, the web app developers can push the live update from the server, which reaches the apps residing on the user's devices automatically. Therefore, it is easier for the mobile app developer to provide the best of the updated functionalities and services to the end-users without forcing them to update their app.

6. Discoverable

PWAs reside in web browsers. This implies higher chances of optimizing them as per the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) criteria and improving the Google rankings like that in websites and other web apps.

7. Lower Development Cost

Progressive web apps can be installed on the user device like a native device, but it does not demand submission on an App Store. This makes it far more cost-effective than native mobile applications while offering the same set of functionalities.

Pros and cons of the Progressive Web App

The main features are:

Progressive — They work for every user, regardless of the browser chosen because they are built at the base with progressive improvement principles.

Responsive — They adapt to the various screen sizes: desktop, mobile, tablet, or dimensions that can later become available.

App-like — They behave with the user as if they were native apps, in terms of interaction and navigation.

Updated — Information is always up-to-date thanks to the data update process offered by service workers.

Secure — Exposed over HTTPS protocol to prevent the connection from displaying information or altering the contents.

Searchable — They are identified as “applications” and are indexed by search engines.

Reactivable — Make it easy to reactivate the application thanks to capabilities such as web notifications.

Installable — They allow the user to “save” the apps that he considers most useful with the corresponding icon on the screen of his mobile terminal (home screen) without having to face all the steps and problems related to the use of the app store.

Linkable — Easily shared via URL without complex installations.

Offline — Once more it is about putting the user before everything, avoiding the usual error message in case of weak or no connection. The PWA are based on two particularities: first of all the ‘skeleton’ of the app, which recalls the page structure, even if its contents do not respond and its elements include the header, the page layout, as well as an illustration that signals that the page is loading.

Weaknesses refer to:

iOS support from version 11.3 onwards;

Greater use of the device battery;

Not all devices support the full range of PWA features (same speech for iOS and Android operating systems);

It is not possible to establish a strong re-engagement for iOS users (URL scheme, standard web notifications);

Support for offline execution is however limited;

Lack of presence on the stores (there is no possibility to acquire traffic from that channel);

There is no “body” of control (like the stores) and an approval process;

Limited access to some hardware components of the devices;

Little flexibility regarding “special” content for users (eg loyalty programs, loyalty, etc.).

Output :

Step 1 : Add necessary Meta-tags and link tag of manifest.json file

```

    href="data:image/png;base64,iVBORw0KGgoAAAANSU...AAAAAABACAYAAACqA...AAAAKSE1...
    sizes="64x64" />
<title>Online Shopping for Women, Men, Kids Fashion & Lifestyle - Myntra</title>
<link href="style.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" />
<link href="utils.css" rel="stylesheet" type="text/css" />
<!-- Meta Tags required for
| | | Progressive Web App -->
<meta name="apple-mobile-web-app-status-bar" content="#aa7700">
<meta name="theme-color" content="black">

<!-- Manifest File link -->
<link rel="manifest" href="manifest.json">
<script src="serviceworker.js"></script>
</head>

```

Step 2 : Create a manifest.json file in the same directory.

```

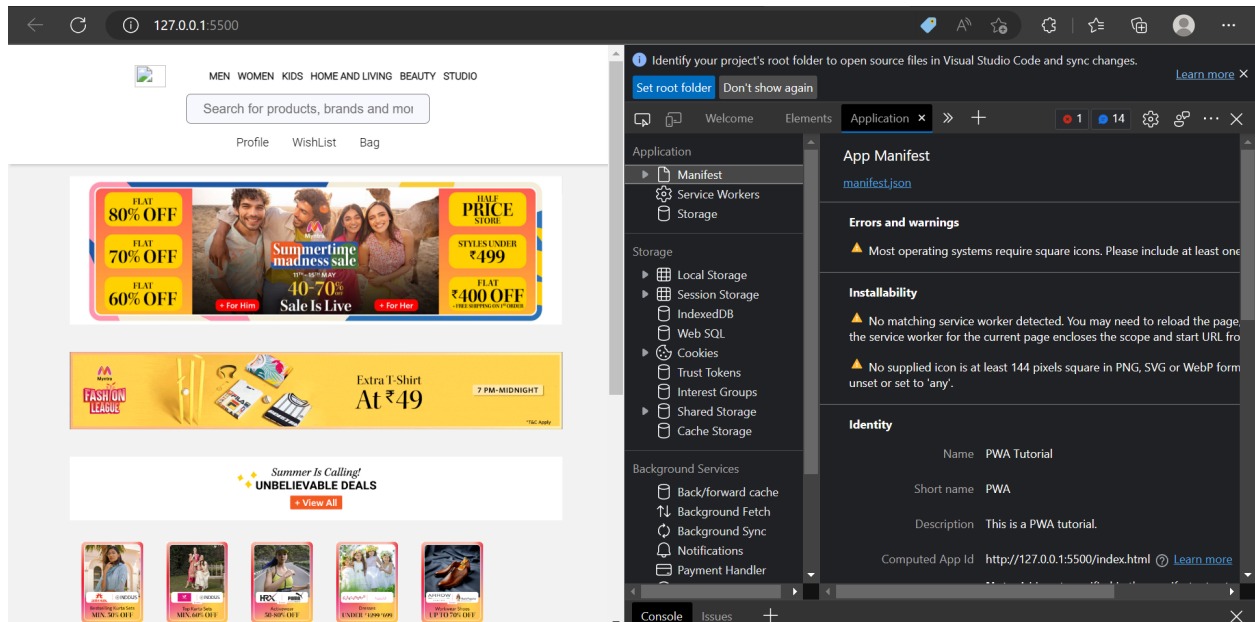
{} manifest.json > [ ] icons > {} 0
1  {
2      "name": "PWA Tutorial",
3      "short_name": "PWA",
4      "start_url": "index.html",
5      "display": "standalone",
6      "background_color": "#5900b3",
7      "theme_color": "black",
8      "scope": ".",
9      "description": "This is a PWA tutorial.",
10     "icons": [
11         {
12             "src": "images/192.png",
13             "sizes": "192x192",
14             "type": "image/png"
15         },
16         {
17             "src": "images/unnamed.png",
18             "sizes": "512x512",
19             "type": "image/png"
20         }
21     ]
22 }
23

```

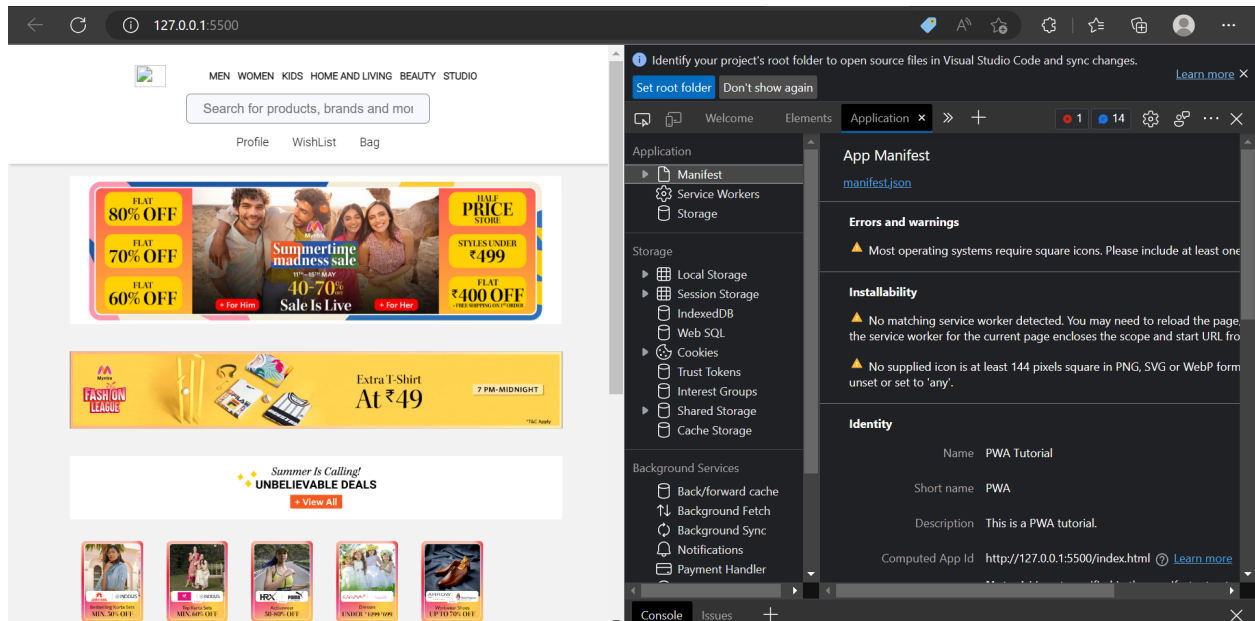
Step 3 : Create a new folder named images and place all the icons related to the application in that folder. It is recommended to have the dimensions of the icons at least 192 by 192 pixels. The image name and dimensions should match that of the manifest file.



Step 4 : Open the index.html file in Chrome and navigate to the Application Section in the Chrome Developer Tools. Open the manifest column from the list.



Step 5 : Under the installability tab, it would show that no service worker is detected. We will need to create another file for the PWA, that is, serviceworker.js in the same directory. This file handles the configuration of a service worker that will manage the working of the application.



Step 6 : The last step is to link the service worker file to index.html. This is done by adding a short JavaScript script to the index.html created in the above steps. Add the below code inside the script tag in index.html.

```
JS serviceworker.js > ...
1  var staticCacheName = "pwa";
2
3  self.addEventListener("install", function (e) {
4  e.waitUntil(
5      caches.open(staticCacheName).then(function (cache) {
6          return cache.addAll(["/"]);
7      })
8  );
9  });
10
11 self.addEventListener("fetch", function (event) {
12     console.log(event.request.url);
13
14     event.respondWith(
15         caches.match(event.request).then(function (response) {
16             return response || fetch(event.request);
17         })
18     );
19 });
20
```

Online Shopping for Women, Men, Kids & Home Living | Studio

Search for products, brands and categories

Profile WishList Bag

80% OFF

70% OFF

60% OFF

Summertime madness sale

10-70% Sale Is Live

NEW PRICE \$1499

\$1499

FASHION LEADER

Extra T-Shirt At ₹49

7 PM-MIDNIGHT

Summer is Calling! UNBELIEVABLE DEALS

View All

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

Application

Manifest

Service Workers

Storage

Local Storage

Session Storage

IndexedDB

Web SQL

Cookies

Trust Tokens

Interest Groups

Shared Storage

Cache

Cache Storage

Back/forward cache

Background Services

Background Fetch

Background Sync

Notifications

Payment Handler

Periodic Background Sync

Push Messaging

Reporting API

App Manifest

manifest.json

Identity

Name PWA Tutorial

Short name PWA

Description This is a PWA tutorial.

Computed App Id http://127.0.0.1:5500/index.html

Note: id is not specified in the manifest, start_url is used instead. To specify an App Id that matches the current identity, set the id field to /index.html

Presentation

Start URL index.html

Theme color black

Background color #5900b3

Orientation

Display standalone

Online Shopping for Women, Men, Kids & Home Living | Studio

Search for products, brands and categories

Profile WishList Bag

80% OFF

70% OFF

60% OFF

Summertime madness sale

10-70% Sale Is Live

NEW PRICE \$1499

\$1499

FASHION LEADER

Extra T-Shirt At ₹49

7 PM-MIDNIGHT

Summer is Calling! UNBELIEVABLE DEALS

View All

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

NEW ARRIVAL

Application

Manifest

Service Workers

Storage

Local Storage

Session Storage

IndexedDB

Web SQL

Cookies

Trust Tokens

Interest Groups

Shared Storage

Cache

Cache Storage

Back/forward cache

Background Services

Background Fetch

Background Sync

Notifications

Payment Handler

Periodic Background Sync

Push Messaging

Reporting API

Icons

Show only the minimum safe area for maskable icons

Need help? Read App Image Generator.

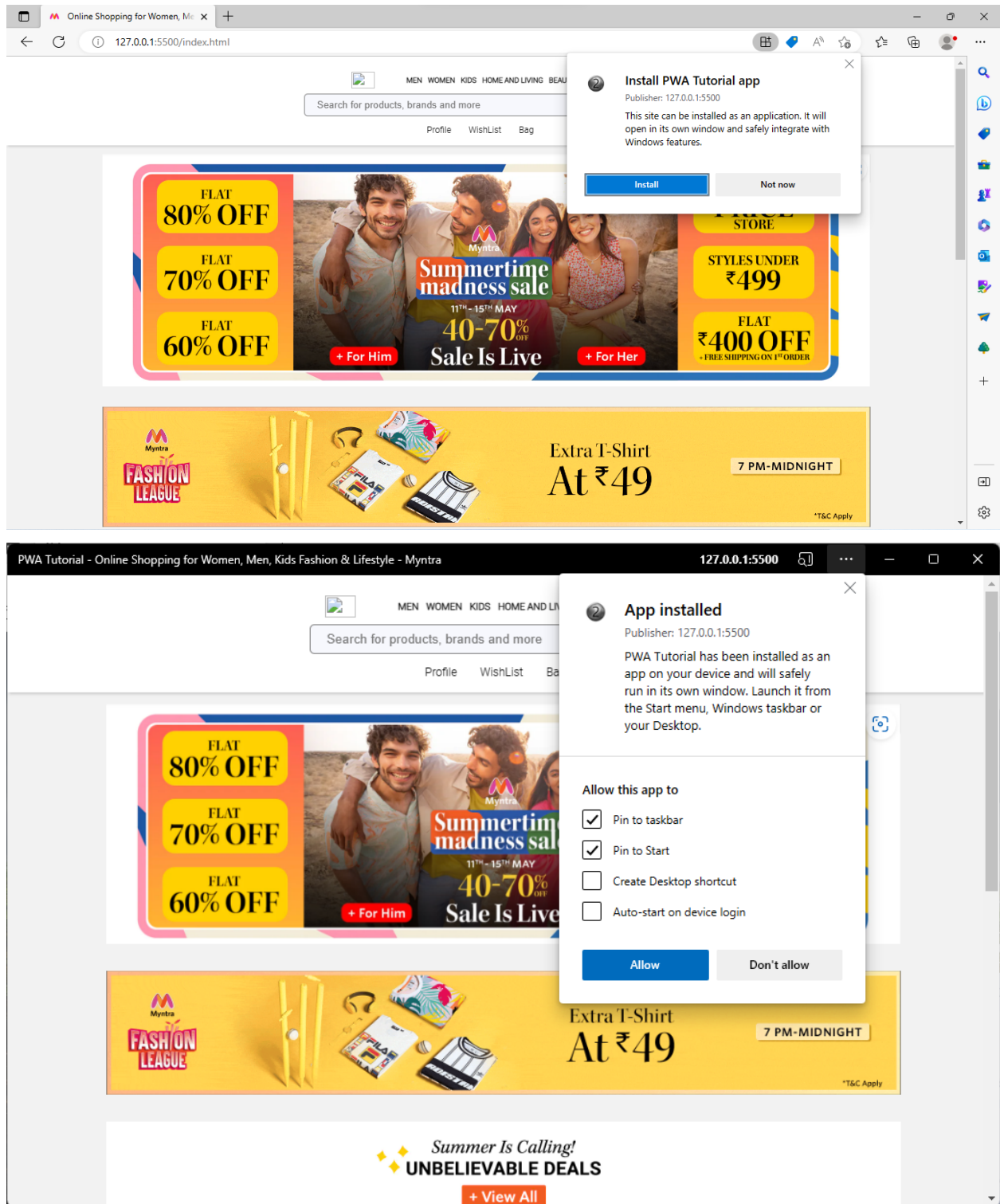
Primary icon as used by

Microsoft Edge

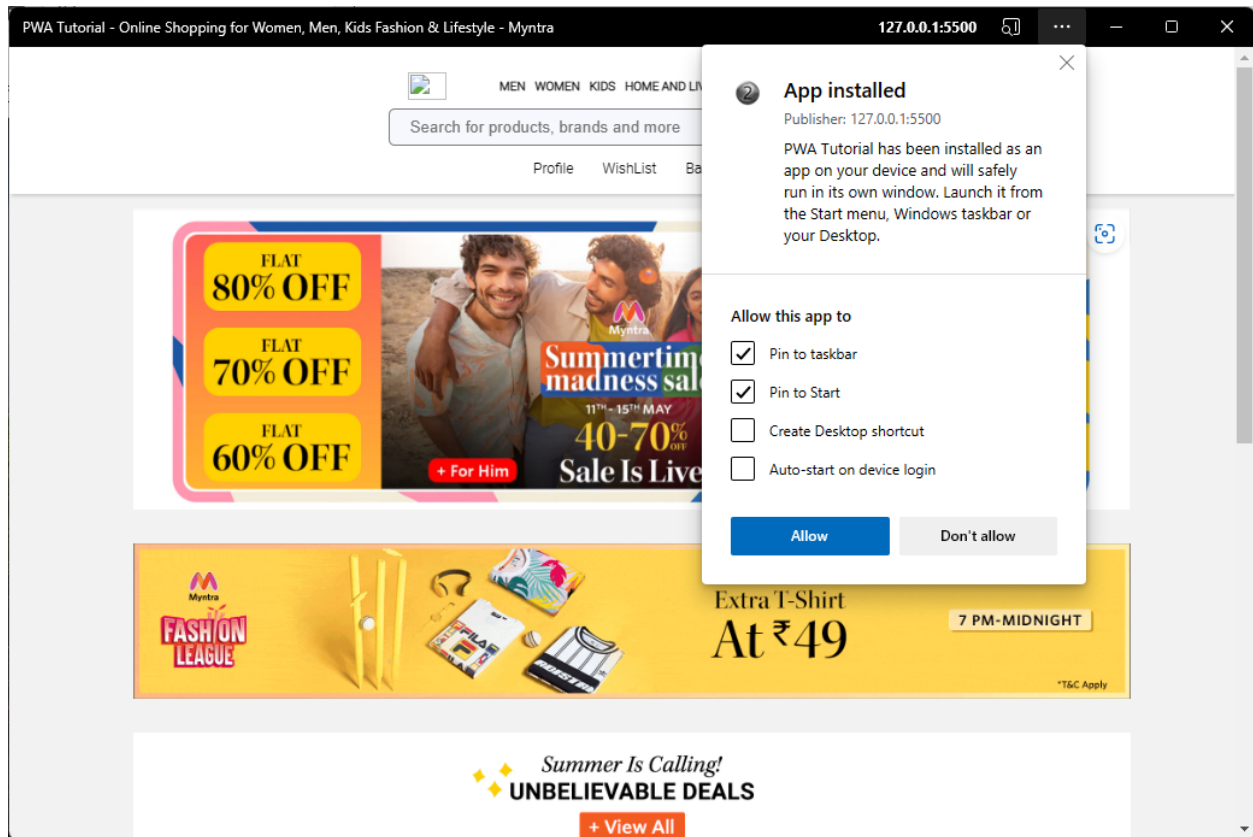
192x192px image/png

512x512px image/png

Step 7 : Installing the web application using the Install app button.



Step 8 : The final application along with its desktop icon.



Conclusion-

Thus we have written meta data of our Ecommerce PWA in a Web app manifest file to enable “add to homescreen feature”. We also added images for icons.