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JavaScript and Mobile Development

Mobile devices have become the go to source for accessing information, entertainment and keeping up with those you find important in your life. What was once a world full of dial-up Internet, ‘snail-mail’ and collect calls for long distance loved ones has become available in one flat fee on mobile devices. It is easier now more than ever to be ‘hip and in the know’ of everything you can imagine. The mobile devices have transformed from briefcases to pocket sized devices that easily slip into your pocket. The visual appearances of the devices are more than accommodating becoming the same quality of HD Televisions, if not better. One of the key reasons this development has been possible is due to the integration of JavaScript into mobile development.

Apps are the hottest downloads for mobile device users. Most people do not use actual websites anymore. The most popular sites people visit now have easy access through free mobile apps. “Specific JavaScript libraries are used to achieve a platform specific look and feel and functionality, while accessing and manipulating (with limitations) the underlying hardware, sensors and user data” (Xanthapoulos and Xinogalus) With the popular platforms being iOS and Android, the JavaScript language allows for the apps to be created to cater to the differences of the these platforms. Apple has its standards in look and functionality while Android is able to look and function the same but in its own guidelines. JavaScript language manipulation for each platform allows for the diversity of apps for specific platforms.

JavaScript is obviously a great deal of importance in the development industry of today. Yet, with every great thing comes a flaw at some point. With JavaScript anytime a device utilizes the code it will decrease the battery life of the device because the CPU will be using that power. “These aspects of JavaScript on mobile devices mean developers need to be careful about JavaScript usage. As much as possible, it is best to avoid using JavaScript.” (Zakas) Therefore, the increased use of CSS has been necessary to enhance the functionality of appearance for some programs to extend battery life.

Google Analytics is a Google tool that allows for a website or app’s usage details and user’s demographics to be calculated. “Google Analytics works by using a piece of JavaScript code called a page tag.” (Tidal) Apple and Android platforms use JavaScript to get information from the user to report back to Google Analytics. Google Analytics is very important because it allows for the developer and client to see how effective their site is. It gives information in details from the type of device the users use, their location, the operating system used, the gender, the bounce rate to that website and much more. This is very important for it determines if the website or app is effective in search engines and how many new and returning visitor’s exist.

JavaScript was one of the few programming languages developed that was very essential to the growth of the mobile development world. While most programming languages are similar for the most part JavaScript is the most common used outside of C#. While CSS has taken away from certain responsibilities of the JavaScript language, JavaScript still has its very essential usage. The rules and structure makes it a language many programmers have defined as ‘complicated’ but it is the one language worth learning outside of HTML. JavaScript and Mobile Development go hand in hand. Mobile Development has JavaScript to thank for modernization.

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