Mobile Applications

Mobile applications are very popular. They can be accessed anywhere you can take your mobile device, both online and offline, and can take greater advantage of device features and capabilities than a web application.

Mobile applications come in two primary varieties: native apps and hybrid apps.

Native mobile apps

- Must be built using the native code that runs on mobile devices. In general, that means Java (Android) or Swift / Objective C (iOS)
- Should adhere to the design and development guidelines for the intended platforms: - iOS Guidelines - Android Guidelines

Android and iOS are the dominant players in the mobile market, but you should check with your particular users to see what is most prevalent in your target market.

Hybrid mobile apps

- Maintained as a single code base that is deployed to multiple different device types (namely iOS and Android)
- Built using web-technologies (i.e. JavaScript) - low barrier to entry for web developers
- Implemented differently depending on the framework: - some compile down to native components - others render all content in a web view (essentially a web page running inside of an app)

Comparing the two approaches

Native mobile apps

- Guaranteed to look & feel like an app since it uses native components
- Requires more specialized development expertise
- Requires separate code bases for different operating systems - Longer development time - More expensive / more maintenance

Hybrid mobile apps

- Reduces development time thanks to shared code base
- Provides more technology options - Many different hybrid platforms / tools available
- Allows for a consistent look on different platforms
- Makes development easier by using web technologies, but it's also easier to make something that doesn't follow standard mobile patterns

So, which one should you use?

Our recommendation for mobile applications is to take a hybrid approach. This will allow you to deploy multiple versions of your application (i.e. iOS and Android) from a single code base. We offer support for several different approaches to building hybrid apps (see our Mobile Framework Introduction to learn about the technologies we support).

> ***NOTE:*** *Brightlayer UI support for native mobile applications is limited - if you are planning to go this route, please Contact us.*