



Introduction

We'll cover the following





- The arrival of handheld devices
- The transition from desktop to mobile

The arrival of handheld devices#

If I told you that today mobile devices have the maximum market penetration globally, you probably wouldn't be surprised. Approximately, 60 to 70% of the users in this day and age are accessing online services through their mobile devices as opposed to accessing them via their laptops or desktops.

This technology shift is for a few reasons: *accessibility* and the *ease of use* of mobile devices. We can carry our mobile phones with us everywhere, be it when hanging out with our friends or when at our office cubicles. Also, we don't have to be tech-savvy to operate a handheld device. My mother, who has never operated a computer, runs Google searches through voice commands on her Android device, without any sort of assistance. This is how simple and intuitive the user interface of handheld devices is.

Engineers have done an impeccable job making the user interfaces as intuitive as possible making the onboarding of the new users smooth. The

mass adoption of handheld devices has totally changed the technology landscape. It has provided a way for non-tech-savvy users  enter into 

the online universe. It's a totally different ball game. Businesses are going from *web-first* to *mobile-first*. There was a time when just nerds used to play computer games, but today everyone is playing *Candy Crush*, *PubG*, and *Fortnite* on their mobile devices.

The transition from desktop to mobile#

I've always been an avid gamer. I love to play games on all the platforms, be it the web, a console, or a desktop. Back in the day, around 2010, I got introduced to casual gaming via Facebook social games like *Farmville*, and many more. These games have a freemium business model, these are free to play with in-game purchases and were popularized by companies like *Zynga* in conjunction with social networks like *Facebook*. *Farmville* is one popular product of *Zynga* that had a major contribution in putting the company on *NASDAQ*.

I got pretty hooked. These casual games became my thing. I often switched between my work tab and the game tab throughout the day on my laptop. This kind of kept me going for a longer period of time without getting bored or burnt out.

Online multiplayer social gaming was a new thing then, and it became a major source of earning for Facebook. Every now and then there was a new exciting game on the Facebook app store. Just *Zynga* alone contributed to 15 to 20% of Facebook's total earnings.

(<https://techcrunch.com/2012/04/23/zynga-made-up-15-of-facebooks-revenue-in-q1-down-from-19-a-year-ago/>)

Gradually, smartphones became popular. They significantly improved in hardware and they were loaded with more features, cool cameras, better

memory, and whatnot. As smartphone's popularity rose, and they became a household thing, this changed the whole online gaming landscape.

Almost all of the games transitioned to mobile devices, as the gaming companies observed *better user retention* and *engagement rates* via the mobile versions of their games. There were more Monthly Active Users (MAU) and Daily Active Users (DAU) after the gaming studios introduced mobile clients for their games.


As mobile engagement was increasing, web engagement was decreasing. Many businesses decided to focus just on the mobile. *Clash of Clans* is a good example of this.

Today, you can hardly find any games on Facebook, besides the instant messenger games. Several have gone *mobile-only*. The Facebook game store feels like a deserted place, and the social network is focusing more on ads, business pages, and Facebook groups to make profits. This technology shift is not just for the gaming segment. This is happening for arguably every business niche.

Mobile devices today bring-in the majority of the traffic for businesses. There are *mobile-only* businesses with billions of users like *Instagram*, *TikTok*, *Pokemon Go*, and so on. *Google Play Store* has over 2 billion monthly active users and has over 3.5 million apps, 82 billion app downloads as of today.

In case you are wondering what terms like *mobile-only*, *mobile-first*, *mobile-friendly* really mean and how important they are in the application development universe, you'll find out in the next lesson.

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