

Sean Berlin

Professor Price

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### Impact of Mobile Applications on App Culture

Since the rise of smartphones beginning in the late 2000s, people have grown accustomed to using their handheld devices for much more than simply making phone calls. Smartphones serve to have access to news, books, weather, videos, social media, and much more. Their multifunctional purpose is made possible through the use of mobile applications. Mobile applications can be defined as a type of application software designed to run on a mobile device, such as a smartphone or tablet computer (Mobile Application). Mobile applications have played a pivotal role in influencing the emergence of app culture. To be more specific, mobile applications have impacted the app culture through (as a result of) their development, functionality, and monetization.

Mobile applications have impacted the app culture through their development. Starting in 2008, Apple and Google created the first mobile app stores (Gaskin). Since then, the need for app developers has increased to a great extent. As a result, 50,000 software developers were designing, creating, and developing, apps for these stores within the following five years (Gaskin). Professional app developers utilized sophisticated tools combined with computer programming skills to create their apps (Gaskin). The average person with minimal experience can create an app and publish it. With the use of premade elements and user-friendly websites, creating the app is the easy part (Gaskin). The difficult part is making an app with value and is easy to use. Creating an app with these things in mind will increase the app's market value.

Users have to have a reason for wanting to download and use the said app. These parts of mobile app creation are referred to as strategy. A strategy is the first phase of the mobile app development process (Mobile App Development Process). The phase of strategy can be looked at as the planning out stage. Four crucial things should guide this part. First, establish the app's goals and objectives. Understanding the purpose and reasoning for making the app. Second, identify who the app is designed for (Mobile App Development Process). Having a directed consumer base is crucial in any product creation. Third, understand the competition the app will be competing against (Mobile App Development Process). Nowadays numerous apps serve to fulfill similar tasks, but each is made by different developers. Lastly, select a mobile platform the app will run on (Mobile App Development Process). The most common mobile platforms today are iOS and Android. In addition to developers going through the strategy phase, they have to go through a design phase as well. The design phase is simply creating a user-interface (UI) and understanding how users interact with it, known as UX (Mobile App Development Process). The goal for UI/UX design for mobile apps is to make the app interactive, intuitive, and user-friendly. A sophisticated and adequate UI design will keep users engaged and coming back to use the app. To continue, an additional and essential part of mobile app development is testing. The testing process can be broken down into several parts. User experience testing is one form of testing and can be used to ensure that the final implementation matches the user experience created by the app design team (Mobile App Development Process). In other words, it is used to check what the app developers created matches what is shown on the user's end. Specifics that are checked are consistency in fonts, style treatments, color scheme, padding between data, icon design, and navigation (Mobile App Development Process). The second type of testing used is functional testing. Functional testing is performed by being tested by having many users cover and check all

possible testing conditions (Mobile App Development Process). Having more than one user check the same test condition is vital as two users can get varied outcomes when they enter different data. The purpose of functional testing is to ensure that users can use all features of the app without any issue. Furthermore, system testing, the app working as a whole, and unit testing, individual functions of the app operating correctly, are used to fulfill functional testing (Mobile App Development Process). Another form of testing is assessing the performance of the app, known as performance testing. Performance testing uses quantitative data to measure certain aspects of the app. For example, loading time, battery usage, storage space, and data usage, are all basic data recorded (Mobile App Development Process). Arguably the most important type of testing is security testing. Security is the greatest concern for enterprise mobile apps, and many companies will hire third-party agencies to perform comprehensive security testing (Mobile App Development Process). Any potential weakness or exposure could lead to a company getting hacked and having their user's data leaked. The last type of testing performed is device and platform testing. Device and platform testing includes using multiple mobile devices or device simulators to ensure the efficient working of your app for all users (Mobile App Development Process). Once app developers have tested their app extensively and all other app creation steps, their app is ready to be put onto the market and be downloaded and used. As a result of their development, mobile applications have impacted app culture.

Mobile applications have impacted the app culture through their functionality. The functionality of apps can be defined as how well they serve a purpose and how they are used. To begin, the main reason for their wide range of use is the abundance of the types of mobile apps. Mobile apps can be broken down into six different types. The first type is lifestyle mobile apps. They can be defined as an app that “accelerates or supports the individual facets that define your

lifestyle” (Types of Mobile Apps). The app culture is enhanced through lifestyle apps as people use them in their daily life. Some examples of lifestyle apps are ones related to fitness, dating, food, music, and travel (Types of Mobile Apps). The main benefit of this type of mobile app is how users will revisit them often and grow accustomed to them. Specific examples of these apps are Spotify, TripAdvisor, and Uber. Apps such as these have become part of everyday life for smartphone users. The second and one of the most popular types of mobile apps are social media apps (Types of Mobile Apps). Social media apps allow for easy user navigation and use of the app designed especially for one’s handheld device. They can be used to connect with others in the form of social networking. The main proponent social media apps play in influencing app culture is their addictiveness. Users are drawn to continually come back to share again and again to compare and compete with friends and family. The most common social media apps are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat. The third type of mobile apps is the utility mobile apps. Utility mobile apps are often pre-installed on the device and serve a single function (Types of Mobile Apps). Some examples include reminder, calculator, calendar, flashlight, and weather apps. They are typically used more often than people realize, but for short amounts of time. The fourth type of mobile apps is games and entertainment mobile apps (Types of Mobile Apps). They serve as oversimplified and rudimentary video games. Moreover, this type of mobile apps often has some type of feature for users to compete amongst and against one another. They also account for one-third of all app downloads (Mobile Application). Common games and entertainment mobile apps include Angry Birds, Clash of Clans, and Subway Surfer. Moving along, productivity mobile apps are the fifth type. Productivity mobile apps function to allow users to complete a task quickly and efficiently (Types of Mobile Apps). They also enable a focus on maximizing business efficiency by easing varying tasks (Mobile Application).

Examples include Google Docs, Google Sheets, Apple Wallet, and Evernote. The sixth and final type of mobile apps is news and information outlets. Their function is to “supply their users with the news and information they’re looking for in an easy to understand layout that efficiently navigates them to the things they care about most” (Types of Mobile Apps). The most popular example include Flipboard, Feedly, Google News, Apple News, and Microsoft News. In total, the versatility of mobile apps and their functionality have greatly impacted app culture.

Mobile applications have impacted the app culture through their monetization.

Monetization regarding mobile applications can simply be defined as how the app generates income and creates profit (Gaskin). As much as people like to think apps only function is to make their life easier, they are also created by app developers in the hope of making monetizing their app. The market for the monetization of apps is increasing dramatically every day. A few years back, mobile apps were expected to reach a revenue of \$92 billion by 2018 (Gaskin). After 2018, the total revenue of mobile apps worldwide reached \$365 billion. So how are these mobile apps exactly monetized? The answer is there are several ways to monetize mobile apps. One way mobile is through donations. Users can directly compensate app developers. However, it is important to note the difference between everyday donations and donations in the realm of mobile apps: “The greatest distinction between mobile donation (or charity) applications and other types of donations is that donors can indirectly donate money to charity whenever they use the functions of mobile donation applications” (Choi and Kim). In other words, certain mobile apps have features implemented making it easy for user donations to occur. To add, app developers who receive user donations are more likely for their app to have success (Choi and Kim). This can be accredited to the fact that the app developers have more money to invest back into their apps. Another way to monetize apps is to charge an upfront fee for the app in the form

of a pay-per-download operation (Gaskin). A third way is to charge an annual subscription fee. A fourth way is in-app purchases. These typically include additional features allotted to users if they pay a certain fee known as micropayments (Gaskin). The last way to monetize a mobile app is in-app advertising. App developers can choose to run advertisements and charge a fee to those looking for ad space. This is the most common way to monetize free mobile apps (Gaskin). As a result of their monetization, mobile applications have impacted app culture.

Mobile applications have impacted the app culture through their monetization, functionality, and development. Furthermore, handheld devices including smartphones and tablets would not be in a prominent position as they are today without mobile apps. As previously and consistently stated, the emergence of an app culture around the world could not have been made possible without mobile apps. However, the impact of mobile apps can far extend just an app culture. The ability to have more advanced technology at one's fingertips than that of the technology used in the Apollo 11 mission is immense, to say the least. People have a great opportunity because of mobile apps. Only time will tell whether they are put to good use.

### Works Cited

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