Mobile Computing

Devices
Platforms

Mobile Devices - Categories

- Mobile phones

- Smartphones (no keyboard + touch)

- PDAs (personal digital assistants)
  - pocket assistant without phone

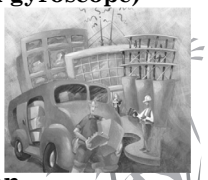
- Wearables (watches, glasses)

- Handhelds (and ultra mobiles)

- Tablets (and phablets)

Mobile devices - capabilities

- Software: distributed applications with the specificities of mobile devices
  - Information access anyplace and anytime
  - Storage and local processing
  - Specific interface elements
    - Mainly based in 'touch', 'multitouch' and 'gestures'
  - Special functions and sensors
    - GPS and localization (satellite, WiFi, ...)
    - Compass (magnetic) and orientation
    - Acceleration and movement (accelerometer and gyroscope)
  - Communications 'wide' and 'short range'
    - 3/4G, WiFi, Bluetooth, NFC
- Applications
  - For the enterprise
  - For learning / entertainment / social interaction

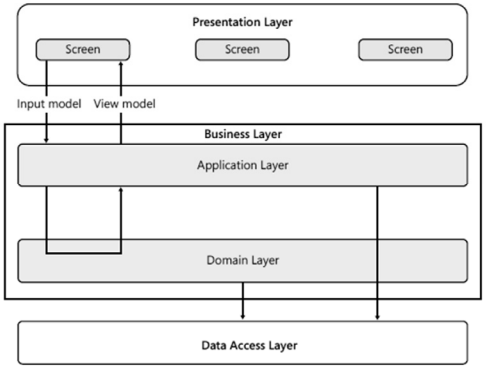


Platforms

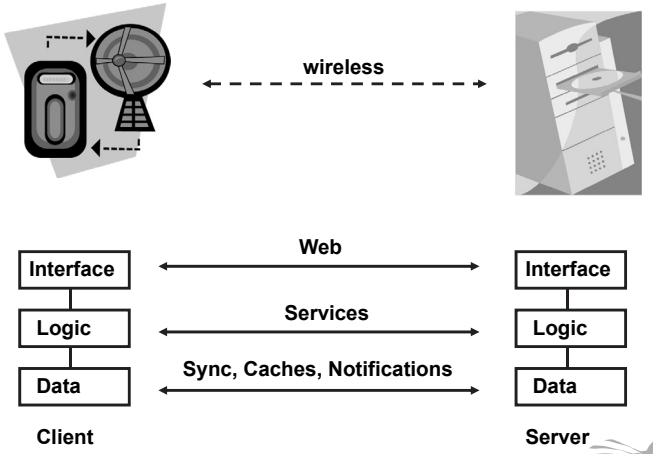
- Operating Systems (many were developed and are available)
  - Android
  - iOS (Apple)
  - BlackBerry
  - Symbian
  - Bada (Samsung)
  - WebOS (Palm)
  - Chrome OS
  - Others …
- Generic frameworks
  - Java ME (some models still support it)
  - PhoneGap (Apache Cordova), Ionic, Titanium Mobile, RhoMobile, …
  - Xamarin (.NET C#) (iOS, Android, Mac, Windows)
  - React Native (JS), Flutter (Dart)
- Application types
  - Web apps – generic mobile browsers (XHTML, HTML5, javascript)
  - Hybrid apps – web technologies encapsulated in a native container
  - Native apps – using the OS and a specific or generic framework

Generic architecture

- The typical three tier architecture
  - In a connected environment some tiers can be remote or shared



Generic connected application architecture



Areas of special interest

- Application life cycle
  - Usually different from desktop applications
  - Mobile apps could be suspended by another app
  - It should be possible to resume a background app without loosing state
- Local data storage
  - Several forms: settings, files, databases, …
  - Full relational databases are available on the device
  - Even NoSQL flavors are now available
- Connectivity
  - Despite all advertisement, it's not 100% reliable
  - Data synchronization
  - Occasionally connected functionalities

Specially interesting mobile design patterns (1)

- Interaction patterns
  - Back-and-save
    - Save input screen data when the user leaves the screen
  - Auto save
    - Save the user input periodically
  - Guess-Don't-Ask
    - Avoid user input, specially writing text
    - If you can't guess, remember
  - A-la-Carte-Menu
    - At any time the user should know all actions and options available
  - Sink-or-Async
    - Operations longer than a 1 s should be asynchronous
  - Logon-and-forget
    - When possible, credentials should be asked only once

Specially interesting mobile design patterns (2)

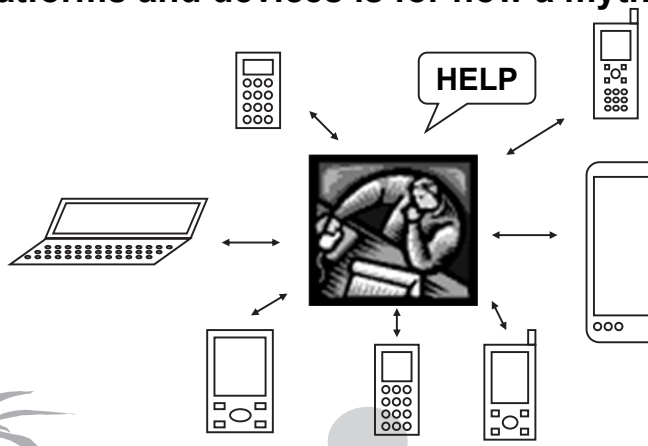
- **Presentation patterns**
  - **Babel-Tower**
    - Avoid hard-coded and fixed layout
    - Support alternative adaptable layouts
  - **Do-as-Romans-Do**
    - Use the recommended look-and-fill for the platform (native)
  - **List-and-Scroll**
    - Use lists and vertical scrolling
    - Avoid horizontal scrolling (to read text)
      - Ok for showing extra columns on a table

Specially interesting mobile design patterns (3)

- **Behavioral patterns**
  - **Predictive Fetch**
    - If the app depends on connectivity, download data that is likely to be used later, whenever connectivity is available
  - **Memento-Mori**
    - Save relevant state and info whenever the app goes into the background
  - **As-Soon-As-Possible**
    - Insist on remote operations and don't fail at first attempt
    - In case of failure, record, and playback when connectivity returns

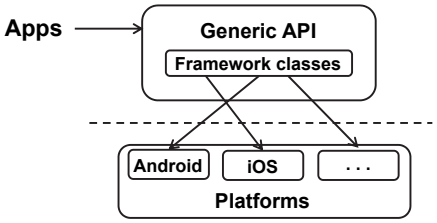
Diversity / Cross platform development

- **A single framework for a large number of platforms and devices is for now a myth**



Cross platform approaches

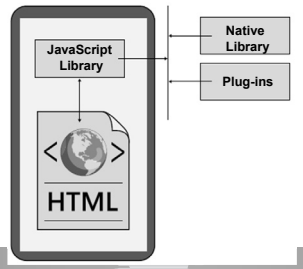
- **Abstraction layer of translation**



Ex: Titanium Mobile
(in run time)

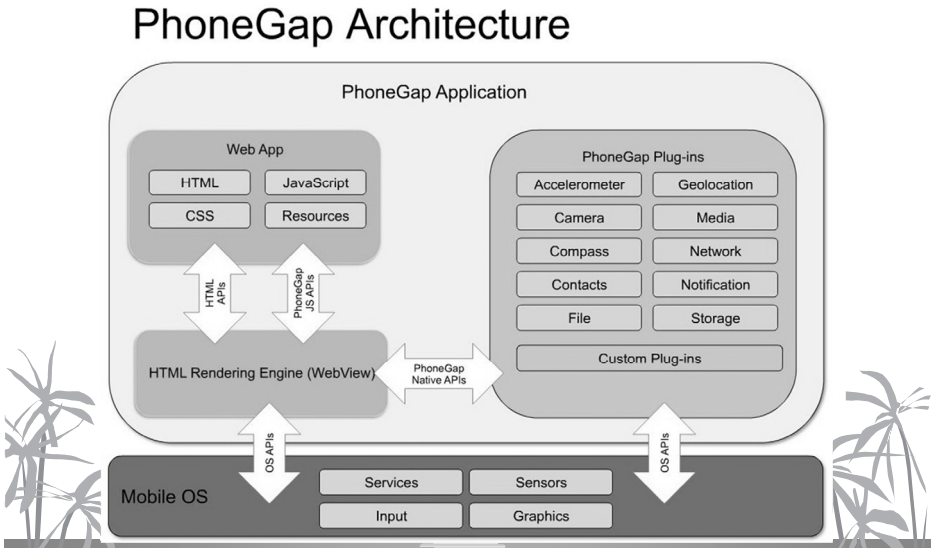
Xamarin
(in build time)

- **Web shell**

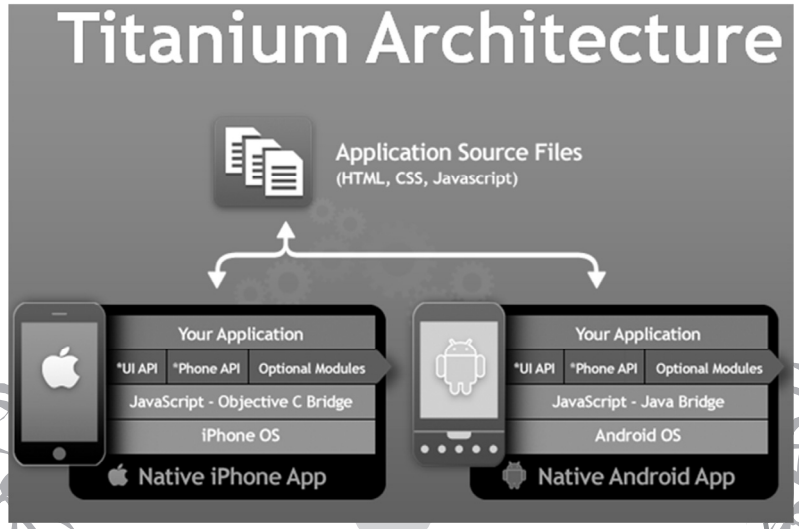


Ex: PhoneGap

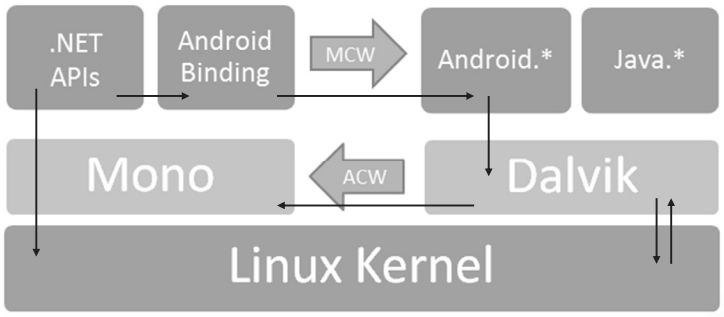
PhoneGap



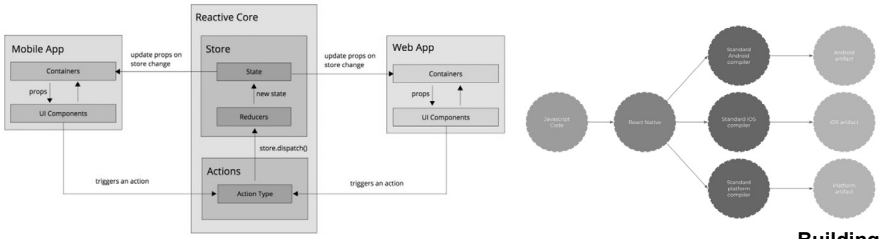
Titanium



Xamarin



React Native



Architecture

Building

Run-time


```
class HelloWorldApp extends Component {
  render() { return ( <View style={{padding:40}}>
                        <Text>Hello world!</Text>
                      </View>
                    );
          }
}
```

JSX source example