

# Single Page App or Multi-Page App?

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# Single Page Application (SPA)

Your application is all contained within (usually) one bundle of JavaScript and CSS

Your HTML markup is generated dynamically by your application as your user navigates through the application

Navigation through your application does not involve any trip to the server. Your frontend framework is intercepting navigation requests

Most commonly exhibited by JavaScript frameworks such as AngularJs, React, Angular, Vue, Backbone and others



# Multi-Page Application (MPA)

“Traditional” web application structure (eg. PHP, Ruby on Rails)

Navigation is handled by the web server, which involves a round trip for every request from the browser

Most commonly exhibited by some kind of compiled language / framework that runs on a web server such as .NET Core, Ruby on Rails, Java Spring Boot, Node.js



# Benefits of SPA

Initial development speed is usually faster

Once the application bundle is loaded, navigation usually feels snappier

Your application can take advantage of the speed of browser improvements and enhancements

Because your application bundle is downloaded to the browser, it's possible for your application to work when a network is not available

Your mileage may vary but it's possible to layer in different JavaScript frameworks and technologies together - AngularJs + React + Vue components for example



# Pitfalls of SPA

Entire bundle downloads at the start - this is usually everything from your marketing pages through to your dashboards and / or account profile work behind a login page - basically everything

Security is trickier and requires planning and thinking through most edge cases

Website SEO is not straight forward and needs to be planned / considered

Need a developer to update anything in the app. Marketing just can't come in and put in copy, and it's not so simple a task to hand off any responsibilities

Most SPA experiences can become a tug-of-war of authority and state management from the server

Browser refreshing and back button



# Benefits of MPA

App functionality is only downloaded as needed

Some of the work can be easier to parcel out between teams

Different teams in the org can take ownership of different sections of the app

Security is almost built right into every framework from the ground up

SEO is more straightforward

The Server is the one true authority and handles state



# Pitfalls of MPA

Frontend and Backend work is tightly coupled together

Development can become complex as the team need to work with both the server-side framework and some kind of a front-end framework

Not so simple to make use of a mobile friendly application and/or dealing with backend API

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