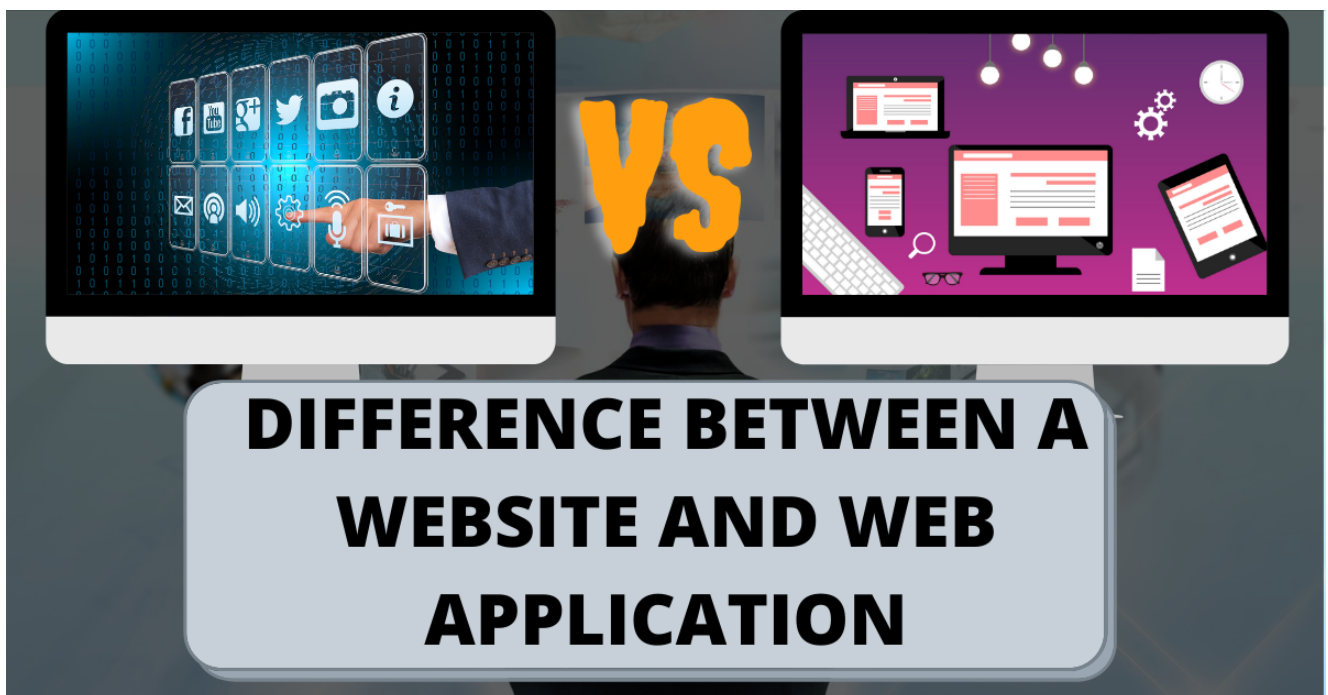


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What is the Difference Between a Website and a Web Application?



Hillary Nyakundi



It's typically hard for an end user to tell the difference between a web app and a website. They just type in the URL and boom, the results are there.

And this is what really matters for the user – getting the results for what they are searching. If that happens, then that's basically what they care about.

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you know the main differences between a *Website* and a *Web Application*?

We'll take a basic technical approach in this article. And although there are conflicting opinions among some developers, I will try and highlight some of the key differences which helped me understand how websites and web apps differ.

Lets get started.

What is a Website?



A Website is a collection of related web pages that contains images, text, audio, video, and more. It can consist of one page, or many pages, and it provides both visual and text content.

There are many types of websites out there, for example:

- Dating websites

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- Educational websites
- Search Engines
- And more.

Here are some examples of websites: Wikipedia, Google, Amazon, and Craigslist.

Characteristics of a Website.

- It's user friendly
- It can be easily searched using a search engine
- It displays quality content
- It should have an easy to navigate layout

Why you may need a Website.

- You may need a website to showcase your products
- A website helps you establish a brand for your business
- It helps create social proof so others can see what you do and have done
- It gives you an online presence so your clients are able to find you
- You can use it for advertising and to raise awareness of your brand

What is a Web Application?

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A web app is a piece of software that can be accessed by the browser. In other words, we can say web applications are websites with functionality and interactive elements.

Web apps are extremely customizable and can perform a wide range of tasks and functionalities. They are generally more complex and difficult to build, and they require an experienced team of software developers to create them.

Some examples of popular web apps are Twitter, Facebook, Gmail, Adobe CC, and Youtube.

Characteristics of a Web Application.

- They are mostly cross-platform - meaning they should be able to work on any platform
- They are easily tested with automated tests
- They are cloud-hosted

Why you may need a Web Application

- They can be used on any platform because they support all

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app

- Users can access them at any time from anywhere
- They be used on both mobile devices or desktop computers to access data
- They're easier to mantain as they use the same code throughout the entire application

Key Differences Between Website and Web App

Let's summarize some of the main differences between the two:

1. USER INTERACTION

A website provides visual and textual content which the user can view and read, but this doesn't affect the site's functioning.

In a web app, the user doesn't only view the contents on the page but also manipulates the data. The user can interact one on one by either filling out forms or providing required data to interact with the app.

2. AUTHENTICATION

Authentication isn't always necessary for information-based websites. The user may get asked to register to get regular updates to access additional options, and that's it.

Web applications need authentication as they offer a much broader scope of options and functionality/interactivity than a website. This means you have to have a username and a password to access your account.

3. TASKS AND COMPLEXITY

A website will only display collected data and information on

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complex compared to those of a website.

4. CREATED FOR

A website mostly consists of static content. This means that the information is publicly accessible to all visitors.

A web application is designed for interaction with the end user. This means that without the required credentials you might not be able to access any data.

5. DEPLOYMENT

When dealing with a website, small changes never require a full re-compilation and deployment. You just need to update the HTML code and everything will be updated.

Now when it comes to a web app, you need to re-compile and re-deploy the app whenever you make changes.

Conclusion

Developing a website is a relatively simple process. But creating a web application requires deeper knowledge, more experience, and more planning.

Now that you have a clearer understanding of the differences between websites and web applications, you should also have a better understanding of which one you really need. You should also be able to tell what you interact with on a daily basis.

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