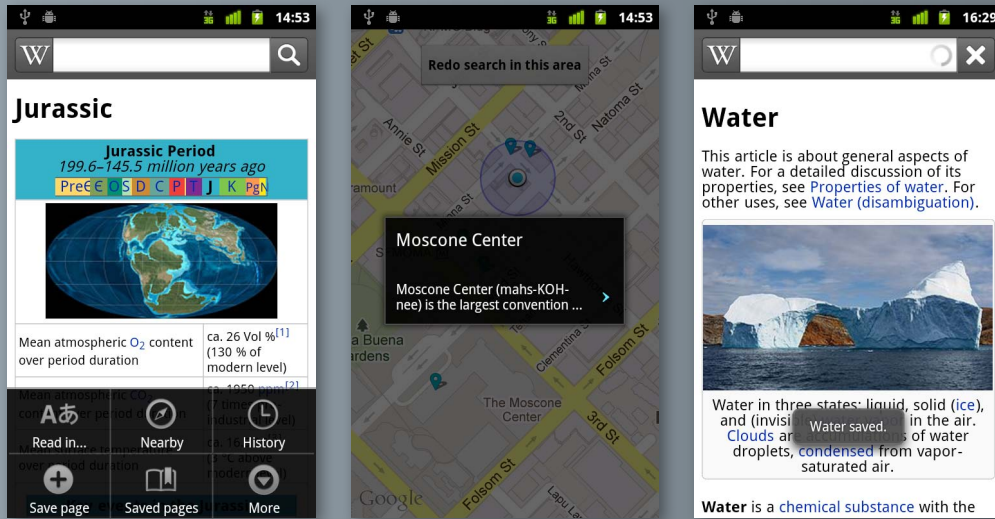




Wikimedia Foundation
Simple, focused, and open



Wikimedia Foundation
 San Francisco, California
www.wikimediafoundation.org

Results

- Established mobile framework aligned with organization's open mobile vision
- Ranked number one search result for Wikipedia in Android™ marketplace
- Recorded 2.3 million users in its first three months
- Achieved 74% install retention rate
- Enabled rapid development of core code for cross-platform deployment

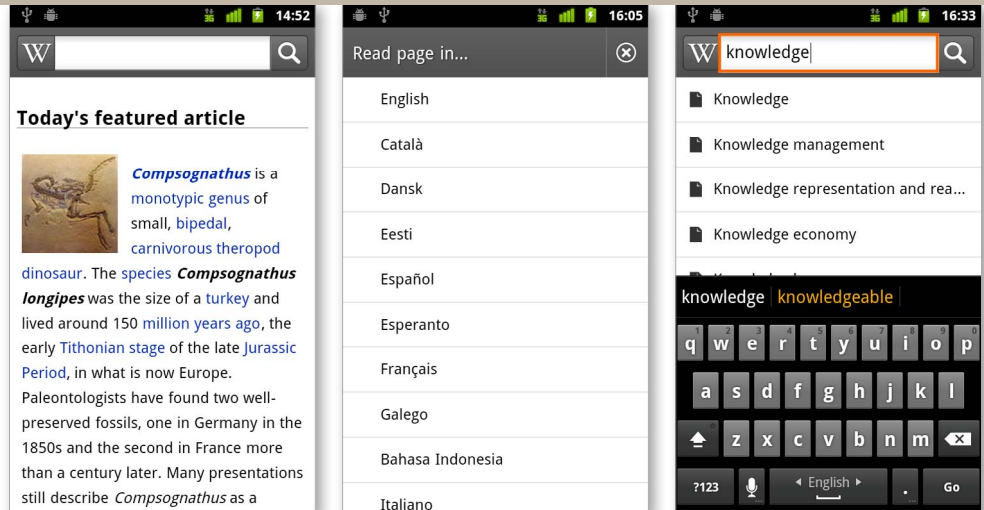
Wikimedia uses Adobe® PhoneGap™ to rapidly deliver its first mobile app, honoring its pledge to the future of open mobile web standards

Imagine a world in which everyone freely shares in the sum of all knowledge. That vision is more than a dream at the Wikimedia Foundation; it is a reality. Caretaker of Wikipedia—among the most popular web properties with more than 480 million unique visitors a month—the Wikimedia Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating and distributing wiki-based content to virtually everyone everywhere, ad-free and free of charge.

Not surprisingly, Wikipedia's fastest growing audience is mobile users, which presents an ongoing challenge for Wikimedia developers to quickly and cost-effectively meet the rapidly growing demand for mobile content. But what makes that challenge even more daunting for Wikimedia is the need to achieve mobile ubiquity while maintaining its cornerstone allegiance to open source computing.

That challenge has been met head on by the Wikimedia mobile team by using Adobe PhoneGap—the open source development tool for rapidly and easily building high-performance, cross-platform mobile apps using HTML and JavaScript—to develop the Wikipedia mobile app for Android. "Wikipedia has to be everywhere, and Adobe PhoneGap helps us get it there," says Tomasz Finc, director of mobile and special projects at Wikimedia. "This achievement marks an important milestone in Wikimedia's strategic growth plans. It fulfills a key mobile initiative that aligns with our commitment to open mobile standards, not just for people who consume content, but eventually for content contributors as well."

Within its first three weeks of release, the app became the number one search result for Wikipedia in the Android marketplace, and now has more than 2.6 million total user installs and 1.9 million active device installs. "PhoneGap helped us polish the app so that it has become the best browsing experience for Wikipedia on Android devices," says Finc.



Challenge

- Create an open source ecosystem to rapidly and cost-effectively deliver engaging mobile wiki-based experiences
- Increase participation from content consumers and application contributors alike
- Expand reach to widest possible multilingual audience across platforms and devices

Solution

Leverage Adobe PhoneGap to establish a framework in support of a current and future open source, collaborative, mobile development ecosystem

Systems at a glance

Adobe PhoneGap

Accessing relevant media everywhere

Wikipedia had a native iOS mobile app in place for several years. It worked but provided only a very basic experience, required significant development efforts to add the simplest features, and demanded too much attention to resolve low-level issues. Time and money were being spent in the wrong places.

Today, the Wikipedia Android app built using PhoneGap successfully brings core Wikipedia features from the desktop to mobile in simple, easy-to-use ways, providing intuitive, yet powerful experiences that engage mobile users. The Wikipedia Android app lets users not only pick articles, it also saves them in case connectivity is lost. Users can easily share their favorite articles with friends. Multilingual users can easily switch an article to any of a number of translated versions.

Location is an example of how the Wikipedia mobile app enhances experiences in ways most relevant to mobile users. As numerous Wikipedia articles are tagged with location metadata, a discovery mechanism comes into play as users roam the globe. For instance, if a person is touring San Francisco—or Nepal, or anywhere—they can call on Wikipedia to access articles about locations nearby, in their choice of languages.

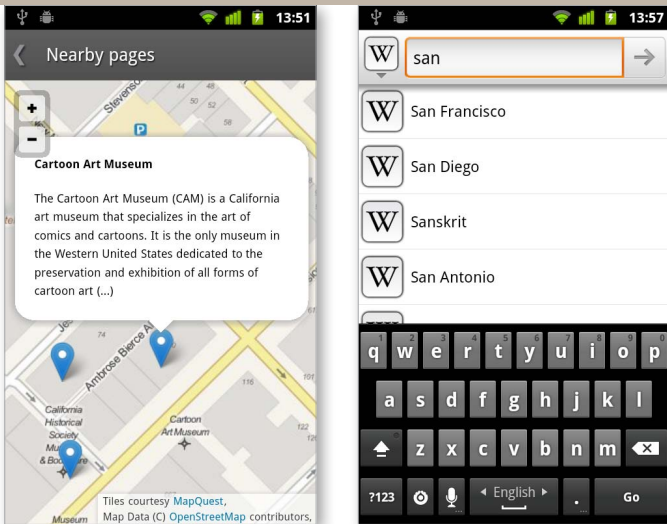
Making simple, far-reaching architectural sense

After evaluating various platforms that would enable Wikimedia to manage its open source development process now and into the future, the team realized that HTML5, CSS3, and JavaScript would provide the ideal infrastructure. PhoneGap provided the best solution to develop a front-end mobile app framework in support of a flexible, interoperable, open mobile ecosystem that shares and reuses code where possible.

Opting to build the app in PhoneGap commits Wikimedia to the open web technologies of the future. Rather than struggle with multiple proprietary frameworks and SDKs, using PhoneGap positions Wikimedia as a leader in the open source community, establishes a core code base for continued open standards development, and accelerates the organization's ability to develop across numerous platforms on its roadmap.

It took a team of three developers less than three months to build and deploy the Android mobile app, followed by another month to create a testing version for iOS. A key differentiator of the Android app versus the old iOS app is that it is truly international, an essential approach for Wikipedia to best serve its global audience. The app already has complete localization for 25 languages, near-complete localization for more than 50 additional languages, and it can be translated to more than 250 languages through translatewiki.com.

Wikimedia developers use location metadata to provide users with access to location specific experiences wherever they are, in their choice of languages.



“Wikipedia has to be everywhere, and Adobe PhoneGap helps us get it there. This achievement marks an important milestone in Wikimedia’s strategic growth plans.”

Tomaz Finc
Director of mobile and special projects,
Wikimedia Foundation

Contribute at will

PhoneGap empowers Wikipedia’s worldwide community of contributors to build and distribute content across platforms in the least amount of time using open source technologies most familiar to developers. Code can be easily ported to multiple environments, the learning curve is quick, and—of particular importance for Wikipedia—the app remains flexible and alive in the hands of readers and content contributors on more platforms than any other framework.

Recently, a group of Canadian engineering students approached Wikimedia for the Undergraduate Capstone Open Source Projects. The idea of building a mobile app got them the most excited, and they were even more excited about using PhoneGap to do it. They are working on a mobile app for Wiktionary, another of Wikimedia’s online projects.

“We made a conscious decision to use web standards and Adobe PhoneGap, which made it challenging in the beginning, but we knew that if we put the effort in it would pay off down the line,” says Finc. “As we push our products out to multiple mobile platforms, the PhoneGap development process becomes easier and easier. If we’re spending less and less time on each platform then we’re doing something right.”

Case in point is the Wikipedia mobile app for the Blackberry Playbook. An employee at Research in Motion (RIM) sent a prototype mobile app to Wikimedia—unsolicited. It just showed up one day. “We were flabbergasted that someone had taken the initiative to do this,” says Finc. “It was a huge win for us in terms of transparency, our code being readily available for cross-platform deployment, and the simplicity in how we originally architected the app in PhoneGap.”

As soon as Wikimedia shifted to standard web technologies, contributions to the mobile app rose dramatically. Participating in a collaborative mobile project instantly became popular to engineers who now can build completely new features in just a few hours. According to Finc, one of the greatest takeaways from this PhoneGap project is that it has engaged the greatest number of developers.

“I’m really happy about the number of people who suddenly understand that they can contribute at will,” says Finc. “In a very real way, Adobe PhoneGap helps us democratize knowledge by breaking down barriers and creating new ways for people to participate in wiki-based content.”

For more information
<http://phonegap.com>



Adobe Systems Incorporated
345 Park Avenue
San Jose, CA 95110-2704
USA
www.adobe.com

© 2012 Adobe Systems Incorporated. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.

Adobe, the Adobe logo, and PhoneGap are either registered trademarks or trademarks of Adobe Systems Incorporated in the United States and/or other countries. Android is a trademark of Google Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

91072067 6/12