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Building Android Apps With HTML, CSS, And JavaScript: Making Native Apps With Standards-Based Web Tools



Synopsis

If you know HTML, CSS, and JavaScript, you already have the tools you need to develop Android applications. Now updated for HTML5, the second edition of this hands-on guide shows you how to use open source web standards to design and build apps that can be adapted for any Android device. You'll learn how to create an Android-friendly web app on the platform of your choice, and then use Adobe's free PhoneGap framework to convert it to a native Android app. Discover why device-agnostic mobile apps are the wave of the future, and start building apps that offer greater flexibility and a much broader reach. Convert a website into a web application, complete with progress indicators and other features. Add animation with JQTouch to make your web app look and feel like a native Android app. Make use of client-side data storage with apps that run when the Android device is offline. Use PhoneGap to hook into advanced Android features, including the accelerometer, geolocation, and alerts. Test and debug your app on the Web with real users, and submit the finished product to the Android Market.

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Customer Reviews

I really ask myself whether the author even bothered to test his "app" on a real Android device. The truth: it does not work. The app is based on JQTouch and even the demos on the JQTouch homepage are intended for iPhone and do not really work on Android (I use Samsung Galaxy S, currently the Android bestseller). The screenshots in the book are not taken on an Android device.

and I just can't make the pages look like they do in the book. Neither in Chrome, Firefox, and certainly not on the Samsung (they do look different on all three browsers, though :-). JQTouch would be great and the webapps actually look great on my iPhone - but not on Android. So if you are looking into real cross platform developing, you might want to skip JQTouch (and this book).

I am a web developer with a firm understanding of HTML, CSS and JavaScript. I bought the book because I wanted to get some insights into building Android Apps with Web Technologies. The book includes a brief crash course on HTML, CSS and JavaScript, and it discusses the CSS features available with WebKit browsers to theme a site for getting the Android touch as well as the JavaScript and HTML features available on Android. Other chapter topics include how to reach the hardware features of Android phones via PhoneGap, and how to get apps based on PhoneGap into the market. The authors provided brief but good examples of many features and explained the tricky areas with clarity. I found only two things that were lacking from the book. Although I thought it was very cool that there were examples of how to write event handlers to react on shaking the device, I was disappointed that there were no examples of how to handle swipes, which is something I expect to be able to do in an Android app! Otherwise I am confident that everyone who finished and understood the book will have no problem figuring that out. The other omission, which I think is a vital one, is that JQuery Mobile is not mentioned in the book. I am unfamiliar with the mobile landscape, maybe the presented library JQTouch is much much better than JQuery Mobile; either way, I would have expected at least a short explanation of what JQuery Mobile is. The book gave me an idea of what's possible with WebApps on mobile phones, and the book inspired me to write an app as soon as possible. I found the book well written, and I liked the structure and end-to-end approach until the app submission into the market. Because the book has nothing at all about JQuery Mobile, I only rate it at 4 stars. If I could, it would have been 4.5 stars.

I had bought an iPad when they were first announced. I had the expressed intention of creating some very specific apps; I did not need Wired Magazine to tell me that mobile apps are the future. My plans were delayed by Apple's delay in releasing a new iPad OS. I didn't want to waste a lot of time struggling with things in the original OS that might become easier in the next. I'd rather not struggle at all. As I have gotten older, the thrill of twisting C and C++ to my will is far less alluring than it used to be. Honestly, there is no allure left at all: I saw learning the Apple API as an onerous but necessary task. I was not looking forward to it. Then this book arrived and opened my eyes. Yes, there is that "Android" in the title, but this is really about building device agnostic apps and I saw that

long before the author off handedly mentioned iPhones in Chapter 7. Yeah, baby - if you think I was reluctant to learn Apple API's, well, that's nothing compared to how I feel about futzing around with Java to drive Android stuff. No thank you. But CSS and Javascript? That's different. Not that I still don't have a learning curve. I have done very little with CSS or Javascript because of browser quirks. I realized that JQuery could smooth a lot of that out for me, but I just did not have enough of a need to invest any time learning that either. Mobile apps provides that incentive. This book opened my eyes to a lot of possibilities I was just not aware of. For example, I did not know about the Web SQL Database abilities in HTML5. The author said that rocked his world; well, it rocked mine also. I am looking forward to sitting down and playing with the ideas this book has exposed me to. This really changes my plans, and this is one case where I am very happy to veer off course. JQuery, here I come!

This book is the Android counterpart of "Building iPhone apps using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript" and covers much of the same material. It explains how to mark up your HTML page to support the Android mobile browser, as well as covering some basic JavaScript, HTML, and CSS. It shows how to build and submit a native Android app using the Phonegap too. One of the the aspects that I appreciated about this book was the focus on incorporating little touches in your web application that make the application feel more like an Android application. Chapter 2: Basic Styling includes a section on adding the Android look and feel and the chapter on Animation adds extra features. Noting that when Android users drill down into a list, the page slides off to the left. The book also includes sections on using client-side storage to allow your application to be used offline.

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