KNOW THY ART?

APP
DESIGN

Contents

THE APP DESIGN ISSUE

Neat graphics, a cohesive layout, a simple user interface and a satisfactory user experience are what good application design is all about. In this issue of Know Thy Art magazine, we will explore App Design on mobiles and devices.

THE HISTORY OF MOBILE APPS
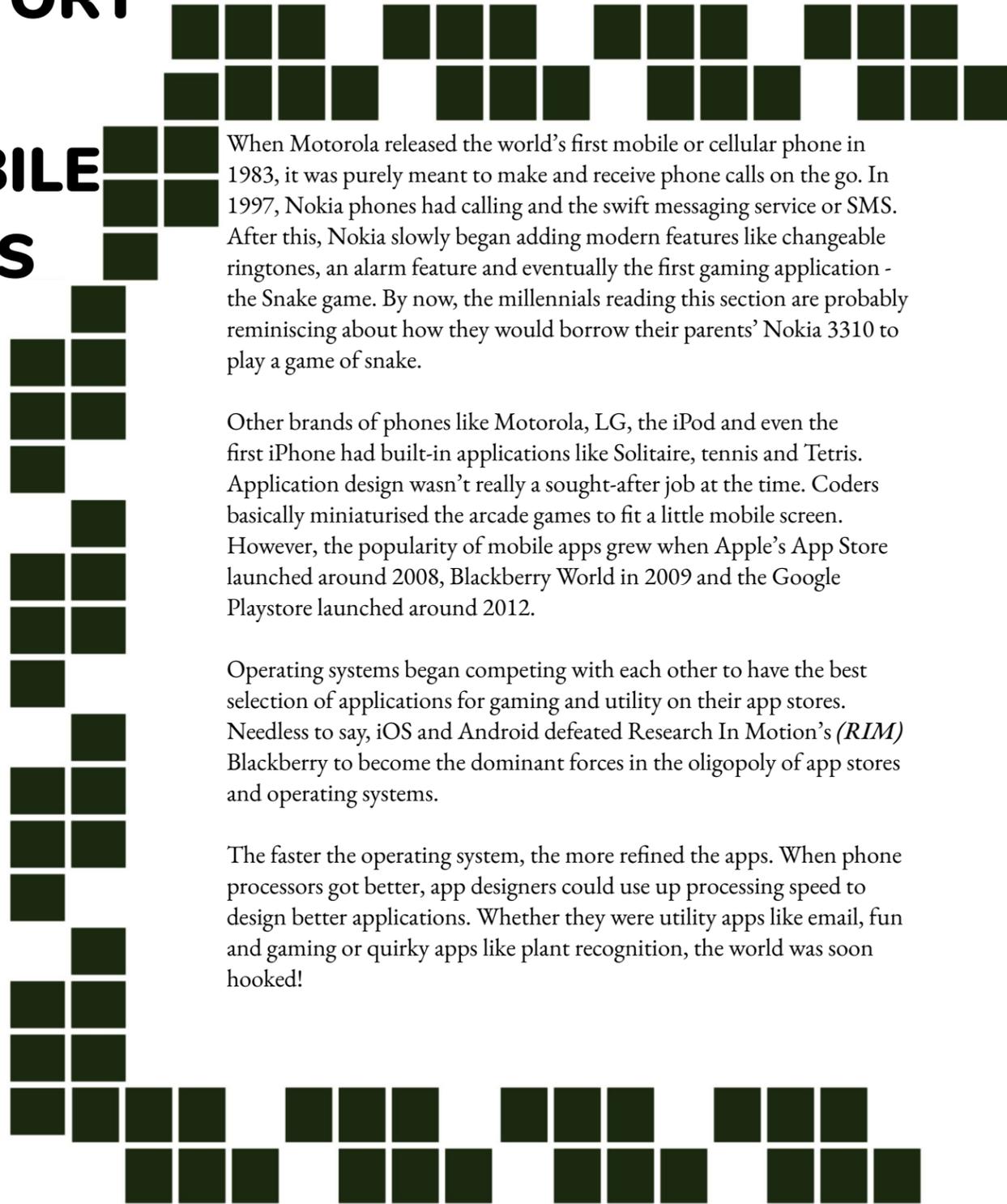
When Motorola released the world's first mobile or cellular phone in 1983, it was purely meant to make and receive phone calls on the go. In 1997, Nokia phones had calling and the swift messaging service or SMS. After this, Nokia slowly began adding modern features like changeable ringtones, an alarm feature and eventually the first gaming application - the Snake game. By now, the millennials reading this section are probably reminiscing about how they would borrow their parents' Nokia 3310 to play a game of snake.

Other brands of phones like Motorola, LG, the iPod and even the first iPhone had built-in applications like Solitaire, tennis and Tetris. Application design wasn't really a sought-after job at the time. Coders basically miniaturised the arcade games to fit a little mobile screen. However, the popularity of mobile apps grew when Apple's App Store launched around 2008, Blackberry World in 2009 and the Google Playstore launched around 2012.

Operating systems began competing with each other to have the best selection of applications for gaming and utility on their app stores. Needless to say, iOS and Android defeated Research In Motion's *(RIM)* Blackberry to become the dominant forces in the oligopoly of app stores and operating systems.

The faster the operating system, the more refined the apps. When phone processors got better, app designers could use up processing speed to design better applications. Whether they were utility apps like email, fun and gaming or quirky apps like plant recognition, the world was soon hooked!

APP DESIGN TODAY

Application start-ups are a multi-billion dollar industry today. The next big idea could be a physical product or a commonplace service and yet, you may need the aggregator app to buy a broom or hail a cab. Buying, selling, finance, education and even government schemes are meted out through cell phone applications. More often than not, you might use an application for important work like paying your insurance premium or something silly like aligning three similar candies in a row. Whatever the use, when the value of the software is high, app design should be constantly refined with updates of bug fixes and improvements.

Today, most popular apps have become multipurpose. For instance, Amazon is a shopping app, a payment app, it has prime video, prime music, the kindle reader and a lot more depending on your region. Whether through a single app or multiple apps connected through a single account and APIs, Amazon functions like an all-rounder on your mobile. Similarly Uber allows ride hailing, deliveries and Uber eats. There are many such examples of apps being multifaceted with related services they offer.

In such a scenario, what should be the characteristics of good app design?

• Efficiency in coding to work smoothly across different operating systems desktop, tablet and phone brands.
• Security protocols that keeps the users data safe and private.
• Consistent UI design that allows multiple apps of the same company to let the user get easily accustomed while switching apps.
• Legible graphics, neat icons and functional designs are what a good app design team should be able to produce.
• Above all, satisfactory UX design means that the design department has rigorously tested the app to give a seamless user experience.

All of these processes should be repeated regularly to constantly upgrade the app and allow a scope for innovation. No application should be exactly the same for more than 2 years. With brands like Blackberry and Nokia, other companies have learned how stagnation can dissolve even the most popular tech companies.
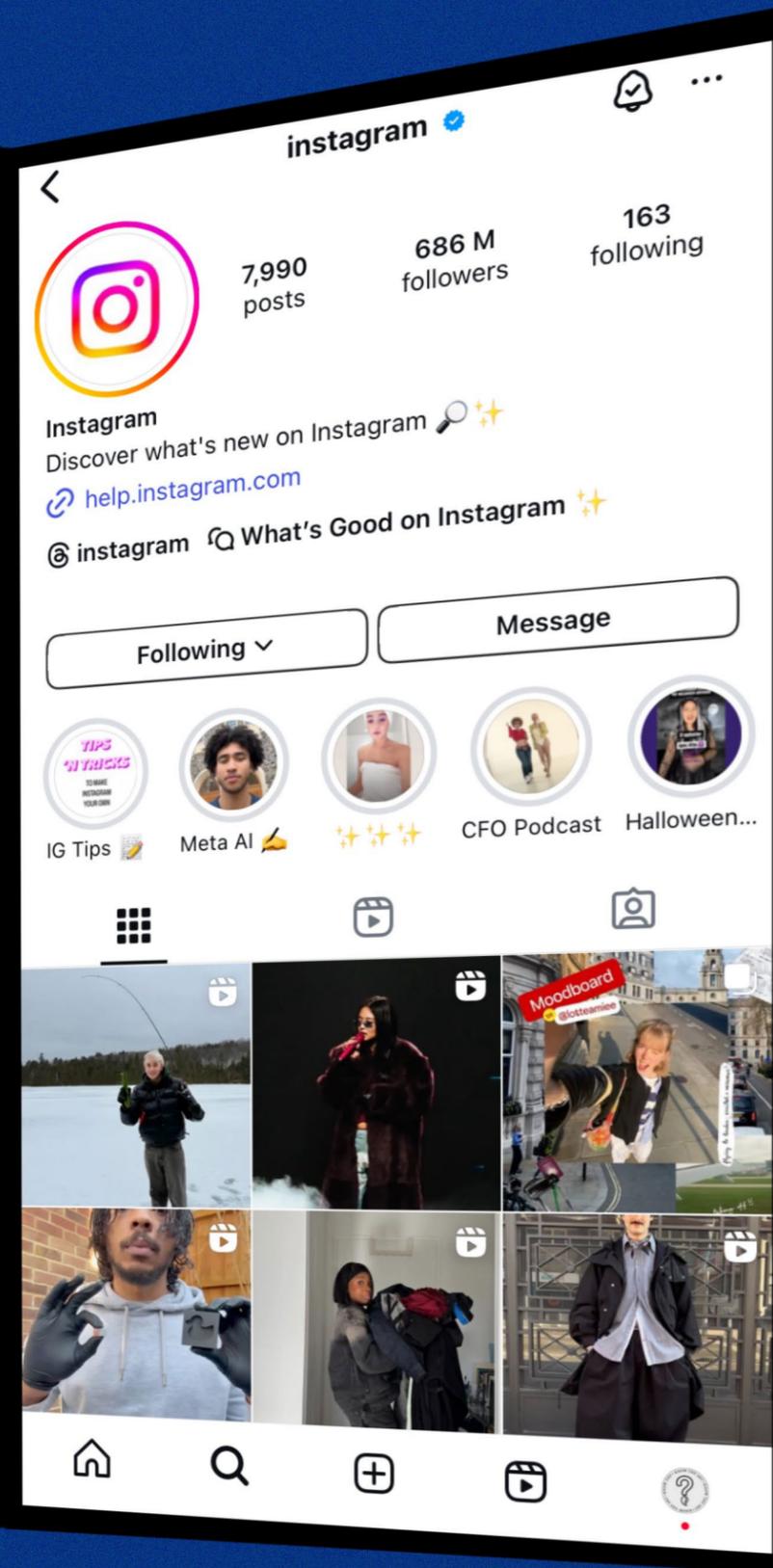
THE FUTURE OF APPS

In the last few years, we have seen extremely ambitious apps. During the pandemic, even governments used apps for people to submit their home test results, to help find possible cases and even monitor vaccinated individuals. In this case, we can see how apps seamlessly connected the healthcare sector with disaster management and even government relief units.

By this instance, we can predict that mobile applications will not only provide services but also connect different sectors of society. You can already buy your groceries, pay from your bank account, save your invoice, file your returns and receive benefits via cellphone apps. Such app functionality will only get more streamlined with time.

App designers, must also be versatile in incorporating effective Systems Design to offer a better User Experience. App design as a career might possibly grow leaps and bounds to give us functions we simply can't imagine now.

AND THEIR DESIGN

SENSEI SPEAKS

"Wouldn't it be amazing if everyone's medical records were available anonymously to research doctors? When someone accesses your record - a doctor - you can see which doctor accessed it and why. You could maybe learn about what conditions you have. I think if we just did that, we could save 100,000 lives this year."

LARRY PAGE

Co-founder of Google

NOW AVAILABLE

NOW STREAMING

One Piece is back!

Stream the latest on Crunchyroll.

Crunchyroll
Stream anime shows
and movies

Get

In-App Purchases

GAME OF THE DAY

Command the Seven Kingdoms in this spectacular strategy game.

Game of Thrones: Conqu...
Dragons & Battle Strategy Ga...

Get

In-App Purchases

GAMES WE LOVE

NASCAR Manager

Rule the track in this brilliant racing sim.

NASCAR® Manager
NASCAR Racing Simulator

Get

In-App Purchases

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I—03   FIRE

LEVEL - 1 TO 5

BOUNCE

ORIGINAL

M

RACE

4.9 Laps
98%
100%
24TH PET Lop 1
Pit Stop

4.85 Laps
98%
100%
23RD CAR Lop 1
Pit Stop

12 Name   7:30 AM   06:28   777   777

Pretty In Pink

Latte, Fruity, Cold, Contains Dairy

An iced latte drink with a shot of espresso, strawberry syrup, whole milk, topped with whipped cream and fresh strawberries.

Espresso   2 parts
Milk   6 parts
Strawberry Syrup 4 pumps
Whipped Cream
Strawberry Slices

100% 100%

COLLECT NEW HEROES!

873.9M   89.7M   27.8M   430.1K

SMALL COUNCIL

MANAGE
SAVE

50   60   50
60   50   60

Council   Actions

DID YOU KNOW?

• As of 2023, Google Play Store offered more than 3.5 million apps to Android users.

• While the Apple's App Store currently has about 2.2 million apps, only about 60% of them have ever been downloaded.

• After the US, India is the second largest app market in the world.

ASK THE EDITOR

Could you please tell me which software I can use to practice and understand app design before actually deciding to make it my career?
- Matt,
Yorkshire

Hello Matt,
Adobe XD, Figma and Sketch are some of the applications that you can use. As a suggestion, before you buy a subscription to any app design software, you could draw out templates on a sketchbook. Perhaps even do a practice a design project for an existing app on Photoshop. Give yourself a pretend company brief and make designs with a focus on the company's branding and the apps purpose. Once you like the mockups you have made, you can play with an app design software.