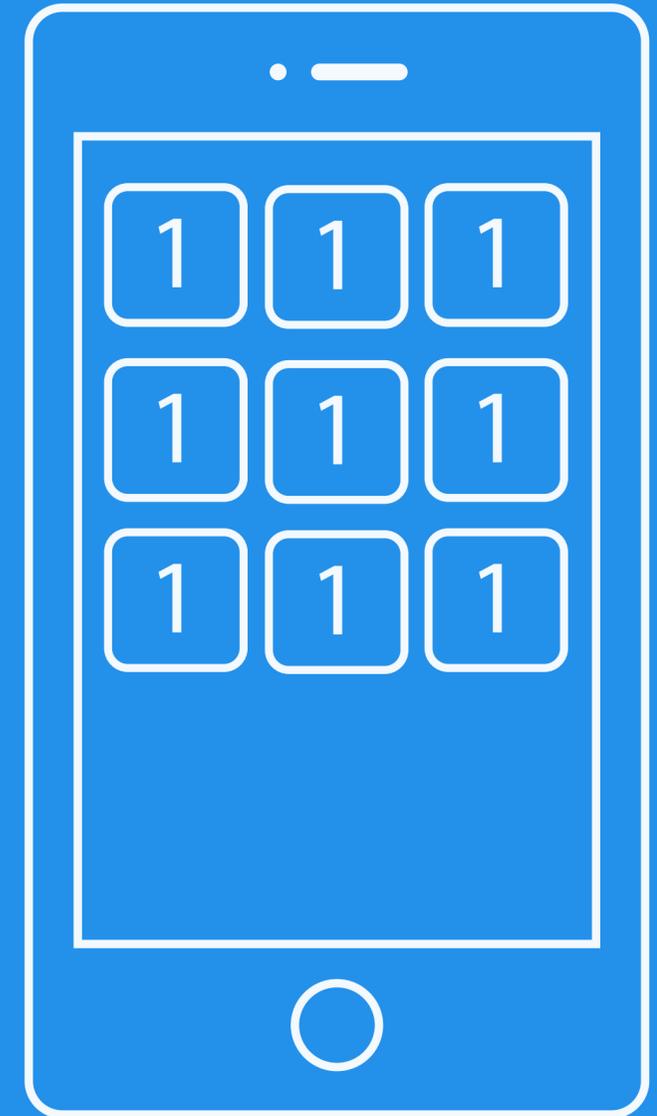


FileMaker Developer Conference 2017 Presenter Series

The Single-Purpose App.

A guide to when less is more.

Ronnie Rios, Senior Consulting Engineer



FileMaker Developer Conference

DevCon is an annual developer conference that includes in-depth sessions, special interest meetings, face-to-face consultations, and opportunities to network with many FileMaker, Inc., staff and other experienced FileMaker Platform developers. DevCon is the single most valuable gathering of more than 1,500 FileMaker practitioners from around the world.



Welcome

This ebook is based on the presentation given by Ronnie Rios at the 2017 FileMaker Developer Conference, "[Less is More: The Single-Purpose App.](#)"

Ronnie is a senior consulting engineer at FileMaker, Inc., with more than 20 years of experience in consulting and database software solutions development.

For more than five of those years he worked at Apple Inc., growing into technology coordinator and consultant roles with the business team.

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01

Introduction

To bundle or not to bundle...

For years, developers, systems architects, industry experts and others have been debating the right approach to building custom apps for mobile platforms:

Create a multi-purpose app

or

Develop multiple single-purpose apps

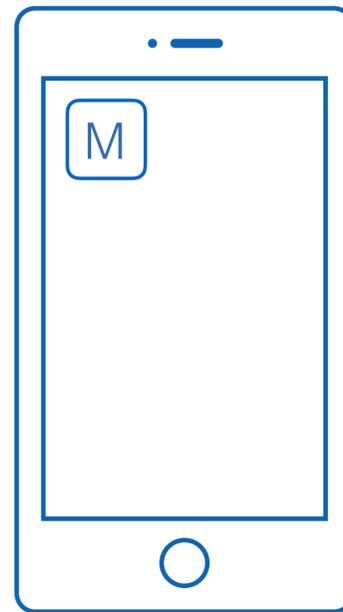
A few years ago, the app unbundling concept came into the spotlight.

What is the difference between multi-purpose apps and multiple single-purpose apps?

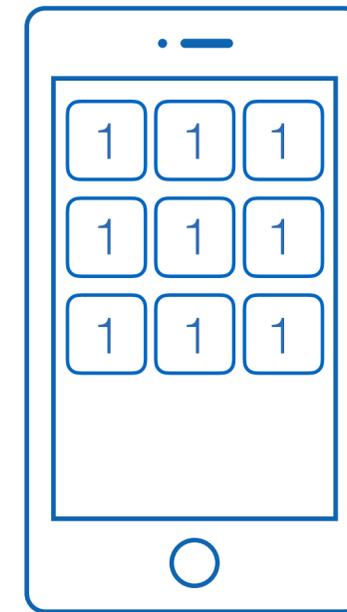
Multi-purpose apps are monolithic apps that have everything the user needs in one place.

Multiple single-purpose apps, are apps that are specifically designed to accomplish one thing.

Multi-purpose v. Multiple single-purpose



Multi-purpose app



Multiple single-purpose apps

Feature and purpose are not the same thing

Features are characteristics that describe what the software does and/or how it does it.

Purpose defines what the user wants to achieve or accomplish, not how, or which way to accomplish it.

Single-purpose does not mean single feature

A **single-feature** app **does** one thing.

A **single-purpose** app is **for** one thing.

What is “app unbundling”?

App unbundling is simply breaking apart the individual features or functionality of an app and offering those as entirely separate apps.

Early unbundling occurred in 2007 when users began migrating from desktop PIMs to smartphones.

“Most mobile applications are utilized by smaller workgroups, with small departmental budgets, narrowly focused business processes and goals, with a 2-year lifecycle.”

— Shannon Sears
Director, Business Relationship Management,
Global Sales and Marketing at CR Bard

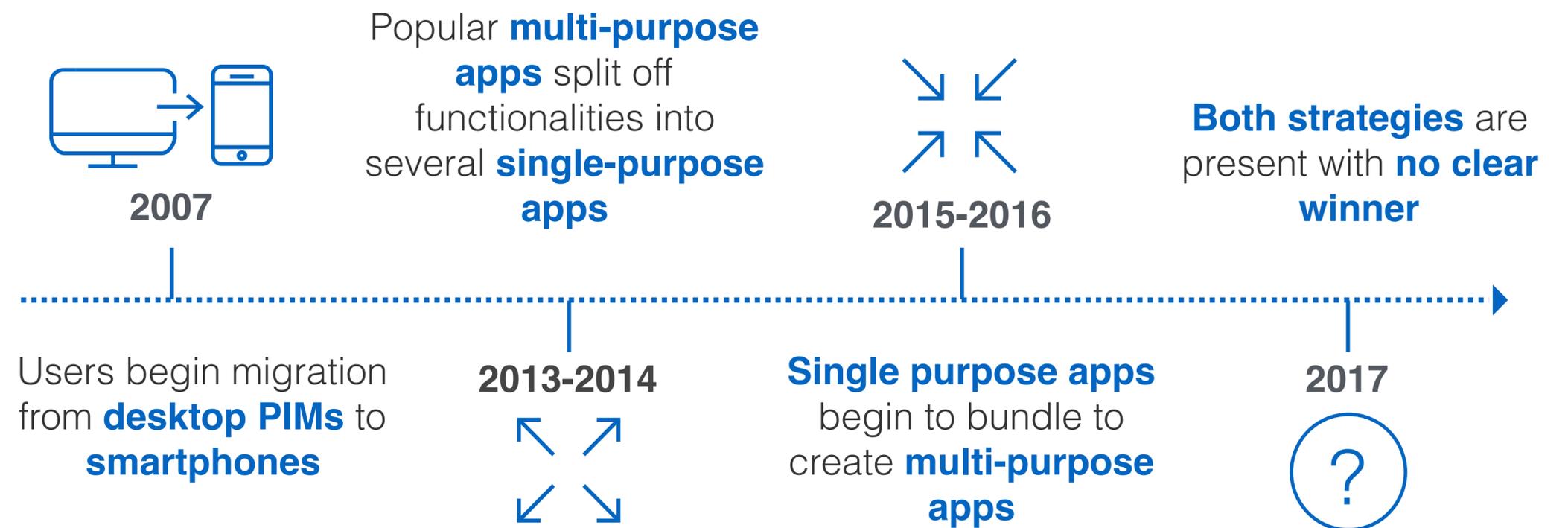
The app unbundling phenomenon

In 2013 and 2014, the developer community saw what many called “the great app unbundling” where Facebook broke off Messenger, built Paper and Slingshot, and bought Instagram and WhatsApp. Foursquare split itself into Swarm and a new Foursquare. Twitter, Dropbox, Evernote and Google Docs also executed similar strategies.

Between 2014 and 2015, a reversal in the unbundling trend occurred.

So, what is the right strategy for today’s custom app developers?

A brief history...



02

Bundle or Unbundle?

Two strategies: Which one is right for your solution?

If app unbundling is not as successful as the industry once expected, stuffing too much functionality into one app has its risks. More features means a larger install size, slower load times, and a greater chance some of those features will be overlooked by users. App developers must figure out where to draw the line.

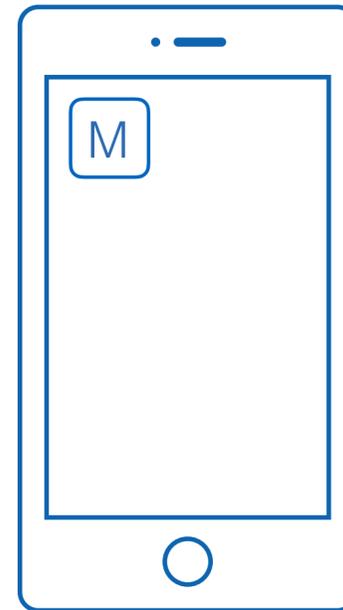
Strategy 1 - Bundle: Create a multi-purpose, monolithic app that has everything the user needs in one place.

Strategy 2 - Unbundle: Develop multiple single-purpose apps, each specifically designed to accomplish one thing.

Strategy 1 - Bundling advantages:

1. No need to guess where to go since everything is in one place.
2. No need to think about how the apps work together.
3. Minimizes the danger of producing data silos.

Multiple-purpose apps

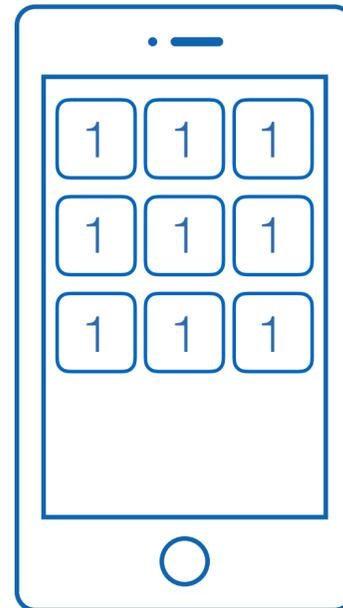


- ✓ Single environment
- ✓ Unified experience
- ✓ Aggregate data

Strategy 2 - Unbundling advantages:

1. The touch interface of mobile smartphone operating systems makes it easy to scan multiple applications to select from.
2. Features hidden deep in tabs are lost to most users. By unbundling you can re-surface features that were once buried, lost or forgotten.
3. Single-purpose apps tend to allow for more rapid iteration due to their simplicity.

Multiple single-purpose apps



- ✓ The home screen is the new portal
- ✓ Unified experience
- ✓ Aligned to rapid iteration / Quick to market

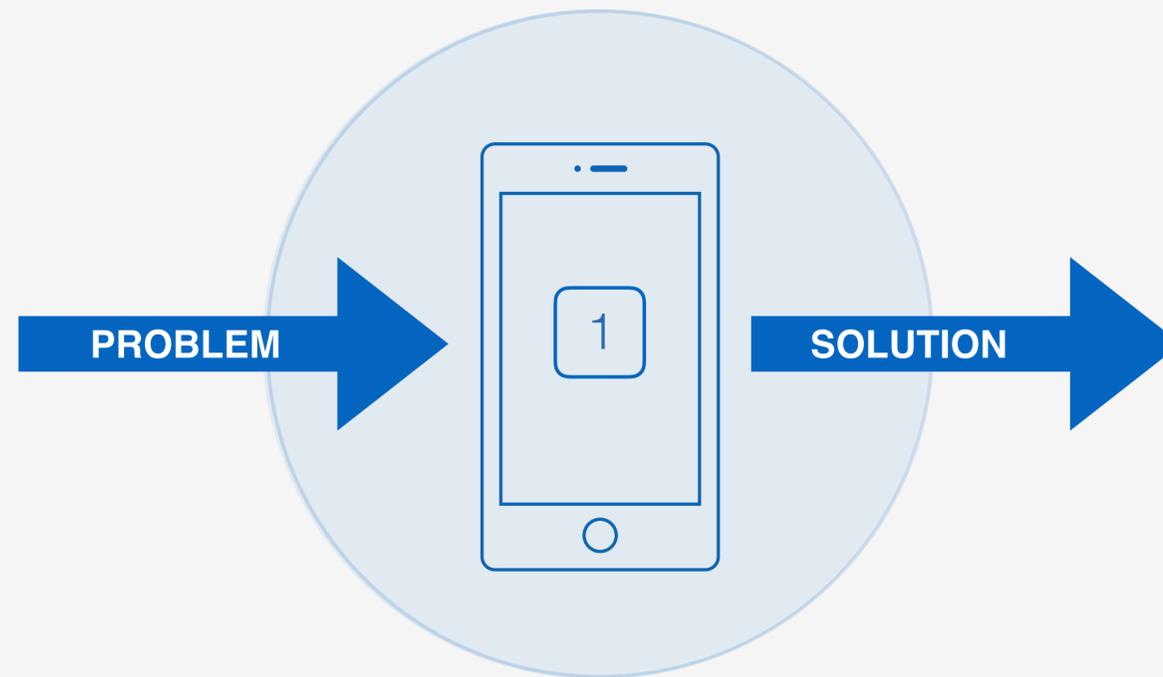
According to research from Gartner, more than 50% of businesses need monthly or weekly app releases. Of those, about a third said IT was not delivering fast enough.

03

Why users favor single-purpose apps

An “Uber” for any purpose

Users tend to favor single-purpose apps for their specialized function, and their clean interface, which often create higher rates of engagement.



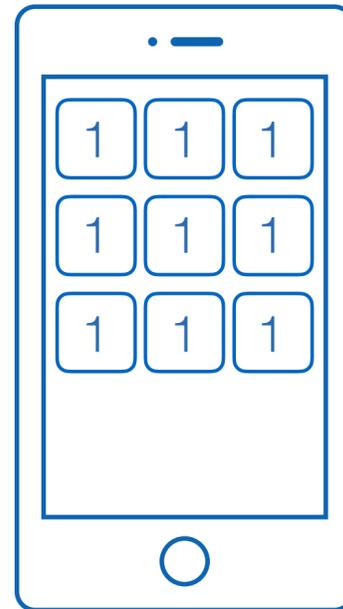
Unbundling pitfalls:

Unbundling almost always fails when it doesn't benefit the user more than a multi-purpose app does.

Too many apps can create app saturation, causing too much jumping between apps. Often these apps don't work together and they tend to produce data silos.

Developers can leverage built-in FileMaker Platform tools to avoid most of these problems.

Why multiple single-purpose apps fail



- ✓ Not user-driven
- ✓ Too many apps
- ✓ Little or no integration with other apps
- ✓ Data silos are created

04

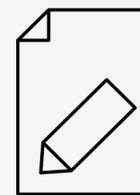
Next Steps

Watch Ronnie Rios' complete DevCon presentation:



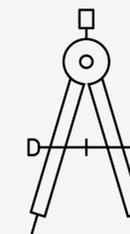
[Less is More:
The Single-Purpose App](#)

Plan your project, create your custom app, and deploy it to your team with the help of these downloadable guides:



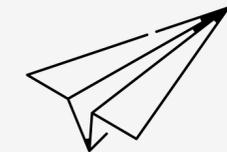
Plan

[Your first steps to custom app development](#)



Create

[Time to start building your custom app](#)



Deploy

[Share your custom app with your team](#)

Explore resources

Explore the resources available to help you along the journey to develop a custom app using the FileMaker Platform.

Online learning, training and community

The FileMaker.com learning site connects you to a free Custom App Academy training series, webinars, discussions, videos, and tutorials:

filemaker.com/learning/

The official FileMaker Community connects you with other FileMaker users and experts. Get answers to your questions, watch videos, access technical briefs, how-to articles, white papers, and more.

community.filemaker.com/

The FileMaker.com support site provides product documentation, knowledge base articles, help with purchasing decisions, and installation guides:

filemaker.com/support/

This ebook references Jeff Schulman and Katherine Lord, "Supersession: Applications and Infrastructure and Operations: When Worlds Collide," Gartner Applications Strategy and Solutions Summit, December 6-8, 2016