



MICHAEL McLEAN COMPUTING 2

Mobile Computing Software Applications

A COMPUTER PROGRAM ON A MOBILE PHONE

Mobile phones are used by a very large number of people these days. Familiarity with the basic use of mobile phones is widespread, including making calls and sending text messages, as well as entering contact details, setting alarms and using the stopwatch and calculator features of the phone. Some of these features are programs known as Java Apps.

The Mobile Computing Programs developed by MMC2 are also Java Apps (programs written for mobile phones using the Java language).

A major benefit of using a Java App on a mobile phone, is the **likelihood of the user having the phone either on them, or very close by, at most times.**

The advent of desktop computers, commonly known as PCs (Personal Computers) was a significant advance from the days when computers were physically very large, and required special environments, usually a dedicated computer room, with its own special electrical power supply, and air conditioning, to name a few such requirements. Specially trained computer operators and computer support staff were also required. The introduction of PCs made computers very much more accessible to a large number of people. It also increased dramatically the number of different types of applications that computers could be efficiently used for.

The benefits of portability, and less demanding operating conditions, became even more evident with the popularity of Laptop computers, Palmtops or hand-held computers, and PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants).

This trend is now extending into the use of mobile phones, not only as a means of communication, as with traditional voice phone calls, but also for text messaging, emailing and sending photos and videos, and listening to and sharing music. And further to this trend, is the increasing use of the 'humble' but also the technically very sophisticated mobile phone, as a computer, to run computer applications.

One obvious advantage of this, is that **computer programs can now be run on a device that many people are already familiar with**, and probably have in their pocket or handbag, or some other equally convenient place. But **there is another advantage**, that is just as important as the physical convenience of this approach.



THE DEVICE APPROACH

While many modern mobile phones have memory and processing power that exceeds that of PCs of not so long ago, and this easily qualifies them as computers, they are **used** more as you would use a **device**, rather than a **computer**. By running your program on a phone, you are leaving behind, waiting for the computer to boot up and the many annoying, time-wasting, and sometimes confusing messages that can appear, and pop up on your screen, presumably requiring your understanding, and some sort of response.

The '**device approach**', is that you have a thing and it does a job. In the case of the **Mobile Tennis Scorer plus Statistics (MTSpS)**, the thing is your phone, and the job is keeping the score at a tennis match, and optionally gathering some statistics on the match and the players.

Many people are comfortable using a computer, but many many more, are comfortable using a mobile phone. Once you begin the application that you have selected to run on your phone, then you are in the hands of the software engineer who designed and wrote it. This is in contrast to being in the hands of Windows with all of its interruptions and pop ups etc. etc.. With MMC2 Apps, you will not be bothered by interruptions from the operating system (Windows) asking and suggesting things, or hackers and others causing pop up messages to appear on your screen and other like occurrences. All that is required of you, is minimal and specific to the task at hand, in the case of the MTSpS, this is keeping the score at a tennis match. Your involvement is kept to what is relevant and very easy to understand. **This is a feature of the device approach**, and it is a key component of the design philosophy behind MMC2 software products.

All of this may be summed up as follows -

The power of a computer combined with the simplicity of a phone.