

Mobile Widgets

Simplifying the mobile Internet

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vodafone

Mobilised Internet or Mobile Internet?

Mobile browsers now bringing the full Web experience to the mobile phone

But the UI is still a limiting factor...

...and navigating around the Web is not easy

May look the same..

...user insight has told us that this is important

But overall experience is not the same

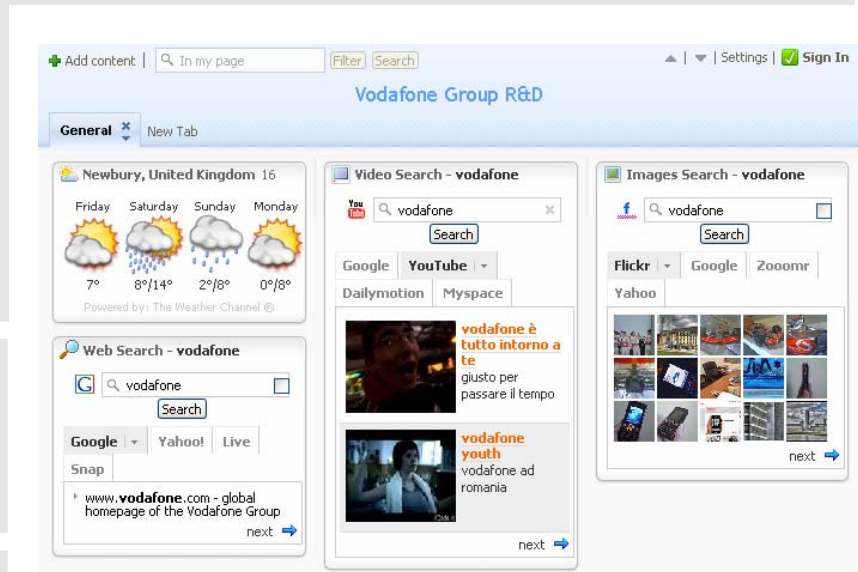
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One approach → simply evolve the terminal to a bigger display, touchscreen or full QWERTY keyboard to match desktop

But Web is becoming more personal...

- Web start pages (Netvibes, Pageflakes, My Yahoo, iGoogle etc) enable users to access 'their' Web via a single page....

Contrarian view → look for a better way of leveraging the Web in a mobile context



Example of a Netvibes start page

User-generated content was a hallmark of 2006. It's a fair bet 2007 will be all about further customizing your online life, Newsweek Dec 30th, 2006



Mobilised Internet or Mobile Internet?

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What do people want when mobile?

- Information available at a glance
- Quick access to the Web to while away a few minutes of downtime
- Preferably without having to fire up the browser, look for bookmarks or enter search text

News, sports results and other RSS feeds
Weather bulletins, shares
Travel information, timetables, maps
Cartoon strips (Dilbert), video clips
Shopping bargains, last minute holiday offers etc
Shopping lists, stickies etc.
Blidgets - Widgitise your blog

The Widget concept is perfect!

Small client-side apps that provide simple functionality to the user in a bubblegum presentation format



"Breaking down the Web into small, portable pieces is the smart trend that everyone from Nokia to Google is betting on", Om Malik, Business 2.0 Magazine, October 2006



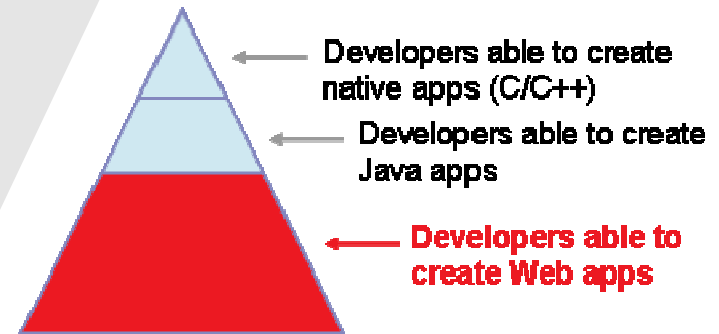
Widgets are great for mobile

For users:

- Easy access to the Internet in a way which is more personal to the user
- Customisable via Widget templates hence enabling a self-service approach to the Long Tail
- More bandwidth efficient than navigating around a website to get the same information
- Always-on connectivity keeping the information fresh

By leveraging Web technologies: (xHTML, CSS and JavaScript)

- Opens service development to a much wider developer base including individuals
- Enables code reuse and “reduces development time to a matter of days rather than months”



Good for users... but also good for business

- Personalised marketing tool
- Implicit targeted marketing through the user's selection of the Widgets they download...

The real promise of mobile marketing is the ability to create a very personal experience between a customer and a brand, And since widgets are selected based on an individual consumer's interests and preferences, they're about as personal as you can get. (Scott Ellison, IDC), Widgets Gone Wireless, BusinessWeek.com, March 27th



But they need to be simple...

Easy discovery:

- Single click to Widget galleries and aggregation sites such as Widgipedia, Widgetbox and Snipperoo
- Option when visiting a website to download a Widget for that site
- Easy mechanism for generating your own Widgets using templates (e.g., RSS feed URL)

CLICK TO GET STARTED

Create a Widget

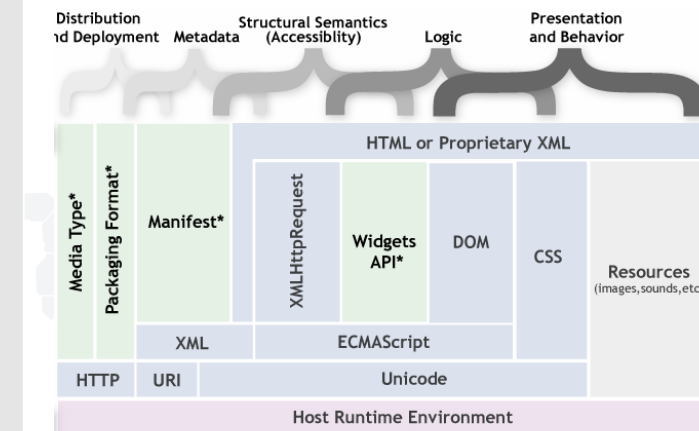
...and still many technical issues to work through

Widgets need to be packaged in such a way as to allow easy download and auto-installation

Such a packaging format needs to be harmonised across the industry to enable sharing and viral distribution:

- W3C Widget standardisation activity

Managing how and when Widgets connect to the Internet to refresh their data to minimise impact on battery life etc.



*Proposed for standardization in this document

W3C Widget architecture



Exploring new presentation options...

Widgets likely to start off being mostly full screen...

...but would be useful to be able to browse Widgets in a snapshot fashion, just as we do currently with RSS feeds

And ultimately would be great if Widgets could provide status indicators and pop-up alerts via the home screen

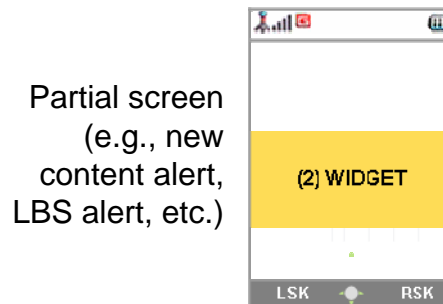
Ultimately Widgets might be able to hook into and augment the host applications on your device → similar concept to Calendar feeds



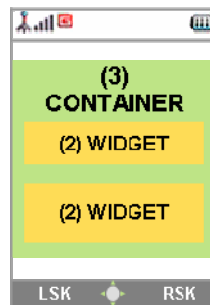
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Full screen (e.g., weather, calendar, shopping price comparison)



Partial screen (e.g., new content alert, LBS alert, etc.)



Single container that manages the display and interaction between multiple Widgets



Enabling mashups... and contextualising services

Next step → provide access to platform APIs to enable Widgets to start mashing up local data and info from the Web

Mashups:

- Single click download of a map for one of the addresses in your address book
- Capturing camera events and offering the user options for annotating and blogging that image

Contextualising services:

- Utilising location data or the calendar to contextualise a weather forecast service

Platform APIs:

- File system access to pictures, music and video clips
- PIM data (contacts, calendar)
- Messaging (SMS, MMS, email)
- Call handling
- System data (battery, coverage, roaming, location)
- Camera (get new picture)

And in the future... Widget Lego?

Taken further, the Widgets themselves could provide their own APIs thereby enabling one Widget to use the services of another

→ a sort of Widget Lego



Inspiration from a pile of bricks

Take aways

2007 has been proclaimed the year of the desktop Widget

So easy are they to develop that the Widgetsphere in the desktop space has grown at an exponential rate...

2008 will mark the start of a new paradigm in the way people access the Internet on the move → mobile Widgets



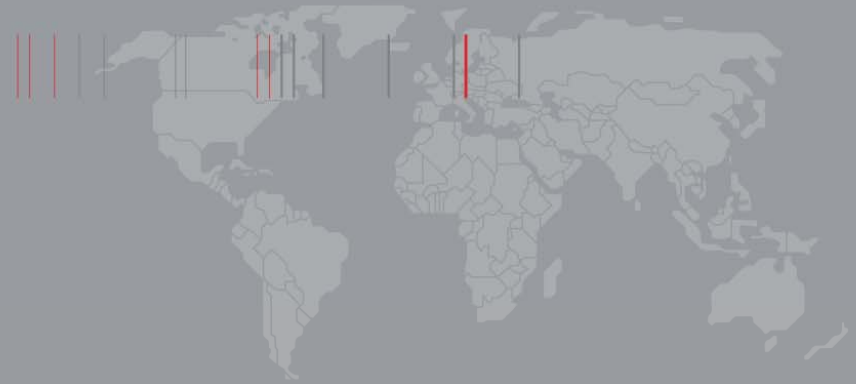
Suddenly Everything's Coming up Widgets, Om Malik, Business 2.0 Magazine, October 2006

*The dawn of the Widget
Widget Web, Ajit Jaokar,
Open Gardens, October 2006*



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