The Need of Localized Transit Mobile Applications for Different Indian Cities

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Abstract*: Majority of Indian population has been migrating from one city to another in search of jobs. Moreover, tourism generates 6.6% of the nation's GDP approximately every year through tourism, welcoming around 23 million tourists every year. So, there arises a need of mobile applications, specific to a city, to help out the needy. These applications should help the user get to the nearest transit station and help in booking inter city buses. This would also further boost the earning through tourism.*

1. Introduction

When an individual first enters a city, the first question coming to the mind is about the system of transportation in the city. The local cabs and auto rickshaws always asking too much from visitors, people do need an application-in-hand to solve their woes. Even the locals living in the city aren't aware of every mode of transit available everywhere around the city. [1]For assessment of availability of Public Transit Network on spatial basis, through the use of GIS tools, numerical indices have been introduced such as, based on capacity, frequency and coverage, Public Transit Coverage Index (PTCI), for measuring the pedestrian accessibility numerical indices, Ideal and Actual Stop Accessibility Index (ISAI and ASAI) and Stop Coverage Ratio Index (SCRI). These indices highlight the well served or the inferiorly served area and helping in making the transit system more accessible.

2. Study Area Profile: Jaipur

Let's take Jaipur as the area for the study, which has a fleet of 400 buses along with the newly introduced Jaipur Metro and is also one of the major tourist hubs.

Jaipur is the capital and largest city of the Indian state of Rajasthan in Northern India. It was founded on 18 November 1727 by Maharaja Jai Singh II, the ruler of Amber, after whom the city is named. As of 2011, the city has a population of 6.66 million, making it the tenth most populous city in the country. Jaipur is also known as the Pink City of India. Located at a distance of 260 km from the Indian capital New Delhi, it forms a part of the Golden Triangle tourist circuit along with Agra (240 km).[6] Jaipur is a popular tourist destination in India and serves as a gateway to other tourist destinations in Rajasthan such as Jodhpur (348 km), Jaisalmer (571 km) and Udaipur (421 km). The city is one of the beautifully planned cities with the largest colony of Asia, Mansarovar.
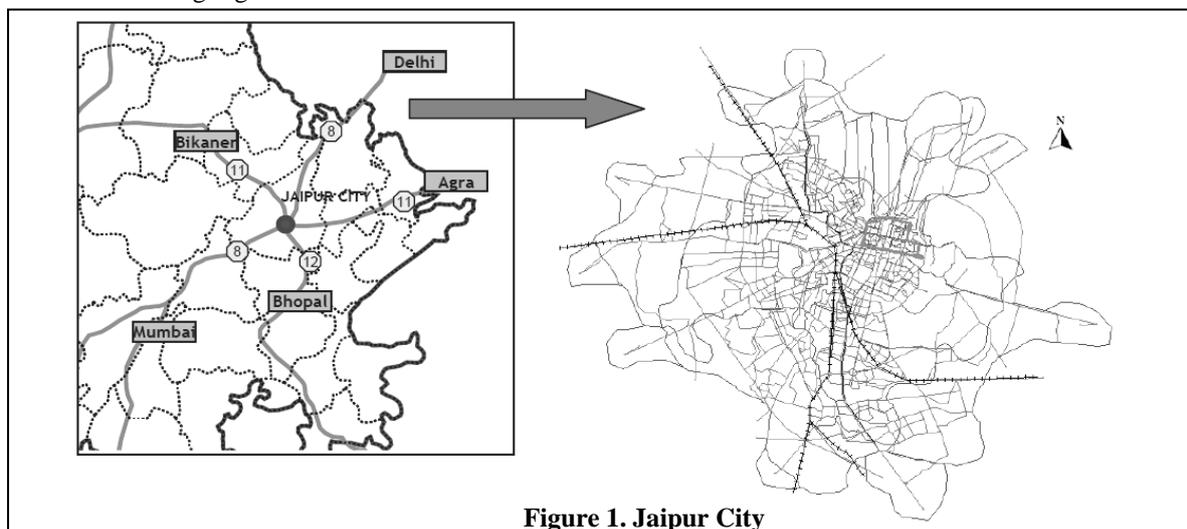

Figure 1. Jaipur City

3. Mobile Applications

A mobile application is a program designed to run on mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets. They started appearing in 2008 and are based on the different mobile operating systems, such as the Apple Store, Google Play Store, Windows Store, and BlackBerry App World. Usage of mobile apps has increased across mobile phone users. [2]A May 2012 "comScore" study reported that during the past quarter, higher number of mobile subscribers used apps than browsing the web on their devices i.e. 51.1% vs. 49.8% respectively. Market research firm Gartner predicted that 102 billion apps would be downloaded in 2013 (91% of them free), which would generate $26 billion in the US, up 44.4% on 2012's US$18 billion. By Q2 2015, the Google Play and Apple stores alone generated $5 billion. An analyst report estimates that the app economy creates revenues of more than €10 billion per year within the European Union, while over 529,000 jobs have been created in 28 EU states due to the growth of the app market.
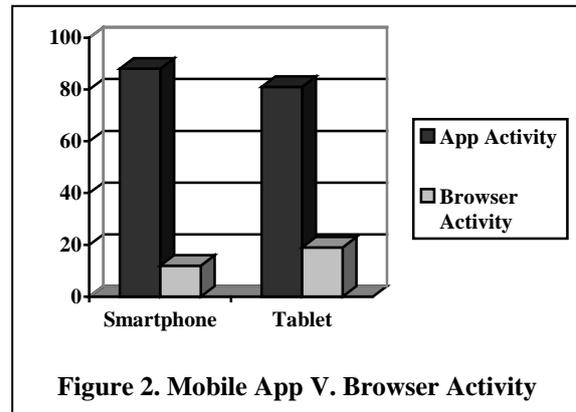
4. The need of a Transit 'Mobile App' in Jaipur

Let's say, for example, Martha, a native of Australia has come to visit Jaipur and is currently at World Trade Park and needs to go to Ajmeri Gate but doesn't know which bus goes there and the local taxi's asking for a □1000. For a local, it could've been a ride of □100 via auto rickshaws or □20 via bus. Whenever Martha comes to know of being duped of □900, she would start giving bad reviews about the locals of Jaipur, which is of course, a bad thing for business. Previously mentioned is the importance of tourism in India, the importance of local transit system in the city, the current technological age of applications and now it comes to the difference that can be made combining these three units to boost the economy of India.
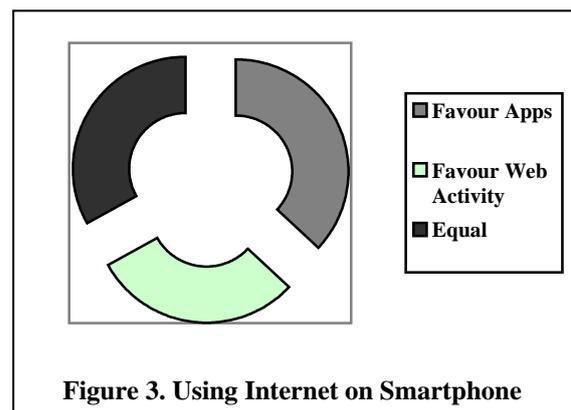
Globally, [3]there are around 1.91 billion smartphone users in 2016, as reported by India in Business, Ministry of External Affairs, Investment and Technology Promotion Division on December 23, 2013. In the same report, it says that around 2016, India will have around 200 million smartphone users.

According to a report by a nonprofit organization Interactive Advertising Bureau (IAB)[4] titled Understanding the Two Sides of the Mobile Coin, as in 2014, out of the total internet activity on smartphones, 88% was dedicated to applications whereas only 12% accounted for web services. Moreover, 37% people prefer apps over web services, 30% prefer web whereas 33% give both an equal weightage.

Figure 2. Mobile App V. Browser Activity

The most intriguing fact is that 54% users have to search for the website's correct link, whereas 29% and 26% follow recommendations and social media links respectively, which simply means that if would have been app for a site, no one would prefer the website. [4]

Figure 3. Using Internet on Smartphone

Moreover, the success of apps like Ola and Jugnoo show that separate apps for separate functions is always preferred, so there should be different apps for different cities.
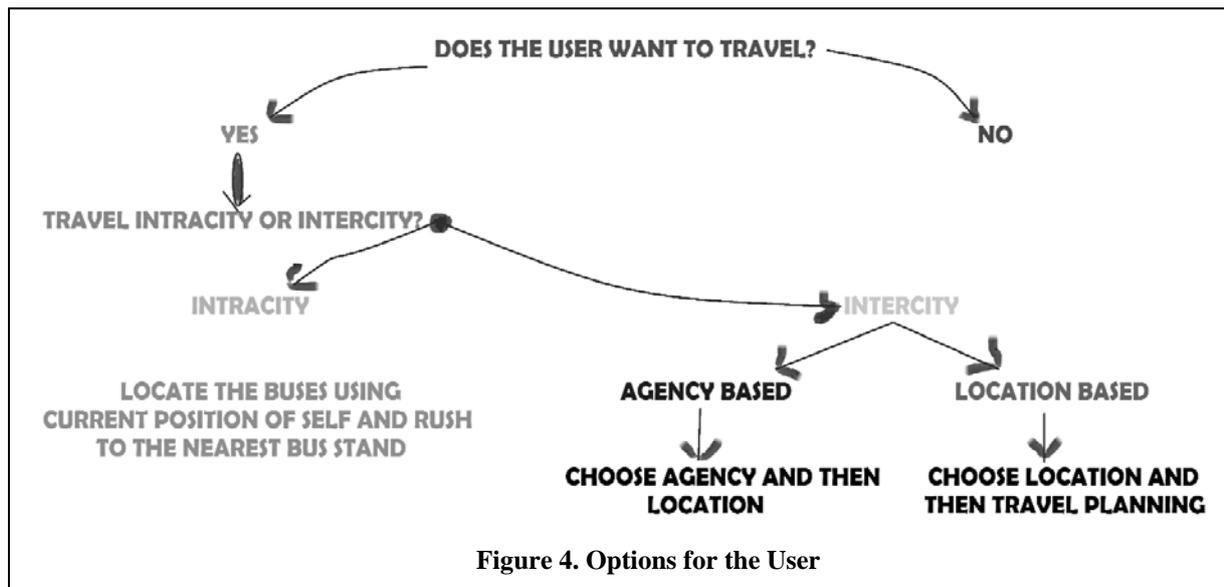
5. The App

The mobile application, for any platform, should comprise three components: 1. People; 2. Process; 3. Technology.

The user should be given options to choose between intercity and inside-the-city travels. The architecture of the application should be location based with nearest mode of transit being shown when the destination is entered. If the destination is outside city, proper list of transportation mediums should be displayed along with a contact number or booking details.

Figure 4. Options for the User

6. Conclusion

The app localized for a city is the need in the same way as Google is different for different countries. In the current times, where people prefer simplicity and swiftness in work, this app wouldn't be complex and the Government of India could easily benefit from these apps if they launch it themselves, boosting tourism and income through transport. These are changing times in technology and with its proper utilization, help and profit can be made simultaneously.

References

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