

# How Apps Fuel Mobile Devices

**THE APPS** that run on your mobile devices are the smaller offspring of **applications**, which have had their heyday on the big desktop computers and laptops. But there are differences:

- **Apps are cheap.** You could spend hundreds of dollars for Windows or Mac applications, but mobile apps are at most a few bucks or, as often as not, free. Some are ad-driven, some make up the difference in micro transactions, and others are functionally more limited than their desktop counterparts.

- **There are a heck of a lot of them.**

As I'm writing this, a study by New Fossil had found there are 1.5 million apps in the Apple App Store and Android's Google Play. On average, each of the more than two billion smartphones in the world run an average of 42 of these apps. Of course, with this many apps it should come as no surprise that one in four apps is abandoned after the first use and more than 60 percent of apps at the Apple Store are never even downloaded.

- **They're a heck of a lot of fun.**

Apps are not made to manage all of L.A.'s traffic lights, detect cancers, or manage a space station. There are plenty of useful productivity apps out there, but they're generally for a single, dedicated purpose. Still more are, for the most part, intended for enjoyment—watching movies, listening to music, social networking, and game playing. When you consider that the processing power, storage capacity, and RAM in any mobile device is dwarfed by a cheap desktop PC from the last century, it's a

wonder they perform as well as they do. Here's their secret: There's a big computer behind the curtain pulling the strings.

