Mobile OS Comparison

By: Erick Perez

DGM 2271: Digital Design I
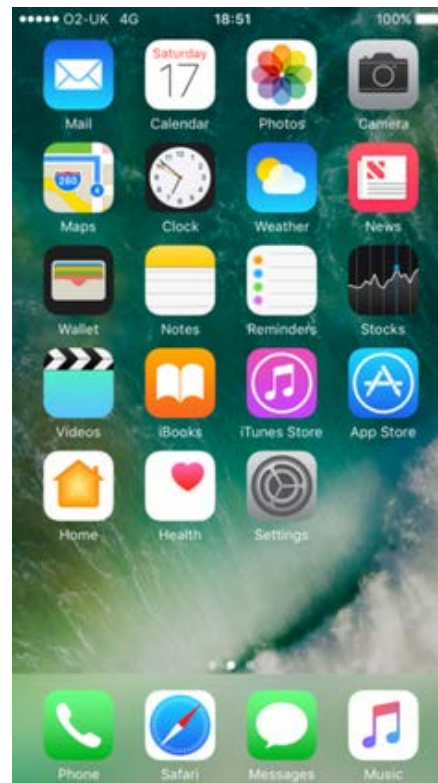
Professor: Martin Rigby

iOS and Android

There are two major mobile operating systems. They are Apple's iOS and Google's Android. These two systems have a few similarities and differences. I will focus on three features to make a **comparison** for each system. Each system has it's own exclusive features but these are not. The features are:

- App switcher/App multitasking.
- Notification/settings bar.
- Siri/Google now.

These features were selected because the functionality is similar on both system. It will mostly be an apples to apples comparison by comparing the similarities of the systems.
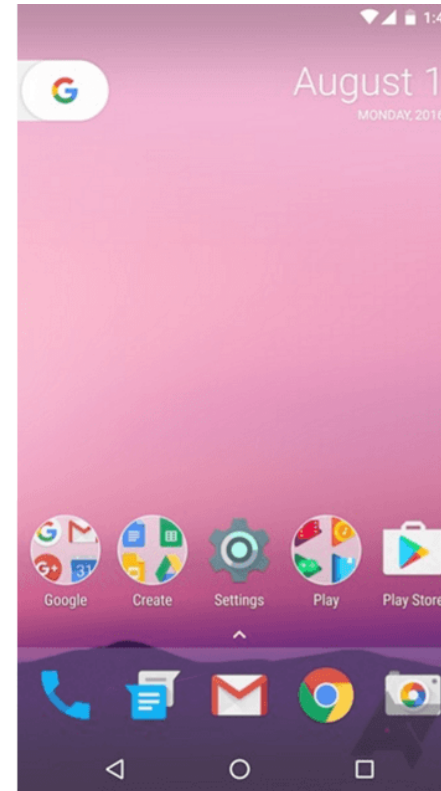
These are screen shots of iOS and Android Home screen. This is what you first see when you turn the system on. I want to point out the home screens because they are a good example of the design principles **aesthetic usability effect.**

I interviewed two Android user and one of the things they don't like about iOS is the home screen. They don't like that all the apps are on the screen. It feels too cluttered. On Android you can choose which apps are shown on the home screen.

Apple iOS Home Screen

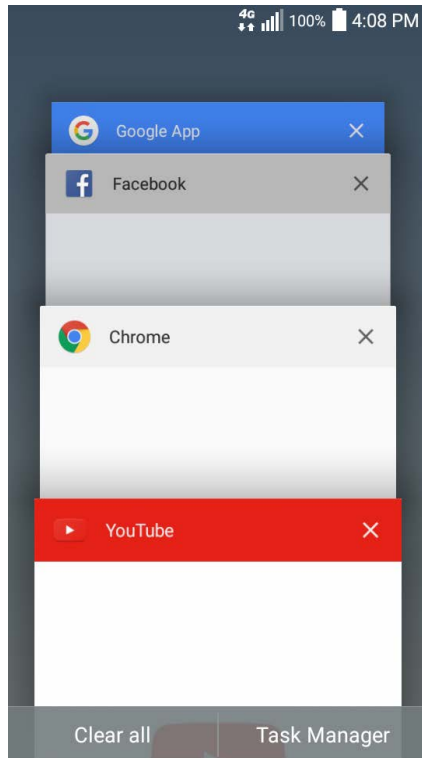Google Android Home Screen

Aesthetic Usability Effect:
Aesthetic designs are perceived as easier to use than less aesthetic designs.

Multitasking

The first feature to compare is the multitasking feature. This feature allows you to have multiple apps opened in the background and manage the apps. The iOS version is called the app switcher. The Android version is called recent apps.

Android All Apps View

Process for feature access. (Android)

The first step is to make sure the phone is on.

The next step depends on the type of phone. You touch one of the buttons of the phone. Some phones have an actual button on the outside, front side of the phone, The button could also be touch sensitive, or the button could be an icon displayed on the phone. The button is usually on the far right.

You either have to press once or double tap.

From there you can see all your opened apps displayed in windows.

By pressing on a window that app opens.
You can also close apps by either pressing the x next to the title or by sliding the window left or right of the screen.

Lastly you can open the settings for a particular app by pressing and holding the title of the app.

Process for feature access. (iOS)

The first step is to make sure the phone is on.

Double press the home button

Delete apps by sliding the windows up

The feature functions the same on both systems. The difference is the controls for managing the apps. For example on Android you swipe left or write to close an app and on iOS you swipe up. The only problem I find with this feature is on an Android phone the button to access the feature is different. Either the location of the button is different or the icon is different depending on the phone.
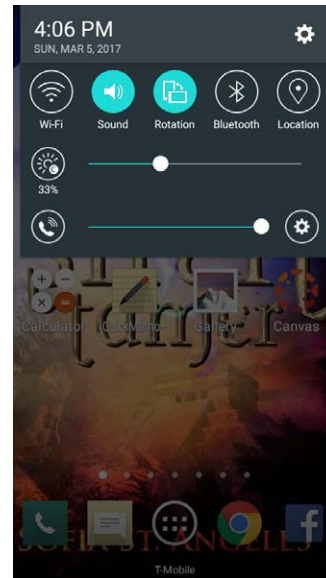
iOS App Switcher

Quick Menus

In October of 2011 apple added the notification bar feature to their operating system. This feature opens a drop down menu that shows notifications and other things you want to show up. A few years later they added a second menu called the control center. These menus is the feature I want to focus on.

On Android, they have a menu called the notification/quick settings bar. This menu is a combination of Apple's notification bar and control center. The menus function the same on both system. They look different, they feel different, and on Android you can customize the settings.

The people I interview love this feature mainly because you can customize it. I don't like it and I prefer what iOS did and split the notifications and settings. On iOS you can't customize the menu but you don't need to because all the settings I'll ever need are already there but on Android They leave it up to you to customize it and depending on which phone and version the settings are different.
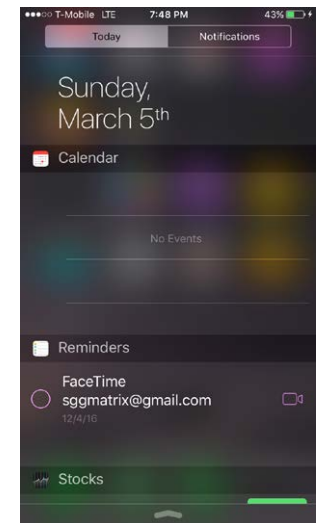
With the customization I feel Apple did their homework and knew what settings people needed. While Android didn't quite know which settings people needed so they gave them all of them.
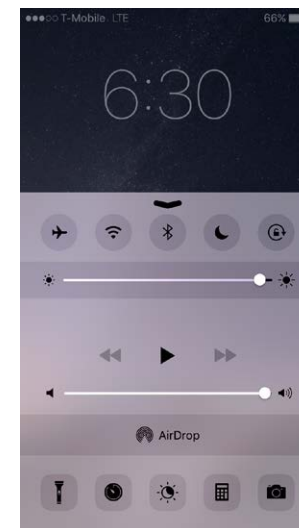
Notification/Quick Settings Bar (Android)

Notifications and quick settings are all in one menu. The menu consists of button and sliders. It is accessed by swiping down from the top. Can be accessed at any time.

Control Center (iOS)

Control Center has the quick settings. Uses button and sliders like Android. Control Center is accessed by swiping up from the bottom. Can be accessed at any time.

Notification Bar (iOS)

Notification Bar displays notification from the phone and apps. There are also a few widgets for some apps. Can be accessed any time by swiping down from the top.

These features are very similar. They work a little different. If an Android user or iOS user switched platforms they would only need to learn a few new things. This can help people with **advance organizing.** The user already knows what each setting does but maybe the way it's accessed is different. They would mostly be comparative advance organizers. They would be compare and contrast the differences and similarities with their previous existing knowledge.

Intelligent Assistants

Both systems have an intelligent assistant. An intelligent assistant is software the helps the user make certain tasks. iOS has Siri and Android has Google Now. Siri is exclusive to iOS and Google Now can be used on both but it works better on Android.

Siri and Google Now perform the same type of tasks. They both can make changes to the systems, use the Internet for searches, access your personal information to make appointments or reminders, manage apps, and much more. The main difference it the process for activating the assistant.

Process for Google Now. (Android)

Depending on the phone Google Now may be on or off by default. To turn it on you go to the Google app. There are multiple easy ways to activate Google Now.
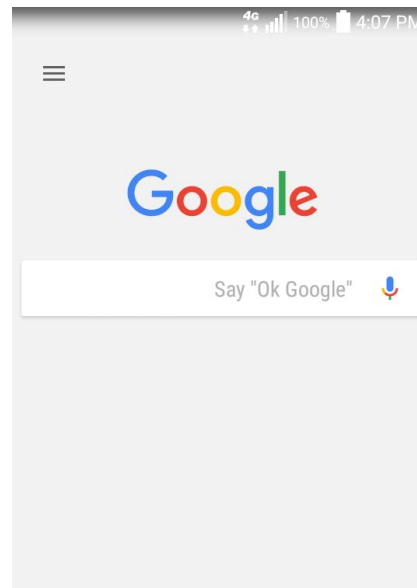
You can hold the home button (if there is one). Once you hear the beep you can speak to Google.

Swipe up from the bottom (depending on phone).

Say "Ok, Google".

You can also added it to the home screen.
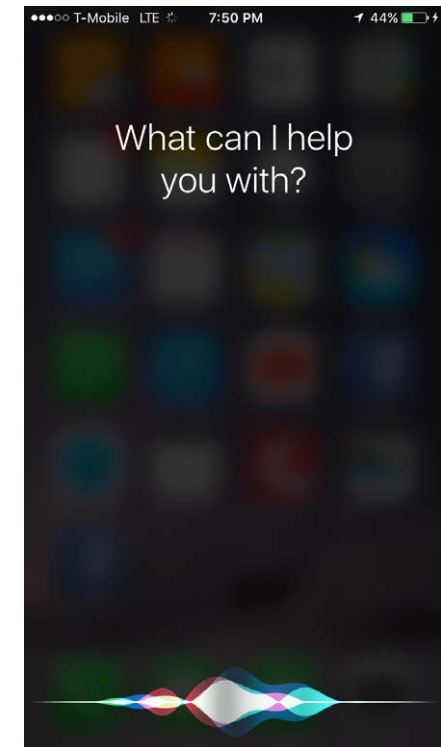
Google Now (Android)

Process for Siri. (iOS)

Siri is usually on by default if not you can turn it on in settings.

Best way to access Siri is to hold the home button. Once you hear the beep you can speak to Siri.

You can also say "Hey, Siri" to activate it, but this feature is off by default.

Siri (iOS)

Conclusion

Android and iOS are both great mobile operating systems. Both of them are very similar and the features function similar. Overall I prefer iOS. I feel it's simplier, easier to use, fast, and the design is **consistent.** I really don't like that every version of Android is different. The same version of Android is different depending on the phone and the phone exclusive features. Each version of Android feels independent of each other. With iOS each version feels the same but bigger and better each time. The design of iOS is more consistent and the hardware doesn't matter.

Each version feels different and independent to other versions.

iOS 6   iOS 7   iOS 8   iOS 9   iOS 10

Design is consistent but each version is bigger and better.