Cross-platform UI Development with Xamarin.Forms

Paul F. Johnson

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Create a fully operating application and deploy it to major mobile platforms using Xamarin.Forms

About This Book

- Create standard user interfaces on Windows Mobile, Android, and iOS and then make those interfaces look good with ease
- Design a full-blown application in very little time with just about the entire code being shared
- Learn how to access platform-specific features and still have the same core code with this handy guide

Who This Book Is For

This book is intended for mobile software developers who are fed up with having three different code sets for the same application. If you want to put your code on all mobile platforms with minimum fuss, and just want to develop but haven't got the time to be digging too far into a particular platform, this is the book for you. Basic knowledge of C# is assumed.

What You Will Learn

- Create a responsive UI, modified to suit the target platform
- Understand the basics of designing an application, and the considerations needed for target platforms
- Construct a complete app using a single codebase
- Develop attractive user interfaces
- Bind information to the code behind to generate a reactive application
- Design an effective portable class library (PCL)
- Include a Windows Mobile application within your standard Xamarin.Forms application
- Extend your applications using the Xamarin.Forms Labs library

In Detail

Xamarin is an IDE used for the development of native iOS, Android, and Windows, and cross-platform mobile applications in C#. For the mobile developer, that means learning three different languages to create the same application. Even if you use the Xamarin toolchain, you still need to work with three different user interface construction sets. Xamarin is essentially a container in which developers can write any application in C# and use the Xamarin compiler to package and deploy on Android, iOS, or Windows platforms. To top this, Xamarin.Forms plays the role of a single codebase for mobile applications.

This book will show you, with fully-coded examples, how to use both the Xamarin toolchain and the Xamarin.Forms library to code once for the three platforms. It goes from the concept and design of a mobile messenger application to its execution. You will be introduced to Messenger—the messaging app—which includes key features such as push notifications, UI, maps, databases, and web services. Next, you will learn to plan the UI using Xamarin.Forms for cross-mobile platform development, and move on to creating custom

buttons, extending the UI, and connecting to social sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

You will also learn about the limitations of PCL libraries and how they make coding easier. This will be followed by the creation of a SQLite database and a database manager, and the SQLite database's reflection within the database manager. You will then be taken through the use of hardware features with ample coverage of iOS, Android, and Windows Mobile. Finally, the book will conclude by introducing common strategies that allow you to create applications that "just work" without having to reinvent the wheel each time.

Style and approach

A fun and informal approach to creating a mobile application using the most up-to-date cross-platform approach. Each coding chapter includes fully working code examples available for download from the Packt Publishing website.

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