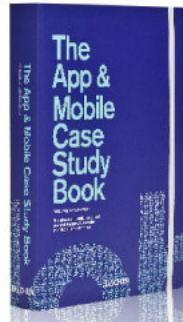


# Book review: The App & Mobile Case Study Book

By Vaughn Davis, June 15, 2012 @ 1:11 pm

## The App & Mobile Case Study Book

By Julius Wiedemann (Taschen, 2012/distributed by New Holland) \$89.99



You might know German “art publisher” Taschen from such titles as *Pert: the Teen Breast in Black and White*, and *Pert 2: Now in Colour*. (OK, I made that up.) Equally odd, but rather more true, is the fact that Taschen’s most expensive ever book (a US\$15,000, 700-page, 34kg epic about Muhammad Ali) was called *GOAT*.

At \$89.99, this latest book is a little more affordable and its content is a little more suitable to leaving on the coffee table than some of Taschen’s more risqué titles.

At first glance, a book on apps is something of an anachronism. Isn’t there an app for that? Or shouldn’t this information, at the very least, be presented online? That’s quite possibly true, and there are plenty of websites showcasing the best and latest. But there’s something about a book; the ease of dipping in and out, the pleasure of physically bookmarking a page, the impossible-to-ignore presence on your actual desktop, that makes it a powerful format for bringing information like this together.

I wish I’d read this before we started developing our own app ([TV-to-digital app pluk](#)). The case studies give a handy perspective and remind us that successful apps don’t just drop from the clouds. Angry Birds was built on one fragment (a cross-looking bird character) of an otherwise overcomplicated and rejected game concept. Flipboard spent US\$10 million before it launched. The BBC tested its iPad app (the iPad hadn’t been released) by printing iPad-sized screen shots and rearranging elements physically. Snippets like these, along with peeps under the skirts of favourites like Lego Photo, Instagram, MyFry and any number of recipe apps make it an enjoyable and useful read.

Each case study comes with a bunch of statistics including number of users, app store ranking, build time and so on. But like the ad award entries these case studies resemble, the measures have been carefully selected to shine the best possible light on each app. Consistent measures would have been useful. There’s also the odd swine among the pearls; Asics Australia’s shoe finder app might have sold a lot of shoes, but it’s unlikely to make the average app developer’s heart beat any faster.

I’d call this a must-read for anyone doing mobile applications. And yes, there is a website – Taschen has handily curated every app from the book, along with videos and other relevant stuff – at [taschen.com/tamcsb](http://taschen.com/tamcsb).

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