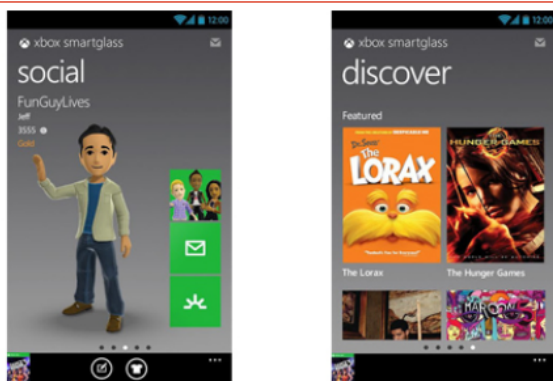


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APPS BLOG

30 Best Android apps this week

Xbox SmartGlass, Britannica Kids, Amazon Cloud Drive Photos, Snapchat, Calvin Harris, The xx and more



The Xbox SmartGlass Android app controls an Xbox 360 console

It's another bumper Best Apps post for new Android apps, covering 30 releases from the last week alone. Heady times for Google-powered devices.

The list doesn't include games, as they get their own separate post: [this week's selection](#) included Android titles like Need for Speed: Most Wanted, Theme Park, Hellfire, Zombie Driver THD, Chrono Trigger and Zombiewood.

iOS apps also get their own post, which can be [found here this week](#). Windows Phone has a monthly roundup – the [latest one is here](#). For now, here's the pick of the Google Play store from the last week.

Xbox SmartGlass (Free)

Launched by Microsoft, this is an official companion app for its Xbox 360 console, enabling you to control the device from your Android smartphone – alas, not tablets for now. The app can control TV shows and films, music, web browsing and other features of the console, and in time will also be usable as a second screen for games.

Britannica Kids apps (£1.24 each)

There are actually nine brand-new Britannica Kids apps available for Android. I'm including them as one entry. The nine apps cover the solar system, Aztec empire, dinosaurs, knights and castles, ancient Rome, snakes, rainforests, volcanoes and ancient Egypt. Their content is a mixture of text, images and interactivity, all aimed at children.

Amazon Cloud Drive Photos (Free)

Amazon has extended its Cloud Drive storage service out with a new app focusing on photos. It offers 5GB of storage (for free) to store images in, and access them from Android devices as well as computers. It supports both phones and tablets, and can share to Facebook and email.

18 Months (Free)

This is the official app for Calvin Harris' new album 18 Months, complete with a nifty feature to play every track in full. It requires some work though: dancing. Well, moving your Android smartphone, anyway: the idea is that by dancing (or wagging the handset) you keep the song playing. Fun and innovative.

Snapchat (Free)

Snapchat bills itself as "the first real-time picture chatting app", and has been doing rather well on iOS, where its users have shared more than 1bn photos. The idea: send photos to friends with a built-in time limit up to 10 seconds. The photo then wipes itself off the recipient's handset. Ideal for sexting people you don't quite trust, but there must be a few other uses too.

The xx (Free)

The xx have released a stylish app that lives up to their latest album Coexist, offering "HD Visualiser videos" for every track on the album for fans who own it digitally, as well as interactive artwork, news and notifications from the band, official music videos, lyrics and ticketing info.

Bamboo Paper (Free)

This app is the work of Wacom, and is designed to work with its Bamboo Stylus accessory. Promising "note taking on your smartphone made easy", it involves scribbling sketches or writing notes which can then be flipped through. Made for Android [smartphones](#), it (kind of) brings them the functionality seen in Samsung's Galaxy Note devices. The stylus costs around £25.

Rockford's Musical Audiobooks (Free / £2.99)

And more numerical cheating here, since there are four Rockford's Musical Audiobook apps: chapters one to four of children's story Rockford's Rock Opera, with the first available for free, and the other three chapters costing £2.99 each. It's an audiobook with an hour of narrated story, as well as music and pictures. Read more on [the aims behind it here](#).

Belkin MediaPlay (Free)

Belkin's new Android app builds on the myTwonky technology, with the aim of helping you pipe films and music from your Android device to a connected TV (via its browser), or play content from your home library on your smartphone or tablet.

Game Reward Mobile App (Free)

British games retailer Game has had some rough times in 2012, but apps are forming part of its comeback strategy. This ties into Game's loyalty programme, helping you earn points on purchases from the stores, while also offering recommendations. If you add your console gamertags, there may be other "cool stuff" in the future too.

Photo Warp+ (Free)

More than 14m people have downloaded developer Tonuzaba Entertainment's first Photo Warp app, so this sequel should find a healthy audience. It's all about, yes, warping photos, with a range of effects to play merry havoc with images.

Find a Tradesman (Free)

This is definitely one of the most useful apps in this week's lineup: released by the Rated People website, it helps you dig into its directory of tradesmen for home improvement jobs, posting what you need done and getting responses from companies or people who can help.

BB - Give Thanks (£2.47)

The Berenstain Bears books have a firm following among several generations of Christian parents, and they're being digitised as apps by Oceanhouse Media book-by-book. This one focuses on Thanksgiving, with voice narration, audio and words highlighted as they're read out, to help early readers.

HotUKDeals – Official (Free)

So called because there seem to be plenty of unofficial Android apps pulling down listings from the UK's deals'n'vouchers website. This is its official app, offering vouchers from the likes of Asda, Tesco, Domino's Pizza and Sainsbury's, filtered by location. You can also comment on the offers and tip those you find in the real world.

Insync for Android (£1.49)

Insync's new app ties in to the Google Drive service, to access documents and other files stored in Google's cloud service, upload new ones, and share with friends and colleagues. All of which you can do in the official Google Drive service. Insync claims a host of additional features though, from exporting files to the SD card in your device, to saving folders for offline use, and streaming music or video files.

Antengo Classifieds - Tablet (Free)

The native Android tablet apps are coming, as Google encourages developers to think harder about their larger-screened software. Antengo claims to be "reinventing classified listings" in the US, with more than 2m items in its classifieds directory, and an app designed for tablets.

Flip Launcher (Free)

This is a smartphone app for power Android users who want to save a few precious seconds when navigating to and opening specific apps and shortcuts. The idea here: you flip to them, having set up to 24 as your designated flips.

The Montblanc Worldsecond (Free)

Luxury watchmaker Montblanc is working on an interesting digital marketing campaign that aims to get people around the world taking photos at the same instant, then making them available to browse. This app helps you do that, with four Instagram-ish filters to apply, uploading pics to the Montblanc Worldsecond site, as well as (if you choose) to Facebook, Twitter and Google+.

Goalmaster | Goal Tracker (Free)

This is a simple but potentially-useful app focused on tracking goals – of the personal motivation kind, rather than the football kind. You can create entries for your ambitions, then analyse your progress, and share your success (hopefully) on Facebook.