Mastodon now has an official iPhone app

Decentralized social network Mastodon now has an official iPhone app. The nonprofit behind Mastodon launched the app on iOS today, supplementing an existing web version and several third-party apps for iOS, Android, and other platforms. The app is free and offers a similar feature set to Mastodon's core service, although it doesn't include Mastodon's broad local and federated timelines.

Mastodon describes the app as particularly geared toward getting new users on board the nontraditional social platform. As we've outlined before, Mastodon looks similar to Twitter but is built around independently run communities (and the ActivityPub protocol) rather than a single central network. You can create your account on a community of your choice while following and messaging people in other communities as well. It's an unusual design among modern social platforms, and offering an official iOS entry point could help ease people into it more smoothly. CEO Eugen Rochko confirmed plans for a comparable Android app, but there's no timeline for releasing it.

Mastodon's iOS app supports features like polls and sensitive content filters, and the app page subtly highlights its differences with bigger services like Twitter by mentioning Mastodon's "ad-free, chronological timeline." As mentioned above, however, you *won't* find a section for local and federated timelines — Mastodon's firehose of all public posts from your home community and the communities of people linked with it, respectively.

Rochko tells *The Verge* that those timelines were a

“suboptimal” way to discover new content, and excluding them also reduced the potential for conflict with Apple, which has required some social networks to limit what users can find through their apps. (Reddit’s iOS app, for instance, makes you opt into NSFW content through the web.) For a different feature set, you can keep using one of the existing iOS apps — or just log in through the web.

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