The Internet Archive Companion Review
Reviewed by Leslie Wagner, The University of Texas at Arlington

Developed by Hunter Lee Brown as a free app for the iPad, iPhone, and iTouch, the Internet Archive Companion 3.0 is licensed under Creative Commons.[1] The Internet Archive Companion, also known as the IA Companion, or IA, as it appears with its app icon, is meant to work with the full-blown Internet website resource, the Internet Archive. The content of the IA Companion is divided into 3 major formats: audio, video, and text.

Some of the content appears to be archived websites of materials that may have solely appeared on the web and were never available elsewhere, with the sites or their links archived on the Internet Archive. Other content may be available through other Internet sources, but certain old time radiobroadcasts and early films, for example, appear to be unique to the IA Companion.

In conducting several parallel searches on both the Internet Archive and the IA Companion, I netted the exact same results. The Internet Archive includes a forum for comments and has links, neither of which are available in IA Companion. An additional search feature, the "Wayback Machine," which retrieves archived websites, is found on the Internet Archive, but is unavailable on the IA Companion because these websites will only load correctly on a standard computer. This is also the case for early versions of computer software and the Internet Arcade, a collection of early computer-based games.

The IA Companion is also lacking an advanced search option. While some related files can be found under a specific sub collection heading, many related files which could or should be tucked into a sub collection remain in the cumbersome and lengthy lists.

There are considerable primary sources of value to be found within the IA Companion. Although many are not unique to this resource, if they are archived on this website and the researcher has a specific item which already resides on the IA Companion, it can be found with a simple search with an iPad; access will not be blocked because you cannot download Adobe Flash Player thanks to the embedded media player. If you are in the exploration stage of a project and investigating topics

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[1] Hunter Lee Brown's Professional Resume, last modified April 1, 2013, accessed June 16, 2014, http://www.hunterleebrown.com/resume/.

in film or radio broadcasting, there are primary sources to be found quickly and easily to be studied on your iPad, iPhone, or iTouch.

Beyond the usual resources and databases available to researchers through university libraries, depending on a researcher's needs, I would point them to the IA Companion if they were so technically inclined and researching 20th century culture. With the inevitable move toward portable devices to keep the Internet constantly at our fingertips, we also require simplified websites. Users of iPads, iPods, and iPhones are not interested in accessing the multiple links and more than 200 forums of the IA Companion's parent website. When searching the Internet on an iPad for an obscure text or film, users will be delighted to find it digitally accessible through IA Companion and pleased that the documents load and appear on the screen just as quickly with the app as they do on a desktop.

To me it boils down to using a simplified tool to access certain web content on my iPad for the sake of convenience, untethered to a stationary desktop. IA Companion provides all of the digital resources available in the original wherever there is wireless Internet access. My personal preference is still an iPad for viewing images, texts, and video because of the screen size, while listening to IA Companion's audio files, anywhere or anytime, is less cumbersome on an iPhone or an iPod. Whereas the IA website continues to be a viable resource for archived Internet websites and digitized archival content, IA Companion cuts straight to the chase without the relative clutter of the Internet Archive's multipurpose homepage, making searches simple and quick. IA Companion's greatest strongpoint is its ability to deliver archival content in iPad, iPhone, and iPod compatible formats, with the few exceptions already noted, making it a viable tool for discerning, tech-savvy researchers.