

New iPhone software has copy-paste, no Flash

USA: Apple on Tuesday, 17 March 2009, unveiled next-generation iPhone software with copy-paste and multimedia messaging features but no sign of much-coveted Flash for digital video.



Apple gave analysts and reporters a demonstration of the coming iPhone 3.0 operating system during an invitation-only event at the firm's headquarters in Cupertino, California.

The software is available for outside developers interested in crafting mini-programs for popular iPhones and iPod Touch MP3 players but the operating system will not be publically released until mid-year.

"It's a significant update," said Gartner analyst Van Baker. "When it ships, cut, copy and paste as well as multimedia-media messages will resonate most with consumers."

iPhone 3.0 software will be a free upgrade for owners of the multi-function, Internet-linked mobile telephones. The new software will cost iPod Touch users about US\$10 each.

The improvements in iPhone 3.0 addressed some of the complaints that iPhones lacked functions basic in competitors such as the Blackberry Storm, the Google Android G1, and the as-yet-unreleased Palm Pre.

Upgrades did not include being able to record video with iPhones or play video made using Adobe's ubiquitous Flash software; an omission deeply irking many iPhone owners.

During a question-and-answer session, Apple executives responded with "No comment" to clamors for video recording and compatibility with Flash.

"They did not address the camera, which is a fairly low quality for a smartphone these days, and they also did not mention video support, which would be nice to see," said Creative Strategies analyst Tim Bajarin.

"But, you can only do so much with the existing hardware. This is still a significant update," he said.

Apple senior vice president of iPhone software Scot Forstall demonstrated how text and photographs can be copied from webpages on iPhone browsers and then pasted into an email or any other application.

Security and user-interface design complexities were blamed for the delay in adding it to iPhone's operating system.

"There are a lot of pieces we really cared about which we wanted to get perfect as opposed to releasing

something that didn't quite work right," Forstall said.

A new iPhone function allows users to search through their address books, calendars, email, and even iPods.

iPhone 3.0 also contains satellite navigation applications, stereo Bluetooth links and Internet-sharing between devices and other computers.

Electronic Arts, Oracle, ESPN and others used the event's stage to unveil applications tailored to iPhone 3.0.

"This was the last bit of software that we felt was keeping us from developing for the iPhone," said Seth Sternberg of instant messenger service Meebo.com.

Apple is letting outside developers build voice chat into iPhone videogames as well as access address books, calendars, and iPod music libraries.

iPhone 3.0 also lets accessory makers connect devices, such as radios, to Apple's smartphones.

"We're going to allow developers to create accessories that can talk directly to the iPhone," Forstall said.

Apple said that this functionality could allow doctors to monitor patients on their iPhones, for example.

LifeScan's Anita Mathew showcased an application that stores glucose readings on iPhones. "We will continue to create a world without limits for people with diabetes by partnering with Apple," Mathew said.

Apple has sold nearly 14 million iPhones in 80 countries since the devices hit the market in 2007.

More than 800 million programs for iPhones have been downloaded from its online App Store, according to Apple.

Source: AFP

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