

New iPhone is truly a technology wonder

Two years ago I swapped my Palm Treo smart phone for the new iPhone from Apple and the technical love affair started right then and there.

I stood in line with the rest of the yahoos and even had a beer with them at Chili's while we tapped away

on the new touch screens like kids on Christmas morning.

A year later I handed over that original iPhone to my wife and ran off to pick up the new iPhone 3G to have the latest and greatest mobile communications device available. Over the past year, numerous enhancements have been made to the iPhone via software upgrades delivering better stability, more functionality and increased usability.

Of course I had been keeping up with the news of the third generation iPhone called the 3G S to come out this last week, so I tried a new path by ordering it this time over the Web directly from Apple.com instead of waiting in line a third time at the local AT&T store.

This past Friday the new iPhone 3G S went on sale at all the AT&T outlets and all I had to do was go home to pick mine up.

I was both surprised and very pleased I received my new iPhone via FedEx at no delivery charge the exact same day they hit the stores. So Friday night I



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the cutover process.

I had already upgraded my iTunes software to version 8.2 just in case the new iPhone OS software version 3.0 required it.

Also I had downloaded the 240 MB version 3.0 software that Thursday night to download on my second iPhone, the 3G. That upgrade went flawlessly and I was already enjoying the new 3.0 features in that current phone.

The cutover was the easiest I had ever done since the iPhone came out two years ago. I have done dozens of them for clients and have had quick ones and difficult ones depending on numerous variables.

First I synced my current 3G iPhone to iTunes and made sure all the data was backed up to my laptop. After unplugging the 3G and connecting the new 3G S, iTunes recognized it was a new phone and asked me if I wanted to download the current backup with all my settings, data and applications down to the new 3G S iPhone. I answered YES along with taking the other defaults, and the download began.

It ran for nearly 30 minutes and when it was finished it was waiting to be activated. My plan was to take it to the AT&T store that next day on Saturday morning but instead I simply ejected the cellular SIM cards with a paper clip poked into the small

them between the 3G and the 3G S.

Within seconds it activated and my old phone number was on my new iPhone which eliminated the planned trip into AT&T the next morning. I was up and running within an hour with all 50-plus of my previously purchased Apps including their data and settings.

All I had to do was type in my POP and SMTP password for my e-mail to start working. Conversion completed!

Right away I started trying out the new applications and testing the enhanced features with led me to my first discovery — this bad boy is fast! Applications almost instantly start up, Web surfing is quicker and contact lookups to make phone calls are snappier.

Apple did this by doubling the processing power and the active memory. The speed improvements alone of the iPhone 3G S make it worth the purchase.

Next I had to test out the new

built-in compass application that is a truly magnetic compass rather than one deriving the direction via triangulation of cellular and GPS signals while you are moving. If I get lost in a strange town and the sun goes down, I will definitely be using the app.

The iPhone's camera has been boosted to 3 megapixels and combined with a video camera with editing capabilities all built into a single application. Apple also added an auto-focus feature which allows you to touch and move a square over the area of interest on the image and the auto-focus will target that area's distance.

One of the long-awaited features has finally arrived on the new iPhone 3G S which is copy/paste. Too many times have I wanted to select and copy text from another text message, e-mail or web page and paste it into a message to a client but could not, until now.

Since this works with both text and images, Apple got up

to speed with many other smart phones that have had this feature for quite a while.

They also enabled both the older and newer iPhones running the 3.0 software the ability to use the keyboard in landscape mode during e-mails, Web surfing, notes and messages. This gives you larger keys and a more natural layout to type faster.

Another built-in application is the Voice Memo program which acts as your digital dictation machine for recording notes and any sounds picked up the by microphone. No, you cannot record conversations while on the phone since Apple has blocked all recordings apps from running simultaneously with the phone function — bummer.

Speaking of voice applications, they also implemented a Voice Control capability to help you start up applications, make a call, look up contact, or even play a song. This can be very handy to help you keep your hands off the iPhone and your

eyes on the road while driving — some thing I still need to do better at.

During the first week using the iPhone 3G S in the field I have had a bit more battery life, but not as big of an improvement compared to the speed increase. With all the internal functionality of Bluetooth, Wifi, Edge, 3G, magnetic compass, and cellular communications I'm amazed all that stuff works on the same unit at all.

Bottom line: Combining Apple's third generation faster iPhone with the new 3.0 software and the 40,000 applications now available for it, the iPhone is truly the technology wonder that needs to be in everyone's hand.

Next week's column: Limiting screen time.

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