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Apple iPhone version 1.1.3

Apple updates its phone software, but should you?

by Stuart Miles published on 16 January 2008

Taking its fifth major software update since it was launched in America last year, Apple has announced the launch of Apple firmware 1.1.3 for iPhone users across the globe. But should you bother with the free update? We take a closer look to find out.

So what's new? Well you get improved Google mapping, the ability to send multiple SMS texts, customise the homescreen, view lyrics in music, access chapters in video and grab webclips from the Internet.

After a quick install and update, you get the new features ready to play with.

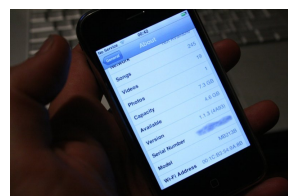
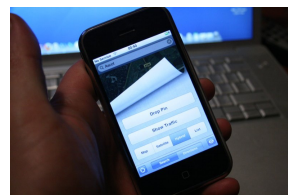
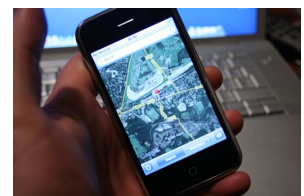
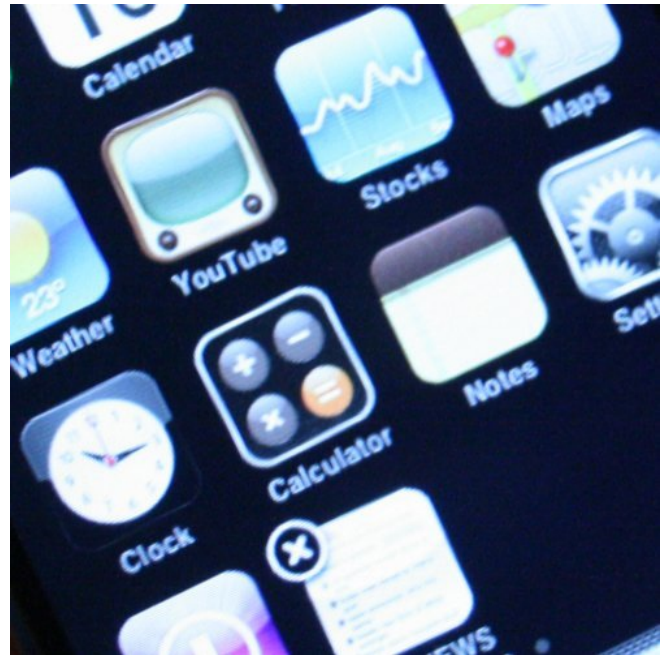
The first one you'll come across is the ability to customise the homepage. This is very similar to the BlackBerry interface that allows you to move the application logos into the order that you want them.

However, rather than simply offer more and more icons further down the screen, Apple has opted to have up to 9 pages that you scroll through from left to right dragging icons from one screen to another.

Holding down on an icon makes them all shiver and, like Apple's Dashboard application on its operating system, you can add and delete icons with ease.

The move, which is clearly pre-empting applications to come from developers following the publishing of the Software Developers Kit in February will also work with the newly announced Webclips, also apart of 1.1.3.

The new Webclips work in a similar way to how they do on Dashboard, allowing you to grab areas of a website to shortcut to. However, rather than



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allowing to cut a clip of the website, it really means that you can bookmark an area of the page to zoom to.

Why would you need this? Well it's the idea that if there is a widget that constantly updates, like Pocket-lint's Most Read box you can zoom to that area at the press of a button.

As a fan of the Webclips on Dashboard it's nice to have it here on the iPhone, and will save you having to find the latest information on your favourite sites.

Google mapping is probably the application that receives the most attention in the update.

Using mobile phone mast triangulation and the iPhone's wireless connectivity Apple say that the iPhone can now locate you without the need for a dedicated GPS chip or bolt-on.

The new software update adds two new buttons to the application. One to locate via the new technology and one that reveals the ability to look at maps, satellite or new to the app Google's hybrid mode that lets you view roads and satellite imagery at the same time.

In addition to the new views, you can also now drop a pin on the map and get directions directly to that location.

In use and its very easy and surprisingly accurate.

On the iPod functionality there are two new updates. Music lyrics, chapters, and language support in videos. While we can see the chapter elements would be useful in videos (there aren't that many videos out there at the moment) unless you are about to perform an impromptu concert or karaoke event then music lyrics aren't going to blow you away.

Finally, Apple has updated one of the phone

At a glance

What is it?

Software update for iPhone

Good

Google Maps enhancement, Webclips, SMS texting

Bad

Still no cut and paste, no video recording and no Bluetooth file sharing

Verdict

Should you upgrade if you are an iPhone user? Of course you should. But are the new features enough to want to make you rush out and buy the iPhone? Not really

Price Free

Our score

8/10

Your score

?/10

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functionalities. Yes that's right, it's a phone as well. Following customer feedback you can now send multiple SMS texts at the same time to multiple contacts.

Adding more contacts to your text is simple as pressing the plus button.

VERDICT

Should you upgrade if you are an iPhone user? Of course you should. But are the new features enough to want to make you rush out and buy the iPhone? Not really.

It might be the fifth software update in the handset's 200-day history, but there are still important updates we think Apple is missing here: cut and paste, Bluetooth file-sharing and video capabilities to name but a few.