ANDROID OR APPLE?

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Category: Observations

I've been using my HTC Magic phone for about nine months now and it seems time that I jotted down a few thoughts about how well it compares to an iPhone. Actually, I can't compare it to an iPhone as I don't have one, but I can compare it to my iPod Touch, which is similar.

Power. The first thing to say is that my phone is drastically under powered. It is fine when it has no apps running, but once I have email, twitter and a couple of other things going it slows right down and becomes very unresponsive. The iPod on the other hand is always much faster and slicker. Then again, the iPod can't multi-task, so it is never as stretched as the Magic. I should also note, that the Magic is a relatively old phone and that new Android phones are much more powerful.

Apps. There is definitely an app for anything I want to do on both the Magic and the iPod. There are fewer apps for the Magic, but there are still far more than anyone could ever use and still have time for a real life left over.

Interface. There is no doubt that the iPhone and iPod are things of beauty. They are wonderfully styled and look incredible. However, the user interface is no where near as friendly as the one on the Magic. I find it really irritating to have to do two or three screen touches to do something that can be done with one press of a button on the Magic. The iPod has wonderful flowing lines, but it would be a much better device if it had a menu button, a back button and a scroll wheel. I know I'm a Philistine, but give me the functionality of the Magic over the style of the iPod/iPhone any day of the week.

Integration. I find it really strange that the iPod can't easily be used as a USB drive when it is plugged into a computer. Having to use iTunes as a way of transferring material to the iPod is silly. Perhaps if I was a Mac user, it would make sense, but I'm not and it doesn't. On the other hand, the Magic can easily be mounted as a USB drive and there are a number of excellent apps for file management across a network. My email, calendar and task list are seamlessly synchronised with my Outlook set up at work - though I expect that the iPhone could do that too.

Other Thoughts. It is very easy to change the battery on the Magic - but somewhat less so on an iPhone/iPod. It's a personal thing, but I don't like the way that Apple tie you in to their products. The Magic also has a tie in to Google, but it is much less suffocating than the Apple link. I don't suppose anyone is about to produce a true open source phone operating system in the near future. I don't know how much it costs to get an iPhone on a UK contract these days, but my HTC Magic was free on a Â£25 pm contract.

I can understand why people love iPhones so much. They are remarkable machines. But in the end, my phone is a working too, not an *objet d'art*. The Magic is slow and I wish I could get a faster Android phone, but to me there is no choice, Android wins out over Apple, every time.