

HARDWARE

Google Maps and some tertiary-interest applications like weather. The only expansion to the available applications is the ability to access WebApps - small websites of minimal benefit.

As a personal organiser - if not a pocket computer - the iPhone is adequate. It has editable calendars, contacts and notes (which can be emailed) and it is fully compatible with Mac. If Palm still made Palm Pilots, this would be the Apple equivalent. Basic, but functional and easy to use.

Battery life is impressive; eight hour talk-time is double that of most WiFi-enabled, 3G phones. The iPhone battery, like that of the iPod, is not user-replaceable. Unlike previous iPod models, the iPhone battery is also soldered (and very fiddly) so replacement will cost a little more - at present it can be done for about \$45 in the US.

Costs

Here is where the UK iPhone comes unstuck. If you walk into an Apple or O2 store, you can buy the iPhone for £269. This is not expensive for the device, but it comes with the expectation that you will sign up to an 18-month contract with O2. The basic contract is £35/month and comes with 200 inclusive minutes or texts, but like all the iPhone contracts, it comes with unlimited data on the Edge network (not quite 3G) and



free The Cloud WiFi access.

If you don't have an existing contract, then the iPhone is probably worthwhile if you want a Mac-friendly PDA with the minimum amount of hassle, especially if you want an iPod as well, but as a 'smartphone' device, it is a limited and expensive overall package.

Crucially for photographers, it cannot be used to upload images (with WiFi, SFTP support and an expandable Unix OS, there's no reason it could not be developed to work with WiFi enabled cameras somehow), and does not support the 3G network that makes this tolerable on a mobile data plan.

Overall

With the iPhone, Apple has achieved something similar to the original Macintosh - taking what people understand about a device, and turning it around. There is no doubt that the iPhone is a successful multi-media product, but like the original Macintosh system it has some frustrating restrictions artificially placed upon it. Purely from a hardware angle, it could do more with what it has, and yet it has less than many competing products. Take away the phone functions, and the obligation to spend so much on a phone service, and it is a good value Apple-produced PDA - lots of storage, good basic apps, and it works with Mac perfectly.

The iPod Touch - a close relative - almost offers this (and twice the memory), but Apple has removed PDA-like applications such as the ability to add contacts and appointments.

Freelance photographers will find nothing 'new' in the iPhone, and the Camera Connector is unsupported by the current iPod range, so it can't even act as an image storage device. It essentially brings nothing new to the world of mobile computing, Visual Voicemail being the one unique feature that offers the potential to rise above conventional mobile phone usage, but it does bring a new level of user-friendly operation and integration.