

SCIENCE&TECHNOLOGY
Innovation, Meet Competition.

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When Apple released the hotly anticipated iPhone about a year ago, they knew they were stepping into a new business field which is very demanding. There are several other PDAs as well as Smart-Phones that could have made the iPhone seem lacking in comparison. However, the iPhone's sleek design along with its many features and applications have made it a complete sensation. Now, after a year of technological advances and a surge of other



iPhonewannabes, Apple released its second generation of the iPhone, dubbed the iPhone 3G, on the 11th of July. The next generation of iPhones have improved in many aspects, and the price drop has significantly increased its appeal.

The 8GB version of the iPhone costs \$199, and the 16GB version \$299. Although the price drops may leave many who purchased their iPhones shortly beforehand disappointed, it is simply the double-edged sword of purchasing gadgetry in a market that renders old models obsolete in relatively shorter periods.

The iPhone's second generation inherits the three basic functionalities its predecessor had; telephone, music, and internet access all in one handy device.

Most of the improvements made towards the next generation iPhones have been geared towards its internet access capabilities.

The 3G stands for 3rd Generation, referring to its broadband internet access, or internet over the air, but AT&T's High-Speed network is really called HSDPA

(High-Speed Downlink Packet Access). Although Apple continues to promote their increased bandwidth speed, this isn't exactly fast. Sprint and Verizon's networks use EVDO (Evolution-Data Optimized).

Both networks, 3G and EVDO, offer internet access over the air, but the gap between these two services is that AT&T's network hasn't been well deployed nationwide, and EVDO is a much more developed system. 3G has been left for the use of older cell phones, while EVDO is what many modern devices use nowadays.

However, Apple is promoting this because it is faster than the iPhone EDGE (the original iPhone over a slower network). It has to be brought into consideration that the iPhone 3G supports Wi-Fi access which can reach higher bandwidth speeds, but it still doesn't provide the anytime/anywhere internet access we crave.

Its design has also undergone some aesthetic improvements. The iPhone weighs in at 4.7 ounces, is 2.4 inches wide by 4.5 inches tall, and has a 0.48 inch depth. The screen uses Multi-Touch technology, allowing the use of more than one finger to control the device. The display screen is 3.5 inches, with 480-by-320-pixel resolution at 163 pixels per inch which is just wonderful when used in landscape or portrait orientation mode.

It comes with the options of a black or white back cover, which takes away the reflective surface on the back, but Apple still maintained the sensibilities with design that they have always been famous for. A 2.0 Megapixel camera accompanies the Apple logo on the back. It supports Bluetooth technology and even includes an Assisted Global Positioning System (GPS).

Although Apple puts its respectable name on the field Samsung's Instinct was designed to become the iPhones most direct competition. Sprint promotes the Instinct at \$129.99, and provides very similar features as the iPhone.

The Instinct weighs 4.4 ounces, is 2.17 inches wide by 4.57 inches tall, and has a 0.49 inch depth, which, compared to the iPhone, runs nearly identical specs. On the other finger, the Instinct has 3.1 inch diagonal display screen with 240-by-432 pixel resolution and uses Touch Flow Technology, which like the iPhone allows you swipe your finger on the screen, although only one finger at a time may be used.

On the good side, the screen is a Haptic Touch Screen meaning that when the finger meets the screen a visual response will let you confirm that a button, option, or field on the screen was pressed. Bluetooth, GPS location, and a 2.0 Megapixel camera that support video and camera functions are built-in with the phone.

One important feature the Instinct lacks compared to the iPhone is the Wi-Fi access. However, Sprint offers the EVDO network, which as previously mentioned, works at faster bandwidth speeds than AT&T's 3G network.

Of course, how can the Instinct be called an “iPhone-Killer” if it doesn’t support music file formats? Well, Samsung developers though about this and included a MicroSD card reader with the phone. Many phones currently support SD cards, MiniSD cards, and MicroSD cards readers and have built-in music playing software.

The SD card readers have been a supported feature by many phones over the years, and even though it is not as convenient as having built-in storage capacity for media files, it does provide portability, as these SD cards can be plugged in the computer to transfer, play, and manipulate media without the need of syncing cables or other syncing software installation. The Instinct comes with a 2GB MicroSD card, but also supports 8GB MicroSD cards.

These two phones can hardly be called phones as technology continues to evolve. The iPhone is widely recognizable, while other phones exist solely to be compared to the iPhone, but they usually fall under the category of Smart-Devices or Smart-Phones. Prices are dropping, and the capabilities the phones support make them more appealing every day. Standalone PDAs have become obsolete as we now see that having an agenda with scheduling and memos capabilities are simply one of many features of most Smart-Phones. Apple has taken giant steps by entering the mobile phone market, but it took baby steps when upgrading the next generation of the iPhone. Other popular and advanced mobile phone companies, such as Samsung or HTC, didn’t have to struggle much to provide phones similar to the iPhone. With all this competition occurring during the first half of the year, we should be expecting more from Apple and from companies that have been marked as competition.

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