

*'Tis the season to be jolly...
Ha ha ha ha ha... ha ha ha ha. Told you so!*

Microsoft investigates Windows 7 'screen of death'

12.01.09 BBC News

Windows 7 was released in October.

Microsoft has confirmed that it is investigating a problem described as the "black screen of death," which affects its latest operating system.

The error means that users of Windows 7 see a totally black screen after logging on to the system.

The firm said it was looking into reports that suggest its latest security update, issued on 10 November, was the cause the problem.

Reports suggest the flaw also affects Vista, XP and other systems.

Software firm Prevx, which has issued a fix for the problem, says "millions" of people may be affected.

"Users have resorted to reloading Windows as a last ditch effort to fix the problem," the firm's David Kennerley wrote in a blog post.

"We hope we can help a good many of you avoid the need to reload."

Unknown problem

The firm said its fix did not work in all cases.

"There can be many causes," said Mr Kennerley.

"But if your black screen woes began in the last two weeks after a Windows update or after running any security program (including Prevx) to remove malware during this time then this fix will have a high probability of working."

Mr Kennerly said the firm had identified "at least 10 different scenarios which will trigger the same black screen conditions".

"These appear to have been around for years now," he said.

The firm reports that the problem affects editions of Windows 7, Vista, XP, NT, and Windows 2000.

Microsoft said that people who are affected by the problem should contact its customer service line.

A spokesperson said that the reports did "not match any known issues" documented by the firm.

It has not issued a fix for the problem, which causes the desktop, task bar, system tray and side bar to disappear, according to reports.

The "black screen of death" moniker is a play on the "blue screen of death," which appears when Microsoft operating systems crash.

Apple tablet: One tech gadget for all

The rumored and much-hyped tablet computer from Apple could lay waste to the markets for countless other gadgets.



11.16.09

David Goldman, CNNMoney.com

Apple's lips are sealed about its widely rumored tablet computer, but technology experts are giddy about the device, already exclaiming it will be the gadget to end all gadgets.

Executives at Apple never discuss products that are in the works, so there's no confirmation that the thing even exists. But rumors are circulating that Steve Jobs and Co. have designed a magazine-sized, touch-screen, hand-held, all-in-one device that is half-iPhone, half-Macintosh computer.

It's supposedly going to make its debut in the next few months, and you can have it for the low, low price of \$600. Or \$800. Maybe \$1,000. No one's really sure.

If the rumors are true, the tablet will be able to do basically everything a gadget could possibly do. It's an e-reader, a gaming device, and a music player. You can watch TV and movies on it and surf the Internet (or so we've heard). And it will have thousands of third-party apps available for it ... or maybe it will run Mac OS X. That's all still unknown.

Cooler device ... ever? Maybe. Some analysts are channeling their inner-Frodo, saying the Apple tablet will be the one gadget to rule them all.

"This will be the next big thing," said Laura DiDio, principal analyst at ITIC. "Apple is going to wow everybody with the tablet."

Any time Steve Jobs gets on stage, the expectations are incredibly high, but they are especially lofty for the tablet. Analysts and investors are saying that this device could revolutionize the handheld world in the same way the iPhone changed the smartphone market.

"The tablet will change the game, because Apple will throw down the gauntlet at the competitors, and force them to follow along," DiDio said.

According to DiDio, the tablet will have a 10-inch to 12-inch screen and a high-end graphics card that will enable stunning resolution -- even more so than the iPhone and iPod Touch. She said the device will come in several different models that offer varieties of Internet connections, such as Wi-Fi or 3G, perhaps through a contract with AT&T.

Another cool feature will be the Web cam, which business travelers will be able to use for video conferencing on the go, DiDio said.

Some analysts say all of those features will kill other single-function handheld devices, making the Apple tablet the go-to handheld device for computing, Internet browsing, reading, gaming and entertainment.

lala

Apple reportedly buys Lala music service

12.04.09
Philip Michaels, Macworld.com

Apple took what could be a step toward adding a subscription-based music services to its offerings Friday when it bought Lala, a company that delivers music via the Web to its users.

Rumors circulated around the Web throughout Friday that Apple was in talks to buy Lala. The New York Times confirmed the purchase late Friday, citing a person with knowledge of the deal.

The Wall Street Journal also reported the Lala purchase as a done deal. "Apple buys smaller technology companies from time to time and we generally do not comment on our purpose or plan," Apple spokesman Steve Dowling told the Journal.

Neither the Times nor the Journal could reach Lala representatives to confirm the deal.

The Lala music service could now be owned by Apple, according to a New York Times report.

Based in Palo Alto, Calif., Lala lets users listen to a catalog of around 8 million songs for free through the Web. According to Lala's site, users can pay 10 cents for unlimited plays of a song; they can also download an MP3 version for 89 cents. The MP3s come without digital-rights management restrictions, making them compatible with iTunes and Windows Media Player.

If Lala is now part of the Apple fold, it would mark a departure from the approach that Apple has taken to music since launching the iTunes Store in 2003. The iTunes Store has always offered music on an a la carte basis, with users paying to download specific tracks and albums. Apple executives—including CEO Steve Jobs—have repeatedly argued that customers like to own their music. "Customers don't seem to be interested in [subscription-based music services]," Jobs told Reuters in an April 2007 interview. "The subscription model has failed so far."

More than two years later, that may no longer be the case. While the iTunes Store continues to thrive—the online store became the

nation's top music retailer in 2008—subscription-based services like Rhapsody (which even offers an iPhone app) and Spotify in Europe are carving out their own share of the digital music market. Apple's interest in Lala could be a sign that the company wants to expand beyond its pay-per-download approach to music.



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Apple Tablet

"Apple will come out with the tablet and blow everyone away," said Dan Ackerman, senior editor at CNET. "Instead of taking along a Kindle and an iPod, that [tablet] could become the device you carry with you."

The cheaply priced netbook market may also take a hit when the tablet comes out. Apple typically prices their products higher than competitors, because they install top-of-the-line hardware, but DiDio said Apple learned from its mistake of pricing the original iPhone at \$599, pricing out many potential customers.

"The Tablet will be awesome, and my guess is that it will be an instant hit for people who loved Kindles and people who want netbooks," said David Wertheimer, executive director of the University of Southern California's Entertainment Technology Center.

Wertheimer said he finds it hard to comprehend how the tablet will replace all other on-the-go tech products. "But then again, what I can't imagine, Steve Jobs often can," he added.

...Or the fizzle may fail. Not everyone thinks the Apple tablet will be the gadget to end all gadgets.

"What we've found in the past with these multi-function devices is that they're better for ad-hoc purposes, like quick and dirty tasks," said Zeus Kerravala, an analyst with Yankee Group. "They're not for any prolonged, high-performance use."

For instance, smartphones have cameras for quick snapshots, but when you go on vacation, you're probably going to want your digital camera to come along with you for high-quality photos.

Kerravala said the same logic applies to the tablet's other functions, including its e-reading capability: "If you want to sit and read a book, the ergonomics of a device that's specifically designed for reading are going to be better."

Similarly, only 3% of people whose cell phones can play music say they use their phone as their primary music player, according to a Yankee Group study. Even if it means carrying around two devices, an MP3 player is bound to have a better user experience than a multi-function cell phone.

That doesn't mean the Apple tablet -- if it exists -- won't be cool. But you may want to hang onto your iPod, Kindle, Nintendo DS, portable DVD player and laptop for a while.

Intel Makes Leap in Device to Aid Impaired Readers

11.18.09
Walter S. Mossberg,
Wall Street Journal



Despite all of the advances in digital technology, too few high-tech products have emerged to help the blind read books or other paper documents, or to make reading such texts easier for people with impaired vision or language-related learning disabilities.

A few years back, a breakthrough was made with text-to-speech software that could be installed on a specific mobile phone, but with limitations due to the phone's small screen and buttons, and restricted processor power.

Now, Intel the giant chip maker, is attacking this problem with a new product: the Intel Reader. It's a chunky, book-size device with a computer-grade processor and a large, forward-facing screen that can be viewed easily while its downward-facing camera is shooting text for translation into audio and giant text. It also has raised buttons that are easy to find via touch.

I've been testing the Intel Reader with books, newspapers, magazines, bank statements, menus and even cereal boxes. My results were decidedly mixed. In some cases, especially with books and certain magazine articles, it worked pretty well, often almost perfectly. In others, it did a poor job. I also found that it takes a lot of practice to learn how to aim the Reader's camera properly.

However, an important caveat is in order. I have full, normal vision and no learning disabilities, so I can't put myself in the

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Intel Device to Aid Impaired Readers

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place of someone who is unable to read paper documents, or who struggles to do so. For them, the limitations I found in this product might easily pale when compared with its liberating benefits. More information is at reader.intel.com.

When it worked as promised, the Intel Reader was a delight. It would start reading the text to me in under a minute, while displaying the words on the 4.3-inch screen in an easily adjusted font size that could allow as little as one word to fill the display. I also could switch to a view of the photo of the whole page, and zoom in to focus on a portion of the text. It holds multiple texts and has an easy interface with large menus that the machine can read to you.

But the Reader is relatively big and expensive. It costs a whopping \$1,500 and is available from only a limited number of retailers who specialize in products for special-needs consumers. By contrast, the competing cellphone product, called the KNFB mobile reader, is much smaller because it uses a standard Nokia (NOK) mobile phone. It can be purchased through Amazon.com (AMZN), also for \$1,500.

Five reasons to partition a disk

Joe Kissell, Macworld.com

Here are a few situations when it's worth it to split up your hard disk.

When you get a new Mac, it comes with one startup drive (a hard disk or, in a few cases, a solid-state disk) named "Macintosh HD." This arrangement is perfectly fine for most of us, but it's not your only option. If the need arises, you can split that disk up. Any internal (IDE or SATA) or external (FireWire, USB, or eSATA) disk can be reorganized into one or more volumes called partitions.

Each partition appears on your Desktop as an independent disk, and you can even mix and match formatting methods from one partition to the next on the same disk. You can use Disk Utility (found in `/Applications/Utilities`) to repartition a drive, although doing so normally requires erasing the entire drive in the process. You can also choose from several third-party utilities, such as Prosoft Engi-



neering's \$99 Drive Genius 2 and Coriolis System's \$45 iPartition that can change a drive's partitioning without erasing it.

I know some people who have partitioned their Macs' hard drives for decades, but can't really give a good reason for doing it. Partitioning can waste space and even decrease your hard drive's performance. So why would you ever bother? Here are five good reasons:

1. To switch between versions of OS X

If your Mac is capable of running multiple versions of OS X (for example, you have an early Intel-based iMac that can run Tiger, Leopard, or Snow Leopard), you can partition your drive so that you can use more than one. Divide your disk into one partition for each version of OS X, and then install the operating systems separately. When you need to run a different version of the operating system—say, for testing, or to use older software that won't run under a newer OS—open the Startup Disk pane of System Preferences, select the partition you want, and click on Restart.

2. To use Boot Camp

If you use Boot Camp Assistant (built into OS X 10.5 Leopard and later) to run Windows on your Mac, it creates a special partition just for your Windows installation. Unfortunately, Boot Camp Assistant won't work if your disk is already partitioned, so if you intend to use Boot Camp, you'll have to stick to just two partitions (one each for Windows and OS X).

3. To repair disk problems

If your startup volume develops disk errors, you may need to run a repair program (such as Disk Utility) from another volume in order to fix them. That other volume could be an external hard drive or a bootable DVD. But another option is to keep a small partition on your main disk that includes a bootable copy of OS X and a repair utility or two. When trouble strikes, you can boot up from this volume and fix some problems without having any secondary media at all.

4. To share your iPhoto library

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If you want to share a single iPhoto library between two or more user accounts on the same Mac, one way to do so, per Apple's advice, is to move it to a volume where ownership is ignored. That can't be your main startup volume, but it could be an external disk—or another partition of your internal disk.

5. To manage backups efficiently

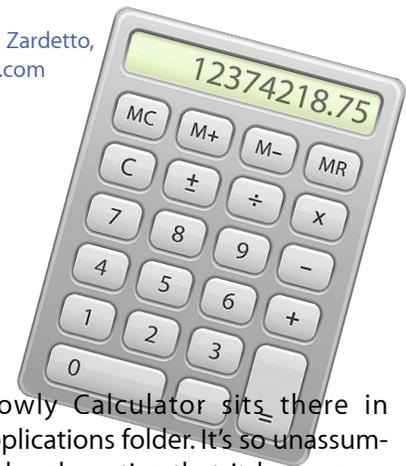
I recommend maintaining two kinds of backups. The first is bootable duplicates of your entire disk, using a program such as Bombich Software's Carbon Copy Cloner (donation requested) or Shirt Pocket Software's \$28 SuperDuper!. The second is versioned backups (which store copies of your files as they appeared at many points in time) using Apple's built-in Time Machine or any of numerous other backup utilities. You don't need to keep two different hard drives around for your two types of backup. Instead, use partitions. For example, if you have a 1TB internal disk, you could buy a single 2TB external drive, divide it into two 1TB partitions, and then put your bootable duplicate on one while using the other for versioned backups.

Disk Utility lets you divide one physical disk into multiple partitions.

Ten quick Calculator tricks

Here's how to get the most out of Apple's built-in tool

by Sharon Zardetto,
Macworld.com



The lowly Calculator sits there in your Applications folder. It's so unassuming you barely notice that it has menus and little interface details that make it not quite so lowly after all. These tips work for the Basic calculator. Many also work for the Scientific and Programmer versions available through the Calculator's View menu.

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Open minimized windows in current space in Snow Leopard

11.17.09
Rob Griffiths, Macworld.com

Snow Leopard changed a lot of small things in the system, and not all of these were detailed by Apple. One such change occurs when you use minimized windows with Spaces (Apple's tool to create virtual desktops). In OS X 10.5, when releasing (unminimizing just sounds so...wrong) a minimized window from the Dock, it would spring back into whatever Space it started on, switching to that Space as it activated the newly-released window.

While this may be desired behavior most of the time, it could be jarring if you'd gotten involved in another Space, and suddenly found yourself looking at your released window in a totally different Space.

In 10.6, it seems that things still work as they did in 10.5, at least when you click on a minimized window's Dock icon. Note that this tip only applies if you have not implemented Snow Leopard's new "minimize into application icon" feature—that is, your minimized windows still show up on the right-hand side of the Dock.

Here's the trick: Command-click on a minimized window in the Dock, and it will be released into the current Space instead of into its originating Space. Snow Leopard makes both behaviors available, hopefully satisfying the needs of anyone who minimizes windows to the right-hand side of the Dock. I'm not aware, though, of any way to toggle the behavior of click and Command-click, so that you could release a minimized window into the current Space with a single click.

Use Tab key in Snow Leopard keyboard shortcuts

11.19.09
Rob Griffiths, Macworld.com

Among the many improvements in Snow Leopard is the ability to use the Tab key in user-created keyboard shortcuts.

In OS X 10.5, pressing the Tab key while creating keyboard shortcuts (in the Keyboard Shortcuts tab of the Keyboard & Mouse System Preferences panel) didn't work; the system would just beep and not accept the Tab key.

Snow Leopard changes all that; you can now use the Tab key in any combination with the Shift, Control, Command, and Option keys. For example, you could change the Exposé All Windows activation keystroke to Option-Tab, which might make sense if you're used to using Command-Tab to switch applications and want to have a similarly-assigned shortcut for Exposé.

Just open the Keyboard Shortcuts tab of the Keyboard System Preferences panel, select the Exposé & Spaces entry in the left-hand column, then click on the All Windows entry below Exposé in the right-hand column. Double-click on the right-hand side of that entry (it will probably say F9 by default), then just press Option-Tab, and you're done.

This is but one contrived example, of course. The bigger picture is that you can now use the Tab key in your user-defined shortcuts, which opens up a number of additional keyboard combinations. If you're creating something that's system-wide, though, keep in mind that other applications may already be using the Tab key in their own shortcuts. In Safari, for instance, Control-Tab (and Shift-Control-Tab) are already used to switch between tabs.

Get better prints Four steps to getting the best results from your inkjet printer

11.12.09
Dave Johnson & Kelly Turner, Macworld.com

No matter how much you enjoy taking digital photos and sharing them electronically, there's something special about photos that you hold in your hand. These days, it's popular to let someone else make prints for you—be it the neighborhood camera store, Wal-Mart, or an online photo service like Shutterfly. But there are advantages to printing your photos. For one thing, you don't have to wait for prints to arrive in the mail. And if a print doesn't come out the way you'd

like, you can adjust the image and print again without having to send it off to someone else. (If you're seeing strange lines or bad colors, see our printer troubleshooting guide.)

Here are some tips for getting the best results from your inkjet printer.

Start with enough pixels

This probably isn't a big concern for photos you take with your digital camera; most modern digital cameras offer more than enough resolution to make prints of any size you'd want. But if you get an image file from someone else—especially through e-mail—you should check the resolution before you print it. Often, shared photos are resized to take up less space, and that can result in pixelated prints.

If you're ordering prints online from iPhoto, the program will let you know if there aren't enough pixels for a smooth print. But you won't get the same heads-up when printing to your inkjet printer, so you'll want to double check the image size. First, decide what print size you want. Then multiply the longest side by 200. The resulting number represents the minimal number of pixels the longest side of your image needs to have. If you're trying to make an 8-by-10-inch print, for example, the longest side of the picture should be 2000 pixels or more. If it's not, then you should consider printing it at a smaller size.

In iPhoto, you can see an image's pixel dimensions in the Information pane.

To determine the size for photos not in iPhoto, open the folder that contains the photo and press Command-I to open a Get Info window. You'll see the pixel dimensions listed under the More Info heading.

Crop to Size

The next step is to crop the image to the correct aspect ratio. Every common print size—such as 4 by 6, 5 by 7, and 8 by 10—has slightly different proportions. And they're all different from the standard digital photo aspect ratio. So if you don't crop your photo ahead of time, you might end up printing a different part of the image than you expected.

If you're in iPhoto, you can use the editing pane's Crop tool. But keep in mind that



changes you make here are reflected everywhere the image appears—including books, calendars, prints, and smart albums. A better option is to use the resizing tool included in iPhoto's Print dialog box.

Select the photo from your library and choose File -> Print. Choose a print template (use Standard for basic borderless prints), and then make the appropriate selections from the Paper Size and Print Size menus. This tells iPhoto what you're trying to accomplish so it uses the correct aspect ratio. Next, click Customize to adjust how your image is cropped. In the resulting screen, click once on your image and use the zoom slider to determine how much of the image appears and the hand tool to reposition the photo within the frame.

To crop a photo for a specific print size, first press Command-P, and then choose the correct paper and print size from the Print dialog box.

Use the zoom slider (seen at the top of the image) in the Customize pane to crop the photo for the selected print size.

Sharpen the Image

The Print window also lets you apply a little extra sharpening right before you print.

Most of the time, digital photos will benefit from a small amount of sharpening before you print them. If your digital camera has a setting to automatically sharpen your images when they're taken, you might want to experiment with that and see if you like the effect. In general, many cameras take slightly better pictures with the sharpening set to the lowest level other than zero, such as +1.

If your camera doesn't have its own sharpening filter, or if you choose not to use it, then apply a small amount of sharpening before you start printing. Again, while you can do this within iPhoto's editing pane, your changes will apply to every instance of that photo. If that's not what you want, you can also perform this task right before printing. From the Customize pane of the Print window, click once of the photo and then click the Adjust button. Adjust the Sharpness slider to get the effect you want, and then choose Print. Your original image will remain untouched.



Keep Your Printer Happy

Now you're ready to print. You'll typically get the most reliable results by using the paper and ink recommended by your printer's manufacturer. If you have an Epson printer, for instance, use Epson paper and Epson ink. The combination might cost a bit more, but all those components are engineered to work together and the results are noticeably better than what you get from less expensive alternatives.

That said, there are a number of high-quality third-party photo papers that offer interesting textures and professional finishes, if you're willing to experiment (see our roundup of unusual papers for some of our favorites). You'll likely spend a bit more money and time working with these papers, but the results can be worth it.

Be sure to set the printer settings to reflect the kind of paper you've loaded in your printer, and, if you have a choice, set the printer for quality, not print speed.



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Ten quick Calculator tricks

1. Copy and paste numbers

Need to include a quick calculation in an e-mail message? Because you can't select anything in the Calculator display, it's easy to forget you can still use Copy and Paste commands with it. The Copy command (Command-C or Edit -> Copy) always grabs the currently displayed number and places it on the Clipboard so you can use it elsewhere. And, if you've copied a number from someplace else, just use Paste (Command-V or Edit -> Paste) when the Calculator's open to insert the number in the Calculator field. (Many OS versions ago, you could paste in a calculation like $17*34$, and it would appear in Calculator as if you had clicked those keys; now that calculation pastes in as the number 1734.)

2. Pick your precision

If kiwis are selling 3 for \$5, does one of them cost \$1.66667? When you don't need 15-decimal place precision, use the View menu's Decimal Places submenu to specify how many digits you want displayed.

The displayed number is rounded, not truncated, so 1.66667 becomes 1.67. The actual number is stored internally, however, so you can continue with a calculation that uses the true number instead of the rounded one.

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3. Convert units of measure

You may never have to convert hectares to acres, or inches of mercury to pounds per square inch, but the Convert menu provides more mundane changes, too. For example, use it to convert metric units to any of the stubbornly held standard measurements the U.S. uses. Enter a number (or work with the one already there from a calculation) and then choose a category from the menu—Length, for example. Use the pop-up menus in the sheet that appears to specify what you're converting to and from. The Calculator displays the answer in the chosen units.

4. Repeat the last calculation

With the Calculator's hidden "repeat the last operation" function, it's a cinch to compute something like short-term compound interest. Start with 1200 dollars times 1.06 for the first year's 6 percent return and you get 1272. Just hit Return again, and the number is multiplied by 1.06 again; another press of Return gives you the third-year total of 1429.22.

Alternatively, you can enter numbers in between the repeated operation. So, after the first calculation is done, you can enter 1500 and press Return to get that number multiplied by 1.06.

5. Use the paper tape

The paper tape window not only serves as a quick reference, it can also be printed or saved. This shows the result of the special "repeat last" function, which uses repeated clicks of the equal sign (=) key to perform the same operation—*1.06 was entered only once.

The Window -> Show Paper Tape command opens a small window that shows each of your calculations as soon as you press Return or click on the equal sign (=) key. This lets you check for incorrectly entered numbers. If you realize you want to see your history only after the fact, no problem: Any time you open the paper tape, you'll see everything you've done since you opened the Calculator for the

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Ten quick Calculator tricks

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current number-crunching session. If you need a copy of the paper tape, choose File -> Save Tape As or File -> Print Tape. You can also select any part of its display and copy out the information.

6. Store a number

You're figuring out the cost of tiling the kitchen, with and without the pantry closet, and maybe the back hallway, too. You don't have to re-enter the \$6.47-per-square-foot cost of the tile for the three different calculations.

Enter 6.47 and press M+ to put it into memory. Then, calculate the cost of each area's tile by multiplying the square footage by the stored tile price, retrieved with a press of the Memory Recall (MR) button. Enter 14*16*MR for one cost, 6*7*MR for the next, and 2.5*3.5*MR for the last.

7. Delete a digit

If you type or click the wrong number, there's no need to clear everything by clicking on Calculator's C (for "clear") key or pressing C on your keyboard. (If you have a full Apple keyboard, you can also use the key labeled Clear.) Press Delete on your keyboard to erase the last digit you entered; press it multiple times to continue erasing digits. (The Forward Delete key doesn't work for this.)

8. Quickly switch calculators

Click on the Calculator's Zoom button (the green one of the three buttons in the upper left of its window) to cycle through the three kinds of calculators—Basic, Scientific, and Programmer—instead of using the commands in the View menu.

9. Easily change a mistake

If you enter the wrong operator by mistake—pressing the plus sign (+), say, instead of the minus sign (-)—just press the correct one next. Calculator will ignore the first operator.

10. Specify a negative number

Normally, you can't calculate 4 multiplied by negative 5, because 4*-5 is assumed to be a typo and is treated as 4-5. But you can reverse the "negativity" of a

number you just entered by clicking on the Calculator's plus-or-minus key. (It's the key with a plus sign on top of a minus sign. You'll find it to the right of the C key.) So, press 4*5 and then, while the 5 is displayed, click on the plus-or-minus key to make it negative. Press Return to see the answer: -20.

Go figure!



T-Mobile

The iPhone on T-Mobile: Why not?

12.01.09
Daniel Ionescu PC World

AT&T's exclusive hold on the iPhone is coming to an end, and speculation is bubbling as to which U.S. carrier will get Apple's smartphone next. Verizon has been hot tipped to take over the iPhone, but the latest iPhone-trashing campaign for the Motorola Droid could mean it's not going to happen. Now, a new carrier has emerged as a possible contender: T-Mobile. Yes, T-Mobile.

Analyst Dough Reid tells The Street that he sees T-Mobile as a potential home for the iPhone. Like AT&T, T-Mobile is a GSM carrier, though T-Mobile is a much smaller company. Would users be willing to make the move to a smaller company? We may find out, according to Reid.

Reid told The Street: "Apple wants to move away from exclusivity; T-Mobile would achieve this for Apple in the U.S." And it makes sense. Apple wouldn't have to manufacture a different iPhone to run on T-Mobile's network, as the GSM version of the iPhone that runs on AT&T would work. To offer the iPhone on Verizon's network, Apple would have to manufacture a new device.

However, iPhone exclusivity on T-Mobile is doubtful. AT&T has around 71 million customers while T-Mobile has only half as many users. It would make sense for Apple to sell the iPhone on both AT&T and T-Mobile, rather than just pick one single carrier.

Users dissatisfied with AT&T's network could just move to T-Mobile, as long as they are in the coverage area. And so, Apple wouldn't have to manufacture different iPhone hardware, which won't be of much use to sell outside the U.S. anyway, because of different network standards.

The model for selling the iPhone on more than one carrier comes from outside the U.S. also. O2, now the largest carrier in the U.K., had the iPhone exclusivity until a month ago. Orange U.K. then sold 30,000 iPhones in the first weekend of carrying the device, and Vodafone will sell the iPhone starting January. In addition, T-Mobile UK and Orange are to merge, which will create the largest UK network, also carrying the iPhone. T-Mobile in Germany also sells the iPhone.

With the foreign examples as a precedent, the multi-carrier iPhone model is out there. Whether Apple will bring home this model though, it is yet to be seen.



That's it for 2009!



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