

Apple's New iOS 6 Not So Revolutionary



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It's hard not to be excited about a new Apple release while the company is hyping it onstage. Apple knows just the right buttons to push to excite the crowd, and it did just that at its Worldwide Developers Conference (WWDC) 2012 yesterday (June 11) Afterward, though, looking at the list of updates in iOS 6 can be a bit disappointing.

Most of the updates were made to apps that ship with iOS6, but not to the underlying operating system (OS) itself. Most of the functionality in iOS 6 could be done through simple updates to each of the affected apps, making it feel more like a 5.2 than a 6.0 release. And some apps from other companies (or features of Android) already do much of the same.

Maps

Apple is dumping its previous Google-provided Maps app in favor of one that it created. The new app adds turn-by-turn navigation and essentially replicates Google's recently updated app.

Major update? NO

Siri

The virtual assistant available on the iPhone 4S makes for good commercials, but hasn't been all that useful. iOS 6 allows Siri to work on the new iPad and gives it improved knowledge about sports, movies and restaurants. It's not so different from Android's Voice Actions, though Siri's ability to open apps is a nice addition.

Major update? MAYBE

Shared Photo Stream

Allows you to share photos from your photo stream with others whom you specify, an extended feature of the Photos app. [[Facebook Camera App Focuses on What Matters](#)]

Major update? NO

Passbook

A new app that stores information and QR codes for tickets, reward cards and coupons, keeping all the information in one handy, scannable app. Similar functionality is available through the Key Ring app for iPhone and Android phones.

Major update? NO

FaceTime

The app now provides face-to-face video chat not only when your device is connected to Wi-Fi, but through a cellular data connection as well. The same can be done through the Skype app.

Major update? NO

Phone

The Phone app was extended with options allowing you to reply with a message if you're in the middle of a meeting, or to remind you to call someone when you leave the current location.

Major update? NO

Mail

Mail was updated with "VIP," which highlights messages in your inbox from people you designate. This is very similar to Google's Gmail Priority Inbox, part of the Gmail app on iOS and Android.

Major update? NO

Safari

The upgrade extends the Reading Lists feature to save articles for offline reading, so users can bookmark and read later even without a data connection (similar to the Pocket and Instapaper apps). In addition, Smart App Banners notify you when a site you are browsing has an app available, a feature many websites already provide.

Major update? NO

Accessibility

Allows the ability to restrict access or prevent accidental taps. Especially useful when you don't want users to exit an app or launch other apps. It's a bit similar to the Kyte app for Android devices, though that is specifically targeted at restricting access for children.

Major update? YES

Do Not Disturb

Disables audible and visual notifications without disabling your communication apps, perfect for avoiding disruptions during a meeting or while at the theater. It's similar to Silent Mode in Android.

Major update? MAYBE

Facebook Integration

Being able to share statuses, images and maps with Facebook is built in to many apps on iOS and Android, but integration in the OS now makes it available to all iOS 6 apps. [[New Facebook Rules to Cut 'Surprise' Sharing by Apps](#)]

Major update? YES

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