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Foreword

Do you need a smartphone? To answer this question, we should know why these phones are called smartphones. Smartphones are different from traditional phones in the features they offer. You no longer have to carry your laptop or sit the entire day in front of your desktop computer to perform all the tasks that you need to do. Get all the info you need here.



Smart Phones

The missing guide for boring hand phone users

Chapter 1:

Do you need a smartphone?

Smartphones enable us to do a lot of things with it, which is why they are called smartphones. Smartphones are smart because of the operating systems they carry. Smartphones can therefore do things more quickly than their standard mobile phone and PDA precursors. Owning a smartphone could enhance your lifestyle in the following ways:

Keeping you organized. It can track important client information; it can function as a personal organizer, and keep track of task lists.

Flexible working. The sync function on the smartphone allows you to sync with your desktop, which means you can store, view, and work on documents directly on your handheld.

Always in touch. Emails can be received and responded to while you're on the move. Now considerably more data can be received and transmitted via a smartphone.

Multimedia Services. This means your entertainment goes with you, which include music, pictures, videos and movies.

Instant access to the web. New information is always available to you. You could have immediate access to maps, news coverage, weather reports and traffic information.

The smartphone might not be something that anyone truly needs, and it could be seen as a luxury to have all these tools at your fingertips. However the luxuries which smartphones offer, could contribute in enhancing your career, help you to not feel detached from social media and will make your life a whole lot easier.



Chapter 2:

How to compare different types of smartphones.

It is important to do some research before buying a phone. There are different features to consider. To ensure the phone has everything you need you could do some simple hands-on tests.

Call quality could be tested by making a few test calls. Take note of static, tinny voices or any other interference.

The phone design determines much of the phones usability and features. Test different designs in real-life before you make a choice, since each design has unique benefits.

The mobile operating system you choose will greatly affect the capabilities of your phone. Familiarize yourself with all the operating systems before settling on one. The most popular operating systems are Google's Android OS (found on different phones), iOS (found only on iPhone) and BlackBerry OS (found on BlackBerrys of various designs)

The size of the screen should be big enough to utilize the phone's features. Viewing quality can be very different on different phones. To enable you to make text and graphics easily viewable your phone should allow you to adjust the contrast and backlight settings.

Before choosing a touchscreen device or a regular keypad, try touchscreen first, since it can take some time getting used to.

Camera specs would be important to consider if you intend to take a lot of pictures (the higher the resolution the better). To enable you to take good quality pictures indoors or at night you need to ensure the phone has a flash. If video is important to you, make sure that the operating system provides an easy way to upload your videos to Facebook or You Tube.

A great deal of smartphones functionality relies on the internet, so pay attention to how they access the internet. Avoid buying a phone that does not support Wi-fi, since it is usually standard on smart phones.

Chapter 3:

Enhance your business with smartphones.

The smartphone device has evolved into a texting, tweeting, multi-tasking productivity and entertainment gadget, which offers a wide range of possibilities to enhance your business.

The smartphone is transforming the way that people-customers, partners, investors- interact with the business.

There are multiple ways that you could capitalize on the growing popularity of the use of the smartphone, to grow your business..

Text messaging: Most people have their phones with them all the time and use their phones for texting rather than making phone calls. You have the opportunity to use text messages to advertise your products and customers can read your messages anywhere they go.

The best part is that getting into social media is very cheap.

Use of Apps: Smartphone apps have been created to solve a problem, increase productivity and to offer an intrinsic benefit. Even if you don't write the apps there are a lot off apps that could help your business.

For example people often use an app when they travel to find restaurants, hotels, and other destinations. If you have an idea for an app there are plenty of companies who can help you to develop an app for your idea for you to sell or offer for free.

Your website should be compatible with the smartphone: Ensure that your website is user-friendly when viewed on a smartphone.

You'll reach far more mobile users if you create a mobile-enabled version of your site's main content. It's a good idea to provide links from your mobile version to your full site.

Social networking: It has been proven that more people access social media via smartphones than with their desktop computers. By creating a presence on websites like LinkedIn,

Facebook and Twitter you can expand your reach and increase awareness of your brand.

QR codes: QR codes make it easy for customers to find a company's website, contact support or get a map to their store. With the right app any smartphone becomes a QR reader. QR codes take the place of having to type in a website address.

Mobile Marketing enables you to connect with new customers and to add value for your current customers.

Chapter 4:

Choosing the right smart phone operating system.

Choosing the right smartphone operating system is no easy task. Some of the mobile operating systems on the market are Android, Windows Phone 7 and iOS. While they might seem the same, they are very, very different. Your choice of operating systems affects the look and feel of your phone and the applications that it's able to run.

Google's Android operating system has been designed to be used on phones made by many manufacturers, including Motorola, HTC, Samsung, Sony and LG. This means there are many different choices in terms of sizes, shapes, features and colors.

To get the best out of the Android platform you should use Google's Gmail, docs and many of Google's other free Cloud services. Application developers are increasingly making their applications available on the Android platform.

A large proportion of the applications is free. The lack of consistency between different Android devices, delays in software updates and difficulties in ease of use are some of the negatives mentioned.

Windows 7 is still very new on the market and hence has fewer users than iOS and Android. Integrated into Windows Phone is Xbox live, Microsoft Office and access to 40 000 + applications from Windows

Phone Marketplace. For users of Xbox Live avatar, Windows 7 is a great operating system.

iOS (developed by Apple) can only be found running on Apple's own devices such as their smartphones (iPhone) , tablets (iPad) and portable music players (iPod Touch). If it is a ton of options you're looking for, when it comes to software on your smart phone, Apple's App Store offers over 500 000 applications. For new smartphone users iOS is often said to be the easiest operating system to pick up.



Chapter 5:

Basic features of smartphones in the market:

- a) The most defining feature of smartphones is email. Users now have access to both corporate and personal email. Lotus Notes or Microsoft's Exchange ActiveSync protocol handle corporate email, by "pushing" email, calendar, contact and to do items on your phone within couple of seconds of their arrival to the company's server.
- b) A strong focus for smartphones is media capabilities. A media player is preloaded on the mobile phone. Some smartphones focus on online media where the basic music player is combined with an integrated Amazon MP 3. This allows the customer to buy songs over the air.
- c) Every smartphone has a mobile app store that allows total beginners to download, install, and remove apps. Everything from looking up the latest news to displaying animated cartoons can be done by the use of apps.
- d) Each phone has a specific operating system. This is the foundation upon which all the phone's software is built. The operating system is preloaded, so you can't choose a different system for your phone than the one that is preloaded.
- e) A camera is now an integral part of the smartphone. No more carrying around a separate camera, since on some phones they are nearly as good as digital cameras.

f) Storage capacity of smartphones has been increased to store photos, music, and videos. Memory cards are used to expand the phone's storage as well as to enable easy content transfer between two phones, bypassing a computer.

g) A phone without a battery is of no use. Phone batteries have a limited number of charge and discharge cycles. Being tiny laptops, smartphones draw a lot of battery power. The average talk time that is provided by a typical smart phone is five hours, but could be less when you play media and games.

Chapter 6:

Using the smart phone as a learning tool.

Smartphones are amazing tools, not toys and so many kids are carrying them around on a daily basis. What makes the smart phone such a powerful learning tool is mobility and it allows the parents to encourage anywhere, anytime learning.

Teachers have found creative ways to use smart phones as educational tools. Students can:

Use the camera to take pictures or videos. They could take videos of their lab experiments. This gives students the opportunity to review their experiment and to improve it.

Use the built-in microphone to record interviews. The voice recorder can help the student to remember homework assignments, memorize terms and practice foreign language pronunciation.

Use the browser to perform research. The smartphone provides so much information, which includes science textbooks, which are online. If they have a question they can easily look up the answer by using the internet.

Use the keyboard to jot down their notes anytime, anywhere.

Use Google information to add to class discussions. Google is also accessible by text message. Students could send a message to Google to define a word and receive a list of definitions.

Use it in chemistry classes as it helps out with the periodic table when looking at atomic mass.

Use the smartphone as a calculator in Algebra, Algebra 2 and Geometry, or watch math videos.

Use the phones to do their homework on- the-go and to communicate with teachers.

Use the built in contacts/address function as a vocabulary study list. Students enter the words, in the “notes” section of the contact and enter the definition of the word. They then create a “group” for each separate list, which makes it easy to keep them organized. Students can quiz themselves on the meaning and then tap the word to find the definition.

According to the Campus technology article, smartphones today “have the computing power of a mid-1990’s computer “For such a tiny device, it is a lot of power. As a learning tool the smart phone could be utilized more, because they are here to stay.

Chapter 7:

Social media goes mobile with smartphone.

Social networks such as Facebook and Twitter are determining new forms of social interaction, dialogue, exchange and collaboration. These sites enable users to swap ideas, to post updates and comments. Social media are helping people to follow breaking news and keep up with friends.

A new report from comScore shows that both Facebook and Twitter users spend more time using these networks on mobile devices than they do on traditional computers or laptops, which leaves no doubt that the future of social networking is mobile. Analysis done by comScore indicates

Facebook and Twitter are among the largest social networks and both brands have developed a growing mobile audience. As more and more people can afford smartphones and mobile broadband, due to lower costs the popularity of social media, particularly Twitter and Facebook has shot up dramatically.

This sets the path for changing the way we live, how we work and how we communicate. The success of a networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter, or even Google + is easily determined by its accessibility. If users can't access a social network via mobile with a half decent experience is doomed for failure.

Increased accessibility to social networks on smart phones could however bring about more stress. A study by a psychologist Richard Balding demonstrated a link between compulsive behaviors and increased smart phone use. According to Balding it is very likely to see an associated increase in stress from social networking, as smartphone use is increasing. He encourages people to take a break from being connected all the time. There could be a risk that stress and tension that builds up from being engaged all the time, could have a negative impact on relationships.

Another side of using the smartphone to access social media is the storing of every personal detail on a single device. With some basic social engineering skills peoples' dependence on social media can be exploited.

Smartphones are designed for sharing, but be selective with what you choose to share.

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Chapter 8:

Free Calls with VoIP smartphone apps.

VoIP is an acronym that stands for Voice over-Internet Protocol. This form of technology allows someone to make free or cheap calls using their smartphones, but instead of using the mobile operator network, they place the call over the internet.

The advantage of VoIP technology is that it is cheaper to transmit any calls or text messages via the internet, since transmitting data via the internet is cheaper than to use satellite services or normal phone lines.

This allows VoIP providers to offer previously expensive services at a much cheaper rate than traditional phone operators.

To use VoIP on your smartphone you should have access to internet either by connecting to Wi-Fi network or the data network of the mobile operator. You would need at least a monthly data plan of around 4-5GB, since VoIP technology uses a lot of traffic.

You would also be required to have a mobile VoIP app installed on your phone. There are several specialist companies that have developed software and technology that allows it to be used without expensive hardware. Some of the most popular are:

Skype allows free conversations and texts between users via handsets and personal computers.

Vonage offer VoIP calls to their customers via existing broadband connections, through PC or smartphones.

Rebtel also offer a complete range of VoIP services and in addition they offer a range of apps freely downloadable from their site for Android, Blackberry and iPhone.

To make VoIP calls you would have to register with one of the companies above. After adding your friends or family to your contact list, they would have to install the same provider as you on their phones.

As soon as they are registered you are able to make calls in the same way as you would be using traditional means.

Mobile VoIP technology is one of the most useful smartphone features that allows users to make free or at least cheap calls.

Chapter 9:

Gaming with your smartphone.

More and more people are giving up on pricey portable gaming systems and replacing them with casual gaming on their smartphones. With this in mind many big-name games and developers are making great titles for smartphones. Thanks to smartphone technology it is now possible to have a phone and a handheld gaming console, all in one.

Some of the premium game titles for smartphones at the moment are:

- a) Sonic 4 Episode1. It brings back all the classic side scrolling action from the original games with updated 3D graphics. Sonic 4 can be played on both Android and iOS.
- b) Grand Theft Auto 3. The popular Grand Theft Auto series have been ported to all Android and iOS devices.
- c) Street Fighter IV. Capcom made a brand new Street Fighter game designed specifically for the iPhone.
- d) Tetris. You don't need a fancy gaming system to get the full, official version. EA has Tetris on iPhone, Android and Blackberry.
- e) Sims 3. The Sims game is one of the most successful games of all time. You can now play on your smartphone.

Some of the choices of smartphones for gaming are:

- Nokia N900. This phone is quite a geeks dream. You can run anything from Angry Birds to one of your favorite Play Station or Nintendo classics via an emulator.
- Samsung Galaxy S. If screen quality is an issue for you when gaming, the Galaxy S' 4-inch Super AMOLED display will have you feeling like you're gaming in front of your HDTV.
- Apple iPhone. This device is solid powerful and offers the best mobile display money can buy. Worth mentioning is that Apple App Store has tens of thousands of top games.
- LG Optimus 7. If interaction with your online persona is what you enjoy LG Optimus 7 is worth looking at. With Xbox live! Interaction you can go into the marketplace and download any number of great games.

There's plenty of choice for the casual gamer in smartphone land.

Wrapping Up

In addition to practical tools like calculators, map applications and GPS, smartphones also have the ability to support third party or browser- based programs that can perform a variety of specific functions. These applications allow users to customize their smartphones to support their lifestyles. There are apps for fitness, cooking, organization, finances, news, games, social networking, education and many more.

Software on today's phones- both the built-in features and the apps we install - can make them more functional as "phones" in addition to all the other functions. How can you make the "phone" part of your smartphone work better for you?

Block unwanted calls. You can install an app to block unwanted calls for only a small one-time price. One such app is Call Guard for Android 2.0 and above, which will block both voice calls and SMS text messages from specified numbers.

Manage your call log. Call Log Manager Pro can log calls to your calendar and it logs your group calls not just by the usual types, but also by date, by contact or according to custom filters you create yourself. It also gives you detailed information about the calls.

Talking Caller ID. The Caller ID app can be very useful. It will speak the name or number of the incoming call so you don't have to look at your phone to find out who is calling.

Google Voice. One of the most useful apps you can get for making the phone calling experience better on your smartphone is Google Voice for mobile. You can make calls (and send text messages) from your Google Voice number and it integrates with your Google contacts and your phone's address book. Google Voice also has the ability to transcribe voicemail messages to e-mail transcriptions, which could be helpful if you're in a meeting and don't want to listen to the message. Google Voice could also save you money, since you could make lower cost calls to international destinations than what your carrier charges.

Applications are developed for personal and professional use and are intended to make life easier.