

Why Phil got my post wrong

Written by Darryn Lowe

Wednesday, 17 February 2010 22:27 - Last Updated Monday, 08 March 2010 22:56

Phil's post in reply to mine was incredibly funny (<http://www.nzmac.com/community-blog/why-darryn-got-the-tech-pundits-wrong.html>). In it he accuses me of not reading what the pundits wrote (which I did) and then goes into a tirade that proves he never really read my post but skimmed through it and had a go at me for what he perceived I had written.

My post was purely quashing the negative comments that the pundits wrote about the iPad that were largely baseless in the first place. Many of the pundits had never seen the device so their comments were flame bait at best. Their posts were largely based on rumours that they themselves made up to get hits. They were wrong for saying the iPad failed to live up to expectations when those expectations were made up and not based on anything tangible. Phil however completely and utterly removed ALL context from my post and then made his post based on that contextless version of my post.

The context of the post was in the title. The tech pundits were spewing all sorts of rubbish that completely removed everything about existing history of iPhone OS based devices from the last three years to make it sound like the iPad is a bland device that will fail.

Let's retort Phil's retort shall we?

Multitasking:

Phil tried to attack my semantics with his own only to completely miss the point of what I was saying. The pundits wrote that the iPad won't have multitasking. Now, they were talking about multitasking in the sense of running more than one app at a time which as I correctly stated that makes no valid sense on a low power device such as a phone or a tablet. You only have to look at phones that can do this to realise this is a bad thing.

I on the other hand said that the iPad can multitask because it does have systems in place that allows certain background processes to run such as music playing or notifications being sent to the device while an application is running. The impression that the pundits were giving was that the iPad doesn't do multitasking but that simply isn't true. In fact one pundit did indeed say the

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iPad can't play music while surfing the web which is a completely blatant lie.

Phil then goes on to accuse me of stating opinion for fact.

Fact: Steve Jobs said at the release of the iPhone that running more than one app at a time is bad news for low power devices.

Fact: I agree with him.

Fact: Having seen low power devices like cellphones and PDAs that run multiple applications at one time kill the battery of said device and make it sluggish to the point of not being useable I can assure you Steve Jobs is correct.

Fact: Since the iPhone has been released the amount of problems with multiple apps running at the same time have been minimal and ALL problems have been caused by crashed apps that suck memory.

Fact: running apps like [Free Memory](#) proves how much of a difference can be made to the stability of the device when memory is freed up.

Fact: the iPhone 3G and iPod Touch comes with only 128MB RAM - 256MB RAM for the 3GS. Free Memory can only release around 40MB RAM and more often than not the devices sit around 15-20MB RAM free when not in use meaning 80-100MB of that 128MB RAM is being used by background processes. After a reboot you will be running around 30 or 40MB. That's not much left to run games and applications.

In my next post about Flash I have some numbers taken from an application I have on my iPhone which you'll find quite interesting no doubt.

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It might seem like opinion but contrary to Phil's claim it is opinion based on cold hard facts. If Phil had actually done research of his own before passing off what I said as mere opinion he'd be singing a different tune... at least I'd hope he'd be rational enough to do that.

Also, Phil needs to re-listen to the podcast when he asks about Skype (22 minutes in) because I actually explain why running Skype in the background is not needed before asking why you'd want to run a chat application in the background at which point I try to explain about the limitations of the iPhone. When around 60% of your resources are sitting there running the operating system and background tasks what makes you think it's a good idea to run multiple applications? The problem is alleviated on the iPhone 3GS with its 256MB RAM and I dare say the iPad will have at least 512MB RAM judging by what I've seen it is still not a lot when you put that into the perspective of most desktop/laptop machines running 1GHz processors are also running at least 1GB RAM.

Phil can argue the requirements all he wants but the numbers don't stack up in favour of his arguments. Apple is pretty good at judging what tech to put in and what to leave out and when you sit down and lay everything out on the table how has your ability to not be able to run multiple applications really affected your ability to work smoothly during the course of the day? I'm doing things with my iPhone requiring me to switch between applications all the time... like using Bento then clicking on a number in the database which shuts down Bento then loads the phone app. I then have to close down the application and fire up Bento again all while I'm on the phone call (I do believe that's called multitasking) then clicking on an address to bring up Google Maps which closes down Bento again and fires up Google Maps (meanwhile I'm still on the phone call (but no, the iPhone can't multitask)) then I have to return to the phone app to end the call if they don't and then enter into Bento again to make an update. Sound's like a lot of effort? The interesting thing is that when you actually examine and actually think about how you "multitask" in Mac OS X or even in Windows you come to the realisation that you're working in exactly the same way as on the iPhone the only difference is that you're not opening and closing apps you're merely switching between open apps, something that can easily be done with large resources. In both cases you're shifting focus from one app to another the difference of how that focus is shifted is merely due to varying resources. Considering the Push Notification service is running in the background it makes no sense having a chat app sitting in the background sucking resources merely to tell you if someone's come online.

When I had a go at the tech pundits for saying the iPhone was not capable of multitasking I did so to prove that while it can't run multiple apps it can multitask by definition and so they need to refine how they say things because I'm not the only one calling bollocks to their argument.

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Camera:

This one blew me away with how humorously ridiculous Phil was being. All I could picture when reading this section was Phil skipping around on tip toes singing in a high pitched voice "Of course there's a camera and there's also a magical kingdom of elves made out of jellybeans".

Phil's incessant stripping of context from my posts makes his ramblings about me trying to equate attaching a camera as being the same as actually having a camera meaningless because he's missed the point entirely... and if he is skipping about singing he may just have missed the boat as well. ;-)

In the context of where Apple is aiming the device attaching a camera, be it an iPhone or a 40 megapixel Hassleblad, is more sensible than sticking a camera - forward facing or otherwise - to the device itself. What Phil is failing to grasp is the people who will be using the device are either not going to be needing a camera or they will (I'm thinking photographers here) already have a better camera than a fixed lens camera with only 3 megapixels so they won't use an internal camera anyway. Not to mention a rear facing camera like on the iPhone effectively would make the iPad a 10" camera which is bulky and ridiculous.

As for video conferencing there's something Phil has neglected to think about. Currently there are how many video conferencing apps for the iPhone? At best (and this is pushing the boundaries of calling them video conferencing) I can count 2 - Fring and an app called Movicha. Fring can only do video chat one way - you can see video but not send it, and Movicha has no real information about its video chat feature but if it's two way it's going to be a very difficult app to use. Considering that the iPad is for the most part going to be using iPhone apps the need for a forward facing video camera is going to be pretty minimal and using a USB camera actually makes more sense.

When you look at the target markets the lack of a camera is at best a slight inconvenience but considering most people will have a camera of some form on them I don't see the point of worrying about a feature that stuff all people would use. I've had my laptop for around 3 years now and I can't even remember the last time I used the camera... certainly not for video chats because the data required to do this is huge and considering dataplans in New Zealand suck then I seriously can't see the importance of a camera on a device that's not designed as a communication device but as a data device. The iPad is designed for documents and data not

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communication plain and simple.

In many discussions I've been involved in very few people see the benefit of a camera on the iPad especially because most of the people in the conversations have iPhones. A double up of cameras makes no sense at all.

Flash:

First things first people Phil has a vested interest in all things Adobe so I wonder just how objective he is about Flash. He keeps thinking I think Flash is only a video format but he's wrong. I know what Flash is I know what Flash does but if he for one minute thinks I'm going to believe the Flash Player is a great product he's going to be barking up the wrong tree.

Once again Phil strips all context from my post. He claims I only ever think of Flash as video but he clearly doesn't know what I know so at best his claims are bollocks. I know Flash can do more than video. I know Flash can do animation (a form of VIDEO) which was its original intention. I know it can make pretty fancy websites. I know it can do ads. I know it can do video conferencing but let's put the context that Phil removed back in shall we?

The tech pundits (remember this was what my post was all about) were saying that the iPad won't work because it can't view Flash content. When you look at their comments they used Flash in the concept of video sites such as Hulu and Vimeo et al. That's largely how Flash is used on the web. The real problem of course is that many of the pundits spread the Flash debate because people visiting their sites on the iPad won't see the ads on those sites and therefore they stand to lose revenue. Do they really care about video or some fancy conferencing system that isn't even used in the real world? No. Their motives are purely fiscal not technological.

Phil doesn't seem to understand how computers are being used outside universities. As an engineer I see how corporates - the ones with all the money - work and I can assure you that they don't even come close to the same technologies that Phil is exposed to. It's a shame because there is great potential but most companies that require video conferencing will have dedicated hardware that is far more powerful than what Flash can deliver and which is also compatible with the iPhone and conversely the iPad because they use QuickTime. If they need

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whiteboarding they'll use dedicated hardware to do that and that interact with standard applications.

What's even more with Phil's arguments he lambasted me for stating opinion as fact and yet when it comes to Flash he's fine with doing it himself. There is a word in the English language for that it starts with 'H' and ends with 'ypocrite'. He tries to make it out that it's fact the iPhone doesn't give you a full INTERNET experience because HE can't access his university's conferencing system from his iPhone. I'm sorry but Phil seems to be unaware that an internal INTRANET is not an Internet experience. I also fail to see how you not being able to access something that no one else on the Internet has access to fits in with the context of my post which was being aimed at the general Internet use of Flash.

If Phil had kept everything in my post in context he wouldn't have had to write what he did. If he'd have read the posts pundits were writing and read how they were discussing the various 'non-features' he'd have realised that my comments weren't to diss the technologies but to set things right. Taken from the concept that the iPad is a device that sits between the iPhone and the laptops/desktops then the iPad is actually well suited to its role and it will succeed because of this. It's not a device that replaces either the iPhone or the MacBook but instead is designed to draw the two together. Using the camera attachment you tie your iPhone to a device that has better ability to manipulate images from the iPhone and place them in e-mails, Pages/Numbers/Keynote documents, or just simply keep them organised. It's easier to do this on an iPad than on an iPhone. At the same time because it is more portable than a MacBook or even a MacBook Air (remember a lot of what is being said about the iPad was first said about the MacBook Air - 'Who's this aimed at?', 'Why would I want something like this when I've already got a MacBook Pro?', 'Why would I want something that is so under-powered?') the iPad is more likely to be with a person such as students, nurses, warehouse clerks, field engineers, etc. As such it sits itself nicely between a MacBook because it can do a lot of work on its own but then synch that work back to a desktop or laptop which has more power to finish the work. In other words the iPad is designed to get data and to access data but it's not designed to process data which is exactly where a tablet should come in not as a replacement for desktops/laptops (http://www.nzherald.co.nz/wired/news/article.cfm?c_id=1501834&objectid=10625511).

This is why the iPad doesn't need a camera and this is also why it doesn't really need the ability to run multiple apps running at the same time. It doesn't need them because it's not designed to be an all in one wonder machine it's designed to be a mediator wonder machine - something that sits in between different devices and brings them together.

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Flash also isn't required because with iPhone compilation coming up having a player isn't required when a compiled app would work better. Remember that Flash Player is only one aspect of Flash and is the worst aspect of Flash. And it is going to be this as my next topic.

Update:

While I was writing and rewriting this post Phil got to it before it was finished. And wrote this post here:

[The all singing, all dancing, h-pocritical Phil](#)

First of all Phil needs to reread my post because a lot of it was rewritten because it got wordy and missed the point in places.

Second Phil is wrong about me only wanting to post on my site. My site is a stop gap. I blog about a number of things and tech stuff is only part of it. Most of my site has not got anything to do with tech or Macs and therefore stays only on my site. Stuff that I do feel relevant to the site I republish on [NZMac.com](#) . Phil had got to my site while in the process of refinement which I often do with my posts. I wanted to make sure the post was right before I posted on NZMac.com and so Phil has largely jumped the gun with this post.

To clarify one massive misconception Phil has an [intranet](#) is not an [internet](#) experience. An intranet is a localised "website" that is specific to a business/university/government department. External users do not have access to an intranet without having the site pinholed and logins, or even VPN access. As it is an internal system it is not open to everyone on the internet and therefore Phil's university conferencing system is

not

an internet experience neither is the DOD or Marine's system an internet experience. I'm pretty sure Phil can't access those sites without the proper systems. Phil didn't use the word "intranet"; but the context of what he spoke points to an intranet. My post was correct and Phil's reply was incorrect because he was trying to interchange terminology that relates to two similar but are very different systems.

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Third I was well within rights to call Phil a hypocrite because he had a go at me for making a generalised statement and then he goes and does it himself. You can't have it both ways Phil. Does everyone have the same needs as Phil? Does everyone need to access video or conferencing systems? No. Is Flash actually required for this? For some sites yes but the ones quoted by the pundits are largely US only based - Hulu for example and therefore are not a "full internet experience" either. Can Phil access his university's network from his iPhone? No but does he need Flash to access these systems? For the time being yes but once CS5 gets released that answer will become NO and I really think Phil is going to stop whinging about the lack of Flash Player on the iPhone when he accesses that conferencing system from a compiled iPhone app. Then he'll finally get why the vast majority of people hate Flash. It's not that we hate Flash we hate the Flash Player because it's a piece of poorly coded crap that is nothing more than a port of a Windows 95/98 application and all its problems stem from that. Flash was largely compiled on the systems before it became a plugin to the Web and they ran really well so the full turnaround pushing Flash back to compiled app is actually a good thing. It doesn't kill Flash but Flash on the Web is a dying technology anyway.

Phil can put words into my mouth all he wants and all I can do is get you all to read and reread my posts and keep the context intact (unlike Phil) and make your own decisions as to what I wrote. My posts aren't anything that controversial and that haven't been stated elsewhere. All I was trying to do was bring reason to the madness created by people making up rumours to get hits and getting angry because their rumours didn't pan out. They didn't pan out because they were baseless for the most part.

I wasn't offended by Phil's post. He didn't hit a nerve but when he writes a lot of dribble that doesn't actually state why I was wrong but attacks the words instead of the context all I can do is defend my posts from ridiculous claims. Could I have worded it different? Yes but then so could have Phil so swings and roundabouts I guess. I like people to think about what I wrote and I'm sorry Phil but none of your posts indicate you actually thought about it and were in fact actually flying off at the words I wrote not the content. Once again this is hypocritical because you accuse me of doing the same thing. If you were thinking about the context and not the words you'd have understood what I was talking about. I don't care for the baseless comments of people who haven't thought or reasoned on what I wrote because they add nothing to the discussion.

Man I really can't wait until my Flash post. That's going to kick up a wind storm.

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