

## Re: "Apples or BlackBerrys? Clinical Use and Evaluation of the iPhone Platform in a BlackBerry-Dominated Hospital Environment" by Sherman Quan et al., *ElectronicHealthcare*, Vol. 9 No. 1, 2010

I feel it necessary to add a point or two regarding the noted limitations of the iPhone.

The battery does indeed usually have to be charged daily, but if that is not often enough, cases are available for the iPhone that contain a supplementary battery to allow longer use before a charge is necessary. Battery life is an aggravation but not a deal breaker.

The BlackBerry Enterprise Server (BES) is a powerful tool, but the authors "were not able to pilot Apple's new enterprise tools." At a personal level, I do use the Apple MobileMe service. I cannot recommend it as a replacement for the BES, as I have never been able to successfully sync my home Windows 7 computers for calendar, e-mail or contacts with MobileMe. I have also failed to get permission to sync my work computer (Microsoft Exchange). So BES is much more useful overall in maintaining synced information between the work computer and the BlackBerry – but this is still not extendable to the home computers. Should Apple be able to deliver on its promise to keep all computers in sync, it would add a very powerful incentive to use the iPhone – and add a new problem of home computer security.

My primary e-mail remains with the hospital Exchange servers because of concerns about volume and security. MobileMe does keep a calendar, contacts and a minor e-mail account synced with my iPhone ("push" technology). This is essentially like the BES in that there is a central server (MobileMe), an up-to-date

phone, and web access for any other computer I am using. I find this so useful that the contacts and calendar have essentially migrated away from the hospital Exchange servers. It is noted that to lose control over contacts and calendar might be a concern for the hospital. If someone wants to set up a meeting with me, they cannot look at my calendar summary and see whether I am free at a given time. The contacts information is also lost to the hospital if I should leave, which raises the question about who owns that information when it resides within the Exchange servers.

MobileMe also allows remote wiping of the data on the iPhone, which is valuable. Another feature is "Find My iPhone," which will give you the GPS current location of the iPhone superimposed on a map. This feature once allowed me to reclaim my iPhone before my lawn mower necessitated the purchase of a replacement phone.

I must concur with the authors that the number of applications for the iPhone is ultimately appealing. Of course, that number would be irrelevant if the applications did not work, but the applications that I carry all really do work. The iPhone has utility for both medicine and for my other interests, and I would not consider trading it for a BlackBerry.

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