

COLUMNS

Why Amazon and Google have a leg-up on Apple

May 2, 2011



By **Dave Heaster**

For those of you who read my **last rant**, you know that I have no love lost for Steve Jobs and his "iVerse" the coining of this term is a nod towards all of you Brown Coats out there not a nod to AT&T (keep it shiny).

In this rant, I am going to again point out what many of you already know that the iVerse is under attack. By whom, you ask? By a pairing of unlikely conspirators: Google and Amazon.

For those of you who have not caught on to this, let me spin you up to speed.

Setting store

Android is, of course, a contender to compete with both the iPhone (think HTC Thunderbolt) and the iPad (think Motorola Zoom).

However, Apple still had a pretty good lock on a universal App Store and that abomination called iTunes again, I am really not a fan of Apple.

Enter Amazon.com a company known for user-friendly shopping and great customer service.

With two moves, Amazon has cemented itself as a player to outsmart Apple. The two moves I am talking about are the Amazon App Store and the Amazon Cloud Drive.

Working with the Android platform, Amazon has created a fantastic alternative to the Apple App Store.

Regardless of your device Droid phone, G Tablet you can point your browser at Amazon's app store and have access to thousands of apps. It is easy to use, ties to your existing Amazon account and helps make owning an Android-based device that much more enjoyable.

But you're thinking, "Didn't you say something about iTunes?" Yes and this is the really cool part.

Tune in

If you have not yet set up a Cloud Drive on Amazon, I highly recommend that you do so.

You get 5GB of free space on the Amazon Cloud to put anything from music to movies to documents. Then you can access them from anywhere.

Also, a little advertised fact: If you order any album from the Amazon MP3 store, they will give you 15 more GB for free. It does not even need to be a full priced album I bought Elvis Man from the band "Piggy has the Conch" for \$5.94 (shameless plug), and I received my free 15GB. Just make sure you have already set up your Cloud Drive before you buy it.

The last little trick was for Amazon to come up with a music player for your Cloud Drive and, of course, they did.

So, now you can access all of your music on your free Cloud Drive from your phone or tablet device, and when you buy music from the Amazon MP3 Store, it asks you if you would like to store it on your Cloud Drive as well as download it.

And, in what I can only describe as a taste of his own medicine, the music app to access your Cloud Drive is only available for the Android sorry, iVerse devotees.

So, in conclusion, there is movement afoot in this whole race to win the mobile market share.

Tip of hat

In my opinion, the current leader is Android. Why? Because:

- It supports all standard Web sites, including Flash-based sites
- I can use any browser on your Android device (try the Dolphin HD or Firefox 4)
- I can play standard MP3 and MOV files by simply plugging an external drive into my phone or tablet
- There are now more Android devices out there than iVerse devices
- You have a choice in manufacturers and more choice in carriers
- The new Amazon app and MP3 stores make getting apps and music as easy as the other guy
- It is fun to rebel against the current leader of anything

I actually think that the Apple devices are great super design and the user interface is very elegant.

However, choice is good and standards are good.

I think Apple will have to ditch its proprietary ways and start supporting standards such as MP3 and Flash. But until then, we do have great choices out there.

Dave Heaster is an ecommerce architect and unhappy iPhone/iPad user based in Sussex, WI. Reach him at dave@biztonic.com.