

COLUMNS

The costs of travelling with Apple iOS7 devices overseas

November 13, 2013



By [Jared Owen](#)

Apple's recently launched iOS7 has given iPhones and iPads a whole new look and feel, but the update also raises concerns for consumers who are traveling abroad with these devices.

While taking a mobile device abroad can always result in unforeseen and occasionally exorbitant fees, Apple's new operating system may end up making things even more expensive during international travel. Some wireless carriers can charge up to \$20 per MB depending on where in the world you are.

These charges are common. The Federal Communications Commission estimates that 30 million U.S. consumers have experienced bill shock after taking their phones abroad, and 20 percent of those people came home to a bill that was more than \$1,000.

It is critical to know how to prepare your device for travel to avoid these consequences.

Why fi

Some of the new iOS7 features, which can be incredibly convenient and helpful Stateside, can end up costing travelers dearly.

Just as you would pack a suitcase and gather your passport, it is important to prepare your devices for international travel or choose to leave them behind.

The first way to prepare your device before you get on the plane is to disable automatic updates.

Applications are updated on a daily basis and if you allow for it, iOS7 now gives you the ability to automatically update your apps when connected to cellular data or Wi-Fi.

Indeed, this feature is very convenient at home, but letting this run in the background while you are traveling abroad can rack up lots of unwanted charges on your phone bill.

This feature is automatically set to Wi-Fi only, but if you have activated it to use cellular data, make sure you turn this off before you head out on a trip abroad. Otherwise, you will be shocked to find yourself paying hundreds of dollars just to have the latest version of Facebook or Instagram.

Pushing it

The next thing to do before you grab a cab to the airport is to pay attention to intelligently scheduled updates.

Apple has a new intelligence feature that will automatically update apps based on your past engagement data.

So if you play a lot of Candy Crush, Apple will automatically update the game to make sure that you are always playing the latest version. The feature anticipates your behavior.

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So, for instance, if you always check sports scores on ESPN at 6 a.m., the latest version of the ESPN app will be updated at 5 a.m., before your normal usage time. The feature assumes that you are using Wi-Fi, but will default into data mode if you are not in a Wi-Fi zone.

The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal are two media companies taking advantage of this new feature.

If you read your news on these apps every morning when you wake up, then you should be careful that you only allow updates when you are connected to Wi-Fi.

This new iOS7 feature can be incredibly handy to keep you up-to-date on the latest sports scores from ESPN, but it is not worth spending a fortune on while you are traveling abroad.

Off switch

To turn off automatic updates go to:

Settings > General > Background App Refresh > Toggle Background App Refresh to Off.

Another action to take before you head off abroad is to restrict apps to Wi-Fi only mode.

In doing so, you make sure that specific apps only work when you have Wi-Fi, which will keep your data-starved apps from tapping into the local phone networks and racking up your phone bill.

You can find out which apps use the most data by looking in the app list at the number of MB listed under the app's name. This tells you how many megabytes that app has used over cellular data.

By disabling the apps that use a lot of data, you can easily and quickly prevent hefty charges. Adding this kind of restriction will ease phone bill worries for international travelers.

THESE TIPS SHOULD protect you from unfriendly bill shock while traveling abroad with your shiny new iOS 7 interface.

Just because you are going out of the country does not mean you have to go with an old operating system.

You have enough things to worry about while you are traveling in another country, but do not let your phone bill spoil a perfectly good trip abroad.

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