

iPod Touch News: Software Development Kit (SDK)

Apple announced that in February 2008, they would release a Software Development Kit (SDK) enabling third-party developers to create applications for the iPhone and iPod Touch. Many people are placing a lot of hope into this tool. As of this writing, it appears that its release will be delayed until March, 2008. Read on to see my take on what the SDK may or may not bringâ?¦.

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On one hand, I am very excited that the availability of the SDK could potentially provide some excellent and useful applications. Opening up application development to third-party developers could potentially rival the literally thousands of applications released for PalmOS PDA's.

But on the other hand, I have several concerns or questions:

1. Because the applications will be distributed exclusively through iTunes, it is currently unclear what applications will cost. My guess is that it will probably follow a pattern similar to PalmGear with free, shareware, and commercial offerings, but it is also likely that Apple will always want their cut, so we may not actually see any free applicaitons.

2. The SDK will obviously provide the ability to develop and distribute onboard applications, but it is unclear if the SDK will also allow syncing data with the new applications which, in my opinion, is essential. For example, I would like to see an eBook reader application be developed, but to work, you would need to be able to sync various file types through iTunes. Being able to sync data will open up many capabilities, but it depends on what Apple provides.

3. What will be the "approval" process to accept applications? Who or how will applications be approved for distribution through iTunes?

4. Finally, what will be the cost of the SDK? Will it be free, or will it cost? Amd what about the "digital signatures" required for control and distribution through iTunes? Will these be free as well? If it costs anything to develop applications, the pricing will need to be so as not to price out small, hobbyist developers. Unless, of course, that is Apple's intention.

Time will tell as to how this plays out.

In the mean time, I'm craving a number of software updates or additions, so here is my current wish list in no particular order:

- Calendar application that syncs with Google Calendar over WiFi and through iTunes
- Notes application that syncs with Google Notes over WiFi
- ToDo application that integrates with Calendar
- Bible Reader application
- eBook Reader that syncs documents (.txt, .html, .pdf, Word, excel, and Palm DOC) through iTunes
- Calculator that is more comperhensive
- Offline RSS reader
- Application to simply toggle WiFi on or off from the Dock
- Ability in Safari to "save" pages for offline reading

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