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THE LAST WORD

My iPhone changed my life!

Guest Op-Ed — First a crush, then a commitment: How iPhone got my number

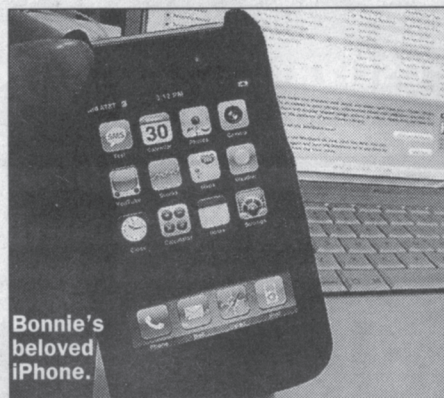
By Bonnie Longbotham

I admit it. I spent the last 45 minutes online exploring iTunes like a kid in the proverbial candy store. Perhaps I'm a bit late to the party, as my teenage nieces would attest, but as a 40-year-old technology buff, I've learned to wait patiently through the initial stages of even the most innovative releases, until the glitches work themselves out.

That is, until iPhone.

During a visit to the Apple Store in Albany, I wandered past the display. As a person who has studiously avoided distracting addictions, the intensity of the attraction was, quite frankly, overwhelming. iPhone in hand, I tapped through a few menus and was hooked. Done. Toasted. It's better than a Jackie Collins novel, a Twilight Zone marathon or any one of a number of guilty pleasures — and it's a business write-off to boot!

How crazy am I about iPhone? Crazy enough to volunteer to write this homage because, for once, the hype is TRUE. If you haven't experienced iPhone, you're missing out on what could be



one of the greatest telecommunications advances of our time.

Can this shiny, lightweight, user-friendly piece of visionary engineering change my life, you ask? For the corporate pitch, visit Apple's Web site. My personal experience has been that everyone's wild about the idea of iPhone, but most people haven't held one. After using iPhone in a restaurant, employees streamed out of the kitchen to touch it. It's been passed around at dinner parties and ogled by wide-eyed children and corporate executives alike. Owning

an iPhone is like having a cute baby or hot car. People just want to touch it!

The 3.5-inch screen's resolution is mind-blowingly crisp, free of annoying pixilation. When confronted with a blurry or pixilated image, we unconsciously try to bring it into focus (it's why low-resolution settings on monitors promote eyestrain). This is a non-issue with iPhone. The touch-screen keyboard is scarily intuitive and after a moment of awkwardness, I morphed into a full-fledged text diva and needed to upgrade my text plan within days!

At a meeting, after taking notes with the notepad function, I snapped 2 mega pixel pictures and created a full-screen album that we browsed by placing a finger on an image and pushing it from side by side to view other images — pictures just roll across the screen.

One morning when my walking buddy couldn't meet me at the mall, I watched YouTube videos to entertain myself and walked right into a trash can! The stopwatch feature came in handy when timing voiceovers for radio commercials and the alarm was helpful when the

power went out a few nights ago. I set it and jumped into bed with no worries (while drifting off to sleep listening to tunes on the built-in iPod). I can check stocks and weather, get directions, browse the Web in a tap and turn iPhone sideways to view content in a wide-screen, landscape format.

It's not that iPhone just does new things. It does an incredible amount of things and does each of them brilliantly with an added splash of fun. Each contact gets one entry with numerous, completely customizable fields.

To call or text, just tap the screen. And did I mention fast? It's all touch-screen with the exception of one button that, no matter how deep you drill, brings you immediately back to the home screen. There are also two small buttons along the side of iPhone: A ringer volume adjuster and an on/off switch. I haven't turned it off yet and can't imagine that I ever will. ■

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