

InfoTech: why I'm not buying an iPad

My Acer laptop being out of commission due to rubbish service from the appointed service engineers, I'm racing around looking for a new machine to an imminent trip. Buying a laptop is the most stressful decision after buying a house, deciding to divorce and finding that your nice new car isn't all you expected it to be.

I love Apple, but I hate the pricing. After all, now the PCs run Intel processors and the software is, at its heart, Linux, there isn't the imperative to pay the premium that there was with former generation machines. Apple's mobile devices, including the iPad use Apple designed chips.

For sure, there is (generally) a consistency of quality that other manufacturers struggle to achieve, design is consistently higher than other products.

But, having entered the mainstream, Apple's determination to be the same underneath but different on top is, simply, annoying.

Apple have taken a decision to separate themselves from the wider market.

I love the iPad. I want an iPad.

But as a workplace machine, the lack of portability across platforms is a pain.

As a policy, we do not use Microsoft Office on any of our machines. We use OpenOffice.Org. What we need is to put a presentation on a stick and be able to run it on the iPad.

Unfortunately, we can't do that. First, the iPad has no USB slot. And because iPad runs the iPhone OS, not the Mac operating systems, it can't run OpenOffice.Org. Sure, I could buy a dedicated software package but Apple's information doesn't say it can import an OpenOffice.Org presentation.

Assuming that I could get the presentation in, there is no VGA socket - nor any other video output. So I can't plug in a projector. Unless I buy an adapter that consists of two separate lumps with a rat's tail connecting them.

The only browser that the iPad supports is Safari. Safari is a great browser - except that Apple has decided not to properly implement Java on it. Safari is the underpinning of Google Chrome. Neither of them can operate on some of our own websites which depend on Java for their operation. Even Microsoft implements Java better.

If we want to upload photos from our cameras, we have to get another external connector.

The iPad is wonderful.

So long as you don't want to do any work in the quickest, easiest way.