

Is your iPhone really yours?

Sometimes getting technology first is a mixed blessing. Yes you have the coolest, newest, shiniest thing on the technosphere, but you also get to be among the first to find out its bugs, glitches and foibles.

The Apple iPhone is a good example of when new technology is a learning experience. With its hefty \$399 price tag, it is the perfect accessory any affluent tech-head or Apple-lover, but some issues are coming to the surface that could make the tech status symbol less appealing.

Late last year, the Library of Congress added exemptions to an earlier Act that basically detailed cell phone user's right to unlock their phones to use on any network. Of course, cell companies still look down on unlocking (its just bad business), but Apple adopted a particularly strict, inflexible and frankly uncharacteristic policy.

On September 24th Apple released a statement saying any iPhones that had been unlocked to switch networks would be rendered "permanently inoperable" the next time the phone was synced up. Reports came pouring in that supported this statement; the unlocked phones were unusable and seemingly unfix-able.

What hubris is Apple toying with that allows them to tell customers, "You will use your (expensive) legally bought and paid for phone only in the manner we see fit"? Though it is legal to unlock phones, Apple is also completely within its rights to take measures against customers who do so. But what Apple is saying is that the device is not really yours; it's still theirs, and they will dictate how you use it. Whatever the price of this iPhone or any other versions that follow, is it too much to pay for Apple to control how you use that equipment?

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