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Surge of New Software for the iPhone

Aiming to capitalize on the new features of Apple's iPhone 3G, developers are planning an array of applications, including several for business

by [Jay Yarow](#)

Mark Cain felt like a rock star. The chief technology officer of medical imaging software company MIMvista got that sensation as he stepped onto the stage at Apple's ([AAPL](#)) Worldwide Developers Conference on June 9 to demonstrate a new program that delivers medical scans to an iPhone. Suddenly he was in front of an auditorium packed with thousands of Apple faithful, reporters, and bloggers, all eager for news of the latest iteration of Apple's music-playing cell phone and the software applications designed to run on it. "We went from thousands of people knowing about our company to millions, in just a moment," he says.

MIMvista's application is just one of the 4,000 applications being developed specifically [to run on the iPhone](#) (BusinessWeek.com, 6/9/08). These are part of a wave of so-called native applications, meaning they're designed to run directly on the phone, as opposed to being [downloaded onto the phone from a Web browser](#). The first of these programs becomes available by mid-July, around the time the new iPhone 3G hits store shelves.

Native applications take full advantage of the new device's improved computational power, including its navigational features and ability to run on a more advanced wireless network. "[Both] Web-based and native applications have a place," says Erica Sadun of the Unofficial Apple Weblog. Yet, "native applications access location, and do a lot of things using the onboard sensors."

Apple has packed plenty into the new gadget. Like the first version of the iPhone, this one boasts a 2-megapixel camera, a snazzy touchscreen, and an accelerometer that helps it respond to motion. The fancy features make this "a truly sexy device," says Kevin Burden, director of mobile devices at [ABI Research](#).

BUSINESS CLASS

As appealing as it may be to hipsters, the iPhone 3G was [designed with business users in mind](#) (BusinessWeek, 6/11/08) as well. Software developers are all too happy to design applications for business.

Salesforce.com ([CRM](#)) was part of Apple's initial software development kit launch in March. The iPhone and its applications will have "huge ramifications for how people conduct business," says Chuck Dietrich, vice-president of Salesforce Mobile. "The ability to run sophisticated applications on a handheld will change how people conduct life and business." Salesforce will have a version of its customer relationship management software available for the new iPhone, though it hasn't said when or at what price.

Several smaller developers have created a number of native iPhone applications for business. Michael Taylor, CEO of Hey Mac Software, developed an application called Briefcase, which allows iPhone users to grab documents from their home and office computers through the iPhone. As long as remote login is enabled on the computer, an iPhone user can read and transfer documents from one computer to another with Briefcase software on the iPhone.

SMARTPHONE COMPETITION

Apple is also pursuing the health-care industry. Modality created Netter's Anatomy, an anatomy flash card application. More are on the way, says Modality founder and CEO S. Mark Williams, who also presented on stage at the developers conference. "We are working on several applications," he says. "We are pretty confident we will have 12 in the next few weeks." Those applications will include a Frommer's travel guide application for the iPhone.

Even with the robust development activity around the iPhone, Apple faces plenty of competition in the smartphone business. On June 24, Nokia ([NOK](#)) purchased the Symbian mobile operating system, which runs 56.3% of the world's smartphones. Nokia will give away Symbian, and open the code, hoping developers will make applications for Symbian. Google's ([GOOG](#)) Android operating system will be filled with its own bevy of smartphone applications.

For now, Cain and his software developer peers are content to bask in their rock star status.

See *BusinessWeek.com's* [slide show](#) for a glimpse of the next generation of iPhone apps.

[Yarow](#) is an intern at *BusinessWeek*.

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