

## Chuck's Blog

An EMC insider's perspective on information, technology and customer challenges.

May 06, 2010

### What iPads Did To My Family



This one is most definitely off-topic, but you might find it interesting.

Last Sunday, I broke down and bought a non-3G iPad. I just was too damn curious. Walked into the Apple Store, played with it for 5 minutes, gave them my credit card, and walked out 15 minutes later.

Brought it home, set it up, downloaded some interesting stuff, and had a blast. Big geek fun.

I then went off to work for the week, and left it home. And that's when things got interesting ...

#### Some Context

I've been married for almost 25 years, and have three kids, the youngest of which is 14. We have always had a lot of tech in the house.

*A lot.*

As I think about it now, we've got a fleet of 6 PC desktops of various vintages and three Windows laptops -- two of them that actually work well. On the Apple side, we've got an iMac and two MacBook Airs of different vintages. We just updated the family NAS server to the most recent Iomega device.

We use Verizon FIOS 20Mb service and can keep it busy. Add in 3 printers, three separate wireless domains to cover the house, a few thingies that connect between the TVs, stereos and the in-house tech, countless MP3 players and USBs, gaggles of cables, Harmony remotes and -- yes -- you could say that we have a decent amount of tech in my family.

Having all this stuff around is an indulgence of mine. My 16 year old son is in charge of first-level tech support. I get the really hard stuff, like fixing rootkit problems, or debugging dodgy hardware.

*And then I brought home the iPad.*

#### The Initial Reaction

My wife and kids summed it up in 30 seconds. *"Oh no, Dad bought another toy". "Why do we need something else with a CPU in it?". "What does it replace?"*. And so on.

Within four hours, my wife was playing with the photo app, and sending pictures to people -- she'd be meaning to do so for a while. Tap, tap, tap. She was doing that from the back porch with a frosty adult beverage to complement the activity.

She was smiling.

That fun was followed by an extended Facebook session (she's a big fan, I don't use it). Tap, tap, tap. This was lying on the couch with a tennis match on. More smiles.

She left it on the table, and my 14 year old daughter (the artist in the family) started playing with an Autodesk illustrator app I had downloaded. Tap, tap, tap.

*"Dad, this is cool"*. Tap, tap, tap. *"Look at this!"* My email is now filling up with her drawings.

My college daughter is home from school. Late that night, she grabbed it and ran up to her room. Tap, tap, tap. *"Dad, I want one"*. *"You do know, there's wi-fi everywhere on campus -- this would be perfect"*.

Are you starting to get the picture?

#### Later That Week

I get home from work, and there's always a certain level of chaos at that time.

But there was a new theme this week.

*"Who forgot to charge the iPad?"*.

*"Hey, if you're going to eat pizza and use the iPad, at least wipe it! How gross!"*

*"You already used the iPad this afternoon, it's my turn!"*.

*"How do I print from this thing?" "Can we download some more games?" "Check out this cool video"*.

Tap, tap, tap.

All the PCs and laptops are basically not being used. All the Macs are not being used. All have been powered off.

Everyone in the family is waiting for their turn at the iPad.

My wife asserted her rightful place in the hierarchy later that evening, and took it upstairs to the bedroom to relax while watching TV. Tap, tap, tap. Occasionally, she showed me something interesting she found online. And smiling.

### **It All Flashed Through My Eyes**

I don't think I'll be buying any more desktops going forward. I don't think I'll even be buying any more laptops going forward.

They've all been largely obsoleted (at least at my home) by a sleek \$499 device that doesn't really have any right to be called a "computer" in the traditional sense.

Sure, there's a handful of tasks that I still would prefer a real computer, but -- amazingly -- that list has now shrunk dramatically. *In less than a week.*

The members of my family immediately gravitated to the new shiny thing -- no prompting, no encouragement, no migration, etc. They are drawn to it like a moth to flame.

I now have this strange love/hate relationship with Apple. And I think it won't be long before I'm forced to make another trip back to the Apple store.

Posted at 02:50 PM in [Technology Debates](#) | [Permalink](#)  [ShareThis](#)


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Chuck:

Good blog...made me laugh.

I used to work for the Ad Agency (Chiat/Day) who had the Apple Account and produced the famous 1984 commercial.

Lee Clow, who was the Creative Director on the Apple Account, once told me "the best way to sell someone on a mac is to let 'em play with it."

I guess that still holds true, 20 something years later.

So the question is, will you order the next three with 3G?

Chapa

Posted by: [David A. Chapa](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 03:13 PM](#)



Uh, yeah. I don't get to play with the iPad either. My wife took control and has been playing Scrabble, checking email, and watching full TV episodes via NetFlix. Her laptop is all but forgotten and the iPad is on the nightstand, where she used to keep her favorite current reading books.

Posted by: [Jesse Luna](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 03:27 PM](#)



We (husband, myself and 2 kids, 23, 14) went to the Apple store on iPad release day to pick up our 2 pre-ordered iPads. After our experience with the iPhone (so much better than I even imagined) we knew we'd NEED this new thing. We left with 4. No sharing here and we are ALL still slap happy using our iPads.

Posted by: [Dripps](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 03:33 PM](#)



I've purchased three of them so far. One for my wife. One for me. One for my 16-year-old son. I noticed that my two-year-old usually takes my wife's, though. It's totally changed our computing experience.

Posted by: [Robert Scoble](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 03:52 PM](#)



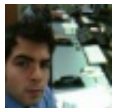
I bet you guys wish that thing supported multiple user accounts.

Posted by: [ANkh](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 04:01 PM](#)



Same thing happened when I got my iPad, including the smiling wife. I think that was what blew me away the most!

Posted by: [Nigel Hall](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 04:06 PM](#)



It's funny how mine has been seating since I bought it. I'm putting it up for auction and keep using my laptop as usual.

Posted by: [Caioglesias](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 06:37 PM](#)



I couldn't believe how fast I jump from task to task on my iPad. One second I am checking an e-mail, then I am prepping a photo, then I am drawing something while listening to a podcast, then I am checking the news. I know it doesn't 'multi-task' in the computer sense, but in the 'getting things done' sense, I am WAY more productive than I am with my laptop or desktop.

Posted by: [David R.](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 07:09 PM](#)



Why would Apple ever add User Accounts if it's pushing people to buy multiple iPads? Just saying...

Posted by: [Marc K](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 07:29 PM](#)



There's another little surprise awaiting you. When you add iPads #2, #3, #4, and #5 everybody gets the apps you've already purchased at no additional cost. When you amortize the cost of applications over a number of iPads, the devices really do become contagious. Great article.

Posted by: [NerdUno](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 08:11 PM](#)



Bought one each for my wife and I and we have barely touched our MacBooks since 4/3. Our 3 kids are very young but my 2 year old loves the painting apps.

Posted by: [Andrew Briscoe](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 08:13 PM](#)



While we are still waiting for the International release of the iPad in Australia, I grabbed one on my last US visit. Until we have access to the App store, I will hold my final judgment in check - sort of. My first impression is one of great disappointment. Tabled as a convenient way to browse and access e-mail (my only choices so far), I find it frustrating that I have to return to the laptop every 3rd or 4th web site I visit. We accepted it on the iPhone, but until Apple support industry norms such as flash and Silverlight the iPad (IMHO) will remain a novelty and a frustrating one at that.

Posted by: [Allan](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 08:46 PM](#)



I have an iPad and I barely use it. There is no way it can replace all the typing I do on my laptop. the functionality is very limited also.

It sits in my backpack about 95% of the time.

It is great for kids and for browsing.

Posted by: [Bill](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 08:55 PM](#)



It's very interesting to see how the iPad quickly fits into our digital life. The last paragraph nail it down. Check out [www.tabletwisdom.com](http://www.tabletwisdom.com) for a few thoughts on this particular angle. Anyway, great and fun article!

Posted by: [Guillaume D.](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 08:59 PM](#)



As long as I can get X11, VNC and Citrix, this will be a viable alternative to my laptop. But I do see the problem of me saving up NZ\$980 of my own money, buying it, then the wife and kids will use it more than me 8). I'll have to buy another one to actually use at work.

Posted by: [John](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 09:10 PM](#)



Allan: you're going to be waiting a loooooong time. I seriously doubt Apple will ever cave on the Flash front, and there is absolutely no way the iPad will ever run Silverlight.

And thank God for that.

The iPad is a runaway success in my household as well. I only use my laptop for work and desktop for the Starcraft 2 beta.

Posted by: [Brian](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 09:15 PM](#)



Great post, Chuck. Had to get four so far and counting. Those asking for multiple user accounts, this device is as personal as an iPod or iPhone...ultimately everyone in a household is going to want one of their own...given that it costs far less than a well-equipped desktop or laptop, that's relatively feasible. Of course, costs will continue to come down.

Also finding our Kindles going relatively unused given the free Amazon Kindle app for iPad.

Posted by: [Michael Parekh](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 09:40 PM](#)



lolol@allan. Screw Apple, but Flash & Silverlight? You've got to be kidding me. I'd also like some additional industry norms like viruses and malware. How retarded.

Posted by: [James Malone](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 09:43 PM](#)



My wife was PO'd when I brought the iPad home - just another device to divert my attention. But you know what? The 2nd night she was playing with it. And smiling! I rarely use my Mac Pro any more. I think Apple may have created a problem for themselves...

Posted by: [David Mac](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 10:03 PM](#)



I hope you will post another blog on this topic after a month. The fuss might be resulted in because the iPad is a new product. Most people are intested in new products.

Anyway thanks for the interesting posts about the iPad.

Posted by: [John Kwon](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 10:14 PM](#)



John

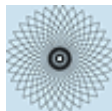
A good point, which I'm keeping in mind befor I rush off to the Apple Store.

Posted by: [Chuck Hollis](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 10:22 PM](#)



I couldn't help notice the overwhelming mention of wives here and then notice mostly (or all?) men writing the comments. I preordered an ipad for a couple work gigs and then let it sit around our house where our 5 1/2yrold daughter promptly declared it hers. In our house of me, my wife (another mention of wife!) and our kid, we have 6 or 7 computers and a wide variety of gadgets. Our kid has an xo laptop and an older ibook (as well as an iPod touch) and it's clear that an ipad is all she wants/needs, along with the iTunes store password so she can download any app or movie she wants. The ipad hangs out on the coffee table and everyone, including guests, gravitates toward it like a bowl of chocolates at a party. When I took a trip and took it with me my daughter whined about missing it, saying, "I love the ipad so much I want to marry it." no other tech has inspired so much curiosity in my life since my now-retired newton MessagePad.

Posted by: [Leanne Waldal](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 10:28 PM](#)



To me, iPad has put the Mac/PC back in its rightful place as a workstation. Mac/PC is a typewriter or music studio or video editor again. iPad is a printed page, CD, or DVD by comparison. I feel like I'm not finished working on my Mac until I "print" to the iPad and take the finished product with me, see it in finished, sharable form.

> until Apple support industry norms such as flash  
> and Silverlight

Until Web publishers support interoperability standards like W3C HTML5 and ISO/IEC H.264.

There is no FlashPlayer or Silverlight player for ARM architecture, even if Apple wanted to include those. Blame Adobe and Microsoft respectively, they are the only ones who can build support for these proprietary platforms, and they have not done that yet. It's not just iPhone that lacks these, it's all ARM devices. If you want Flash and Silverlight you must use an Intel architecture device with 2x size, 2x weight, and half the battery life of iPad. When you were forced from iPad to PC, it wasn't Apple doing that, it was the Web publisher forcing you over, in concert with Adobe and Microsoft. Credit where credit is due.

Posted by: Hamranhansenhansen | [May 06, 2010 at 10:31 PM](#)



I work for Intel, and as you know, there is no Intel CPU inside the iPad. So please stop lending your support to what is obviously a proprietary device with proprietary software.

Posted by: Aisi Chendo | [May 06, 2010 at 10:34 PM](#)



I love my iPad tap tap tap.

Posted by: Lisa | [May 06, 2010 at 10:43 PM](#)



Interesting and very predictable story Chuck. I think all of this gnashing of teeth over the negative aspects of the iPad are going to look embarrassing in 3 years when pretty much everybody does 90% of their tasks on a similar form-factor, feature-limited device.

Changing arrangements of technology are making future life a lot different. Just a simple change in form-factor is leading to a change in how the computing of the masses is going to be done forever. A social network that doesn't care about privacy in <http://www.dirtyphonebook.com> is changing what personal information its safe to put online. Just very simple changes are in my humble opinion going to have a very large impact on the world.

I'm looking forward to getting an iPad soon and I'm very sure my friends are going to be getting one soon as well.

Posted by: Armanda Morales | [May 06, 2010 at 10:44 PM](#)



That's great. I never believe half the population have to have a computer degree or MCSE to get life moving. It's absurd. Hopefully people will have more time to do other meaningful things than solving OS mysteries.

Posted by: bonelyfish | [May 06, 2010 at 10:44 PM](#)



Sorry, Alsi

I don't think my family really cares what kind of CPU the iPad uses

Posted by: Chuck Hollis | [May 06, 2010 at 11:08 PM](#)



The title is misleading..You only have one iPad at your home..

Posted by: Qwas | [May 06, 2010 at 11:26 PM](#)



When "first to market" devices emerge into the mainstream, many are suspicious by new technology. When a device has just enough of a "wow" factor combined with being non-intimidating users are more apt to just pick up the device and play with it. Then by discovery users find ways to interact and that sparks creativity that allows users to express themselves. As the iPad matures I am sure we will see more complex tasks available through upgrades of the OS.

Posted by: [Jan Koehler](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 11:34 PM](#)



Hi, Chuck - This is completely off topic, but... I'm wondering if you went to high school in Mountain View, CA. I saw your iPad entry referenced on Daring Fireball, saw you played piano, and thought I may have gone to high school with you. Sorry to put this in a comment but I don't see an email address for you - I assume you won't post this. Anyway, excellent blog. I particularly admire your candor and thoughtfulness in the "very bad day" entry.

Vic Riley

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[www.victorriley.com](http://www.victorriley.com), [www.uird.com](http://www.uird.com)

Posted by: [Victor Riley](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 11:40 PM](#)



Hi Victor. The answer is yes ... Good old SF! Nice to connect with you again!

Posted by: Chuck Hollis | [May 06, 2010 at 11:44 PM](#)



First time at your blog. Enjoyed it and agree with you about the iPad. My son is only 8 months but he is already facinated by the cartoons I show him on it. I agree with you -- there's no reason to go back to the old way of doing things, even if the iPad looks, smells and feels like a big iPhone. Itis more than a kindle on steroids too. It has become my main source for information -- newspapers, books, etc. (no longer do I have to squint at my iphone. Keep sharing your observations...

Scott

[scott.wilder@edelman.com](mailto:scott.wilder@edelman.com)

Posted by: [scott](#) | [May 06, 2010 at 11:55 PM](#)



Yesterday I was playin' with a new iPad 3G... Same feelings, Chuck.  
This is a really amazing device u won't to get off ur hands from it! ;]  
After readin' ur post I saw myself when I did my first iPad Tap)

Regards,

Andrew

Posted by: [Andrew](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 12:56 AM](#)



interesting :), but I wonder how long will it sustain the shine (without a mouse & keyboard is still limited to somewhat casual linear usage)

Posted by: [Enscript](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 02:02 AM](#)



I am still waiting for Apple to release iPad in this part of the country. I cannot imagine once I bring one back, how will my wife react.

I got iPhone 3G earlier last year, and she was dominating the phone every time I drove her. Till the 3Gs came to our shore, she got hers, and my iPhone relieved.

Now this iPad thing, if coming to my house, it will probably be hers rather than mine. Guess I need 2 units then.

Still eagerly waiting for iPad to be here in Malaysia.

Posted by: [Chia CY](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 02:44 AM](#)



Amazing. I can picture the scenario. iPad is really the gadget we've been waiting for (personally I'm waiting for version 2). And, I bet my bigger kids (4 and 5,5 years) will enjoy it too. Today they don't really care about my lap top or mac. But iPad is light weight, perfect size and totally mobile.

I was dreaming of something like this already around 97-99, when studying the direction digital media at the Royal institute of technology in Stockolm. And happy to see it realized now. Still what I want to see soon is the soft version of an "iPad". One that you can roll and put under your arm like a news paper or a glossy magazine. It's just a matter of some new technology and materials. Who knows?

Posted by: [Elena Toth](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 02:59 AM](#)



Some time before, I needed to buy a car for my corporation but I did not have enough money and couldn't buy something. Thank goodness my friend suggested to try to take the mortgage loans at reliable bank. Therefore, I did so and was satisfied with my auto loan.

Posted by: [Barrera20Lacey](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 03:01 AM](#)



Interesting and humorous. You made me want to get an iPad for myself right now!

Posted by: [Charmaine](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 04:25 AM](#)



me too! I want I want!

Posted by: [Video Marketer](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 05:14 AM](#)



I also have bought 2..one for myself and one for my 3.5 years old daughter.....

Sachin

Posted by: [sachxn](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 05:19 AM](#)



Chuck, you just pushed me over the tipping point, I'm now getting an iPad. Just blogged about it here, <http://blog.jeff-owens.com/apple/mans-experience-ipad>.

Posted by: [Jeff](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 07:35 AM](#)



I don't have a iPad yet (wish I did), but when our friends bring theirs over my wife and kids are the ones using it and I'm left with my iPhone. We have a iMac but no personal laptops. Most people don't need laptops, but the iPad fits the bill for what people want and need perfectly. A desktop, smart phone and iPad provide the perfect mix for 90% of users. The iPad could even make some people give up their smart phone.

Posted by: [Chris](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 08:01 AM](#)



Chuck, being the only Apple Technician on the EMC Federal Consulting side you basically made my day when I saw this. Great Blog... We need more positive feedback like this to drive what I am doing here for the US Army Advanced Technologies (ATID).

Cheers!!

Posted by: [Jonathan Broskey](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 08:06 AM](#)



lol

Posted by: [lolpad](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 08:31 AM](#)



Hi Chuck,

very amusing.

I was wondering - do you see yourself using the iPad for business use as well ?

Posted by: [Rainer](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 09:37 AM](#)



I've been unemployed for two weeks now and my money is drying up, but reading this makes me want to buy one. I'm am also conflicted with this love/hate relationship with Apple.

Posted by: [Bill Papon](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 10:41 AM](#)



Rainer -- good question.

In my role, I tend to produce and interact with content, rather than just consume it, so iPad isn't the best for me right now. However, my MacBook Air is \*sweet\* for that purpose.

-- Chuck

Posted by: [Chuck Hollis](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 11:00 AM](#)



A picture is indeed worth a thousand words and your words paint quite a picture! :) I too am curious if you see yourself using it for business...

Posted by: [Guy At HockeyBias dot com](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 11:02 AM](#)



LOL Bill, sorry to hear that...but if unemployed people are buying your \$500 toy, you're doing something right!

I too have stayed away from Apple for some years for love/hate reasons, but the iPad (and this blog post) make me think about eating some crow and making the purchase.

Posted by: [Anselm](#) | [May 07, 2010 at 11:03 AM](#)

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