Lachlan Moore

Bypassing iPhone

A history of Apple vs 3rd Parties.
Inside it's own ecosystem.

The Rise of Jailbreak

Lachlan Moore

Cydia (Developed by Jay Freeman)

As technology has evolved, its user's knowledge has evolved along with it. As that knowledge advances, many people end up creating modifications to commercial technology that can give the creators of the device a run for their money in the eye of the consumer. This was seen prominently in the late 2000's with the Nintendo Wiis **"Homebrew Channel"** and Apple's i-series of products **"Cydia"** Application. These applications added features to the technology that wasn't possible on the vanilla product, much to the dismay of the companies creating the devices. While these pratices are not illegal, they viewed the practice as detrimental to their business and impact how they thought the device should be used, when it in fact represented the incredible enthusiasm, and curiousity of fans who wanted more from the companies' devices, that they weren't providing.

For several years, it was common for iOS users to *'jailbreak'* their iPhones so they could enable additional functionality like screen recording, widget support and install apps once unheard of on Apple's Platform. **"Jailbreaking"** entailed bypassing the device in question's security and patching the installed operating system with additional code. The most prominent piece of software installed on Jailbroken devices is **"Cydia"** developed by Jay Freeman (saurik) in Feburary 2008. Cydia provided users with applications unheard of on iPhone at the time, such as an on device App Store, predating Apple's own storefront which launched a whole 5 months after Freeman's.

The User vs Apple

Unlike competing smartphones, Apple's iPhone does not run on an open source operating system, closing it off from many 3rd party "QOL" (Quality of Life) developers. For instance, many phones operating system's (forks of android) support Dark Mode, a skin for the phone that made the interface emit less light allowing for less intrusive usage of the phone should the user see fit. iPhone users didn't receive an official version of this feature until the most recent iteration of the operating system, iOS 13 launched in 2019. This left a void where through the act of Jailbreaking and installation of Cydia 3rd party patches were applied to bring Apple's technology up to the standard it's competition was displaying by default. This lead to up to nearly 4 million devices running Cydia worldwide. This is a recurring theme throughout Apple's development of their smartphone and i-series with countless examples littered in the company's history. The first iterations of the iPhone did not support basic features such as a changeable ringtone, copy and paste functionality or even a built in game, which many non smartphones had included with the product such as Snake or variations of Tetris.

Emulating History.

Through the widespread installation of the new hacked OS came the advent of trying to make the i-series the "All In one" device it was introduced to the general public as. Many sought to bring over software and compatibility for filetypes not recognised by the vanilla iPhone. This advent of new filetypes made the need for a file explorer mandatory, something Apple didn't implement until iOS 11 in 2017 in an attempt to compete with Microsoft's Windows tablets.

One of the most prominent examples of a Cydia app reading new files is the GBA4iOS application, one that is capable of reading files originally made for the Nintendo Gameboy family of devices. This app would turn the iPhone into a Gameboy Advance, using touch controls to emulate the inputs present on the GBA allowing for titles developed by Nintendo on iPhone years before the company's first mobile endeavours with Super Mario Run in 2016.
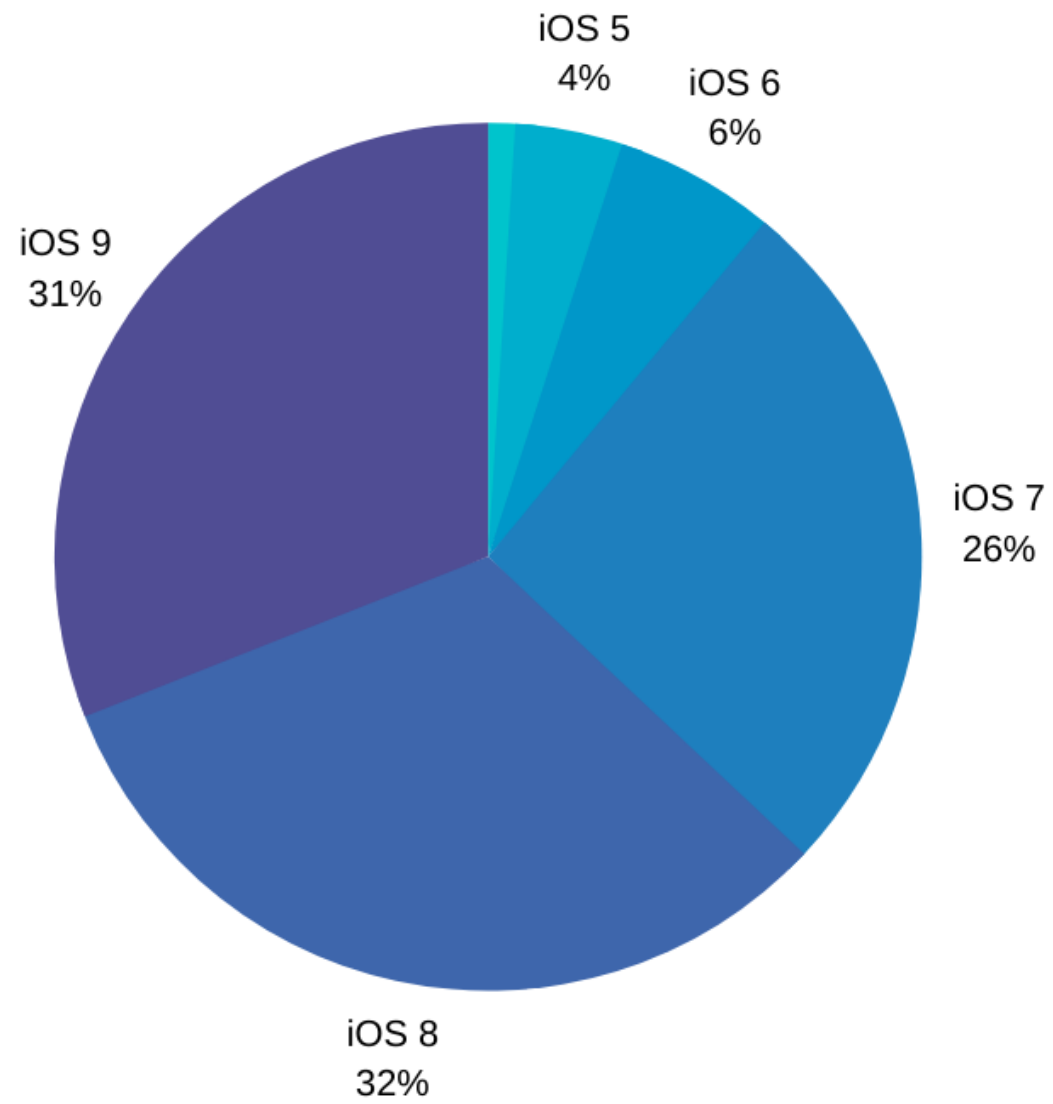

GBA4ios (Developed by Riley Testut)

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Cydia users by iOS version

iOS 5
4%

iOS 6
6%

iOS 7
26%

iOS 8
32%

iOS 9
31%

THE WORLD VS APPLE

JUNE 2007

The original iPhone is released to the world.

JULY 2008

Apple's App Store is released.

DECEMBER 2017

Apple and Nintendo release "Super Mario Run" as a timed exclusive for Apple Users

SEPTEMBER 2017

Apple updates iPads to be able manage data on the device via an onboard app akin to Finder on Mac

SEPTEMBER 2019

Apple Releases iOS 13 and with it, a Dark Mode.

FEBRUARY 2008

Cydia is released for iPhone, with on device app store.

MAY 2012

GBA4iOS is released publicly for use on jailbroken iPhones Allowing for emulation of Nintendo games.

2012

Microsoft releases Hybrid Tablet/Laptop Surface with features unheard on vanilla iPads

2012

3rd Parties develop Screen modifications for iOS 5 and 6 allowing for customization