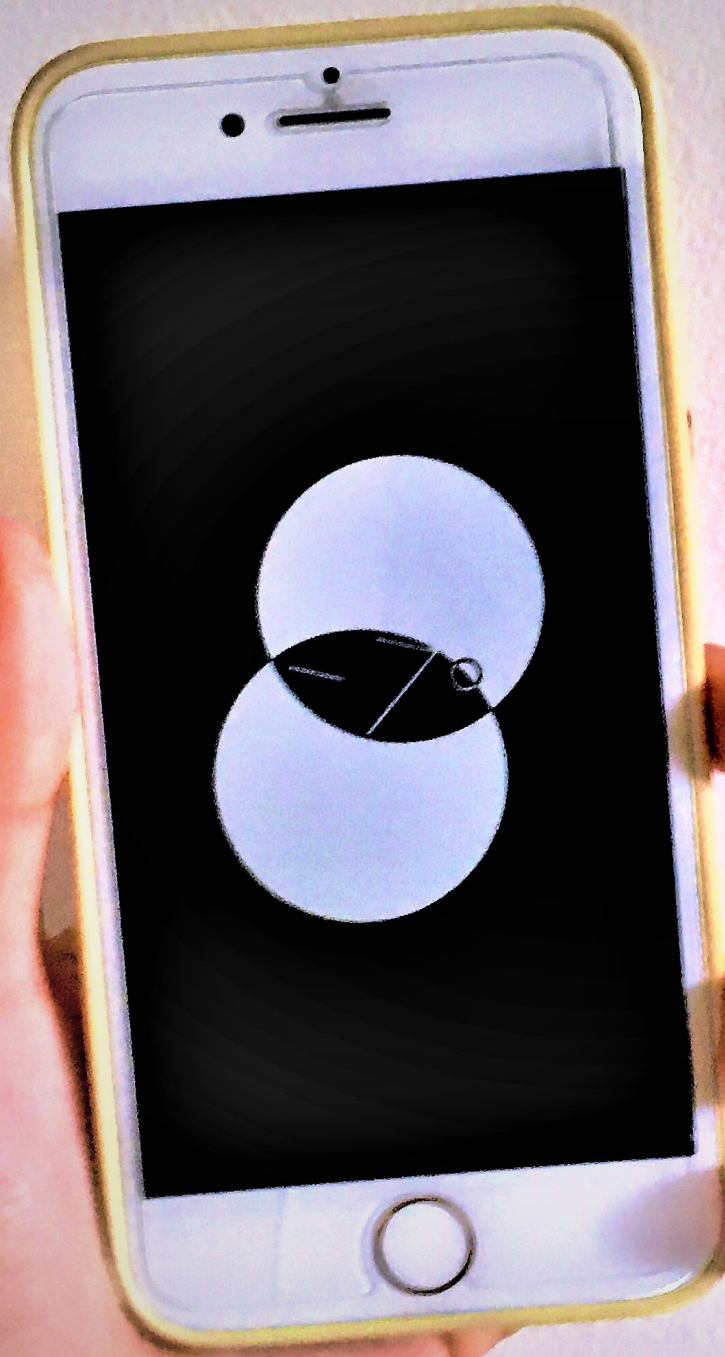


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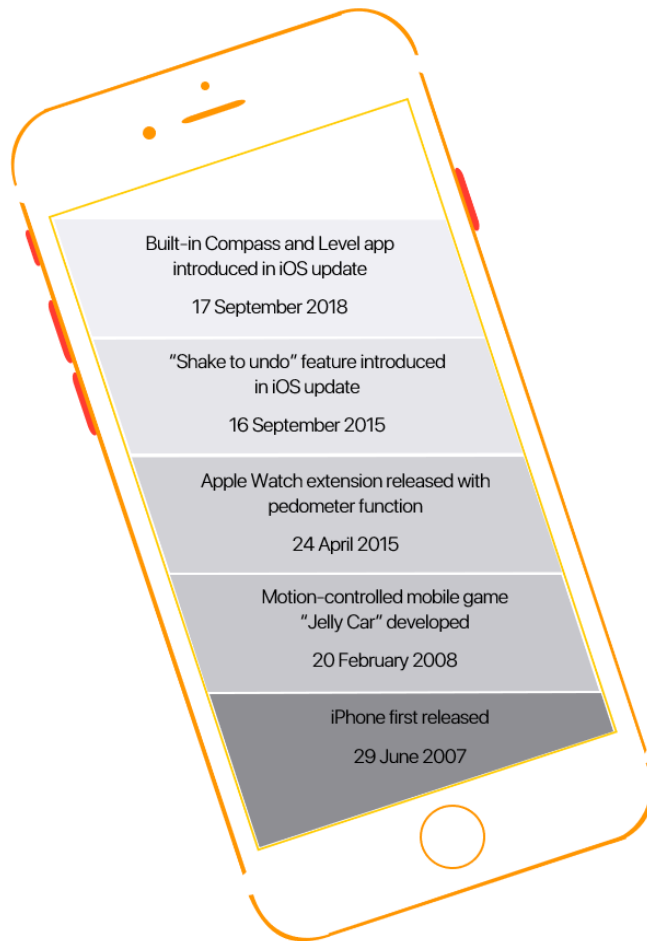
A Future in Motion

How the iPhone functions with as many
buttons as it doesn't have



A Future in Motion

Pocholo Bajar



The iPhone, having persistently broken new grounds in its evolution throughout the years, has revolutionised smartphone technology for over a decade by introducing several mechanisms and features to accommodate the capacity of media we consume and produce. At the time of its release in 2007, Jobs foretold of a device that would "reinvent the phone", and delivered with a smartphone that allowed consumers to "see the world through a familiar object". Several aspects of the iPhone have profoundly characterised the technology of the early 21st century, from touchscreen technology to interactive audio and predictive text. One of these key practical mechanisms is the accelerometer, the device within the smartphone that detects and measures proper acceleration. It allows the iPhone to register and respond to outside motions, such as shaking and tilting. Though often overlooked, the accelerometer is one of the defining features of all existing iPhone models for its contributions to accommodating a wide variety of media and bringing an impressive

sense of convenience to a commercially accessible product.

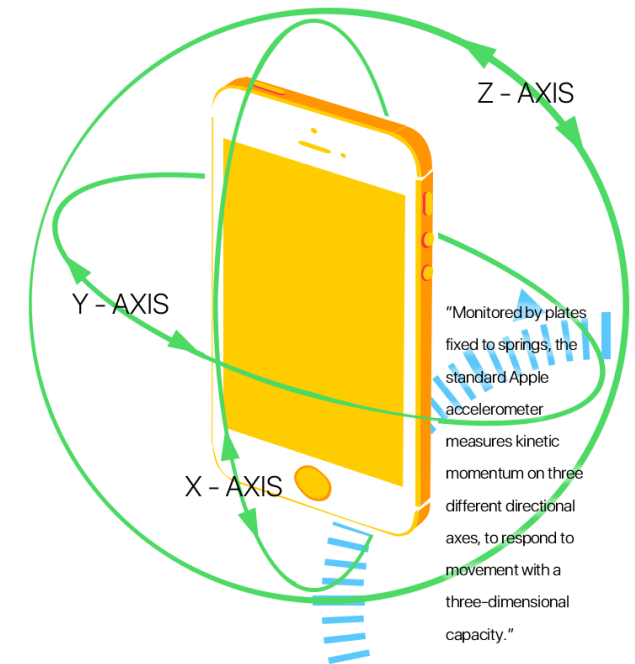
The accelerometer has been utilised before the production of the Apple smartphone – its ability to gauge acceleration has been employed before to measure vibrations on cars, buildings and other industrial installations; as well as measuring seismic activity in landscapes. It has also been recognised for medical purposes such as tracking CPR chest compressions. They are even installed in cars to deploy airbags at appropriate times in the event of a crash. The technological ambitions of the early 21st century sought to utilise this mechanism on a leisurely platform. A relevant application of this is the Nintendo Wii console, which came out in 2006 a year prior to the release of Apple's ground-breaking product – the sensory capabilities of the remote was integrated directly into the gameplay in a way that had not been previously conceived. This innovation astounded the world at the time of its release, and Apple only capitalised on the commercial success of the accelerometer's magic.

The most prominent display of the accelerometer can be observed in the lock rotation on all existing iPhone models. This feature allows the screen to automatically alternate between a portrait and landscape format to provide whichever is more spatially or visually convenient and legible for the user, controlled by whichever angle it was held at. Its performance ventures beyond 90-degree shifts and sharp motions; the compass application which also doubles as a level provides accurate readings in accordance with the smartphone's positioning. The design choice of attributing functions that could otherwise be accomplished by buttons to innovative triggers is indicative of Apple's creative ambitions to produce a sleek and simple device, one that has shaped and currently encapsulates the charisma and efficiency of 21st century technology.

Several minor parties in partnership with Apple, namely mobile game developers, have also learned to adapt their craft to utilise the accelerometer. The iPhone's sublime accommodation of interactive

media, in conjunction with its portable dimensions and functionally flexible interface, largely impacted the mobile gaming industry. Developers celebrated the creative freedom of a screen in which buttons were not pre-set, along with the prospect of motion-determined controls. Soon the App Store embraced the growing trend of mobile games with a wealthy surplus of video games, several of which boasted controls which involved tilting the phone and other such antics. The implementation of the accelerometer in gaming was met with enthusiastic and positive acclaim.

With a constantly growing gallery of models and iterations, Apple's most powerful creative asset has proven time and again to be its utilisation of unorthodox mechanisms to invent usable and exciting features. What will Apple implement in the future to grant even more power to the consumer? Despite having already installed a device that monitors orientation, it is in the spirit of Apple to always look for a new angle.



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