Crossing the Digital Divide (v75)

"Trial by Fire"

by Joseph Feigon

for the Observer

My Android based Smartphone was giving me clear signs it was time to replace. Camera module failing, oft-times dropped wireless connections, I really can't be without. I opted for an iPhone 7. My first. Okay, why?

I see good and bad, new and old, pricey and otherwise. Apple builds good gear. The Android based products available on the Verizon or US Cellular network are not quite what I wanted. I've got my bag of goodies setup on the iPhone now, it should mean things work the same, right?

I'm learning iOs for a couple reaons: many of YOU use Apple products, it's one thing fixing stuff, another using it day-to-day. I'm committed.

First impressions:

With an Apple ID,*and* an Internet connection of suitable speed, having a conversation with Siri and struggling with new icons took me a couple days. If I were an Apple iStuff user, I would be able to access all my files, music, friends, etc. I use Google for those services, and while nearly as easy a setup as the Apple routine, it took a few extra steps, but I got my calendar, contacts and files. Cool. Cross-platform portability. Smart.

I prefer to "opt-in" versus "opt-out" when an application wants access to my contacts, camera, wireless or data. My new iThing assumed I wanted constant beeps and buzzes and pop-ups. I spent a few minutes exploring the Settings. Apple (and likely the new Google Pixel) are designed for the connected urban user. Understanding rural connectivity constraints, when there's no cellular data coverage, you still need to control use of satellite data (via wifi, it's still your Exede or Hughes account) requires attention to "settings/notifications". Turn off "automatic updates" as well when you're on limited bandwidth – but do remember to turn them all back on when you're on your cellular network, or a non-metered Internet connection. Updates are important, as is your money.

Keep control of what you can control.