

ELIOT VAN BUSKIRK JUN 29, 2007 6:05 AM

Why the iPhone Doesn't Record Video

Apple's iPhone can tell you what traffic's like by color coding the roads in its Google Maps application, so why can't the iPhone record video? After all, its processor is clearly fast enough to handle video recording, and it has a 2-megapixel camera for taking still photos. One caller to the Wisconsin Public Radio show [...]

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iPhone camera

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One caller to the Wisconsin Public Radio show I appeared on this morning assigned blame for the iPhone's lack of video recording to Apple being partners in the film business. He claimed Steve Jobs's buddies didn't want people using their iPhones to record movies in theaters.

My theory, on the other hand, has to do with Apple's overall approach. Ever notice that there hasn't been a single iPod in the past five and a half years with the ability to record music right out of the box? (I'm not talking voice memos here, I mean connecting the thing to a stereo and recording CDs or vinyl directly to MP3.)

There are hundreds of MP3 players that can record music, so why not the iPod? For the same reason the iPod doesn't receive FM: because Apple cannot protect the user from bad-sounding audio. What if you were to record something too hot, resulting in horrible digital clipping, or too low, putting too much noise in the signal? Apple would have to include a volume meter to help you set the volume level at the right level, or some other sort of volume stabilizer, and even then, it'd be possible to record something and have it sound horrible. There's also the matter of naming and organizing recordings (something that would, granted, be easier using an iPhone's virtual keyboard rather than the iPod's two-way scrollwheel).

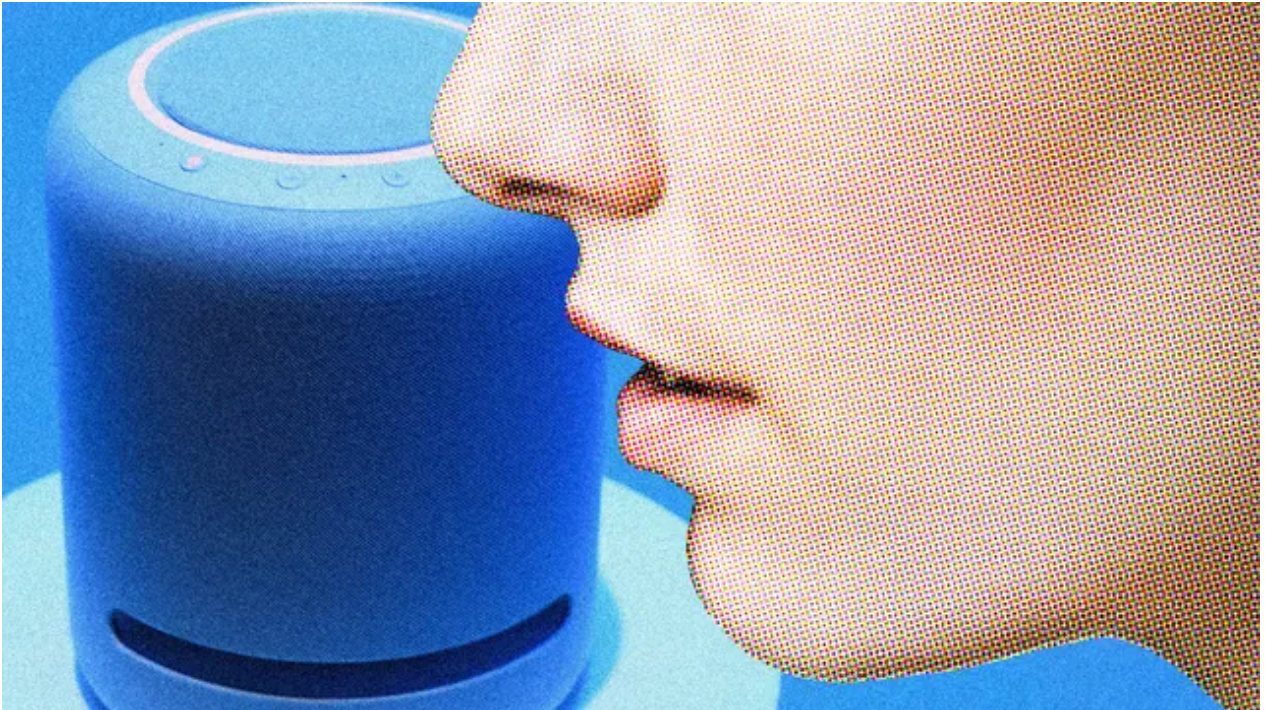
It's true that Apple discourages piracy in several ways, but that's not the primary reason Apple's portable products don't record audio and video, iPhone included. It's because Steve Jobs can't abide the thought of someone using his products to make something that looks or sounds like crap.

(Another question is why the iPhone doesn't allow videoconferencing. That's probably a bandwidth-related issue. I expect the eventual 2G iPhone to run on a faster wireless network than Edge and to allow video chat -- but still not video or audio recording.)

(image from [news.com](#))

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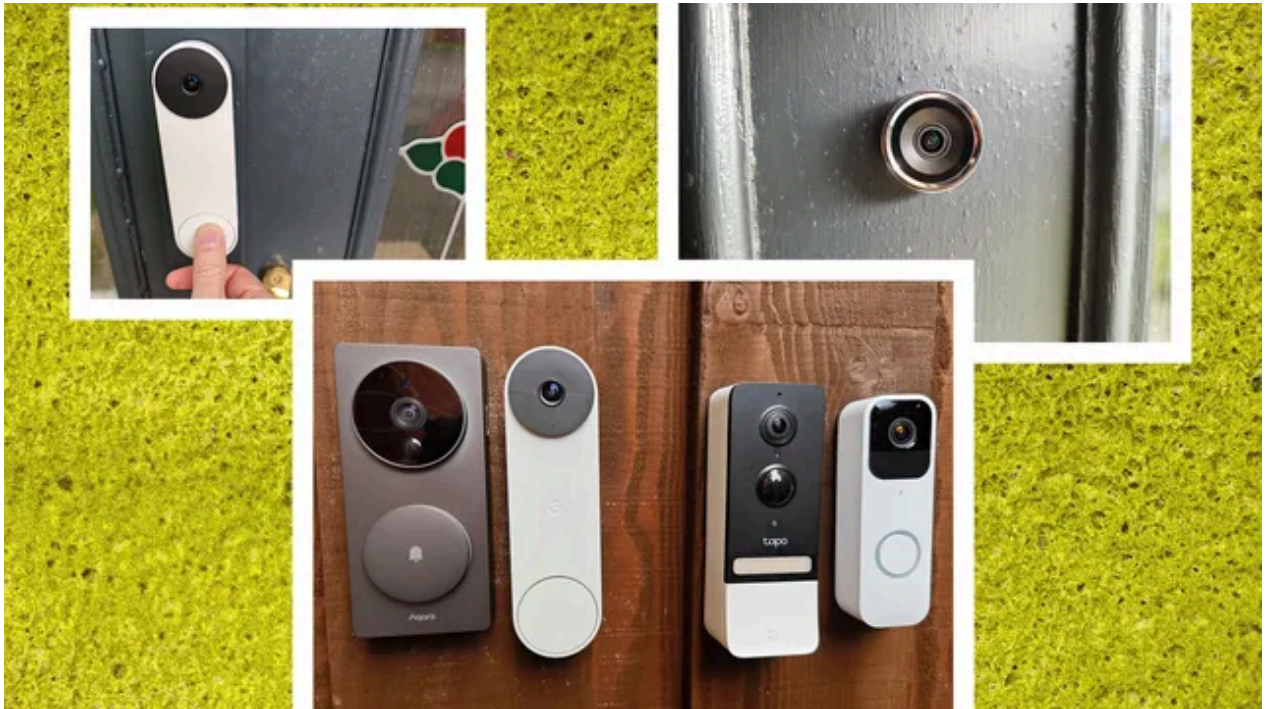
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