**Microsoft forced me to buy an iPhone**



It was hard, but inevitable I guess. After using three Windows Phone devices in last 3 years, I finally bought an iPhone 6 yesterday. It was hard, really hard for me to move away from Microsoft and buy an Apple product. I always believed that Microsoft had a real chance to gain in smartphone market share and give a decent competition to Android and iOS. After Nokia acquisition, my hopes were almost doubled…but at the same time I was very disappointed with the latest Lumia smart phones from Microsoft. I am working on different Microsoft technologies for almost 15 years now and regular job happily allows me to launch Visual Studio every day and work on my favorite programming language – C#. As you can imagine, when you work on different products from the same company for so long, it gets difficult to move on to a different technology from its competitors; and here we are talking about an iPhone!

Back in 2011 when I was in UK when Lumia 800 was launched with Windows Phone 7.8 operating system. I visited Phones4U shop many times just to see how cool the new product is. Eventually I bought one for £100 with a 2 year contract and was very happy with it initially. I was probably the only person in my office who had Windows Phone as most of my colleagues were very happy with Android and iOS. I hardly play games on my phone, so I did not bother about some of the cool games available on those platforms and not available on my phone. I was happy with basic apps available on my Lumia 800 back then. Occasionally I wished for few apps on my phone, but still never thought of moving away from Windows Phone. My biggest complain at that time was Zune. Dear God, it’s difficult to outperform Zune in worst written software ever. With Windows Phone 7.8, you can’t avoid it. It was supposed to compete with iTunes app. I doubt even folks at Microsoft know how to use it.

After few months, with multiple operating system updates, patches, app updates, getting to know few ‘features’ [read bugs], my phone slowly started moving towards graveyard. But hey, I was in 2 years contract with O2, so buying another new phone was an expensive affair. So I calmed myself by making small adjustments and ignoring all of the known issues. In the meantime, both Apple and Samsung released gorgeous new phones on iOS and Android respectively. When my wife bought first smartphone in UK, she did not even think of Windows Phone and got Samsung S3 mini. She is still using it till date, without any issue!

My job forced me to move to NY in 2014. People are just crazy about their iPhones here, I mean it. My 3 year old Lumia 800 suddenly felt like an antique phone. Microsoft had new Windows Phone 8 operating system released so I had very high hopes from it and new mobile phones. I immediately went to AT&T, T-Mobile and BestBuy shops to find out the best Windows Phone available in the market. Believe me, some of these shops did not even had latest windows phones. In few places sales people gave me strange look when I asked for Windows Phone. With Windows Phone 8 OS released, I knew that my Lumia 800 was just on ventilator. I was very frustrated when I realized that few must have apps [NJTransit for e.g.] are missing from my phone. If you travel from NJ to NY every day, you would realize how important it is to have such apps on your phone. With all these issues, I was still hopeful for Windows Phone 8 and kept looking for a good phone. I checked many phones like Lumia 920, 1020, 1520, HTC and I always felt that the price was too much for these new phones. Till today, pricing of these phones is just on par with good Samsung phones and iPhones. Since I had a bad experience with my first windows phone, I did not buy an expensive phone and went for Lumia 520. I bought it from BestBuy in NY and they offered me $20 for my Lumia 800. I must say that I was lucky that they gave me a buy-back offer. I was okay with the low end phone and new operating system. First thing I did was to uninstall Zune from my PC, second best thing I did on that day. I copied MP3 files on my new phone using File Explorer, and that’s how it should be done on all platforms.

After Windows Phone 8.1 update, I started feeling more comfortable with my new phone, even recommended to few friends; until one day it stopped working all of a sudden. It literally hanged while playing music and I could not even restart it. I had to wait for its battery to drain out and when I charged it again, it breathed. I thought I got a faulty piece so I returned it back to BestBuy…and I bought a new Windows Phone again, Lumia 635 this time. I paid around $50 to get new phone and its working okay as of today. I am neither too happy nor too sad about Lumia 635, there is a fine line to define it. I know it’s not a long term phone and I will have to buy a new phone sometime soon. Now some of my colleagues got high end Windows phone like Lumia 930, 1020, 1520 and they always encourage me to go for these phones. However with my past experience, I was in no mood to buy expensive Windows Phone.

And then on one fine day [01/06/2015], Apple started selling unlocked iPhones including 6 and 6+ without any contract. Unlocked iPhone 5s with tax costs around $600 and iPhone 6 is between $600 to $800 depending on the model [16GB or 64 GB]. Since I am relocating to India in few weeks’ time, I knew I had to take the decision quickly. My wife always felt my frustration with windows phone, so she almost forced me to visit Apple store to buy new iPhone. I could not resist this time. After all I thought I gave enough opportunities to Windows Phone and its really time to try the phone, the world is crazy about. Before visiting Apple store, I visited AT&T just to check on new windows phone again, but then again cost factor disappointed me. I finally made my mind and walked away with brand new iPhone 6. I paid $800 for 64 GB model as other models were out of stock, but now I am okay with it. At least I am hopeful now that I will use this phone for next 2-3 years without any issue. Needless to say that I have all the necessary apps on my iPhone 6 now. I have imported all my contacts from Hotmail account, installed few games which my 7 year old enjoys and captured a selfie, which was almost impossible with all the Lumia phones I had.

Having said that, I will keep a very close watch on Windows Phone and I am looking forward for Windows 10 release and unified app store model. I will continue to build universal apps using C# and test it on my Lumia 635 backup phone. I love ASP.NET and will continue to use it to build beautiful web apps. I am excited to see how it works cross platform. Skype will remain one of my favorite tool to talk to my family whenever I am away. I don’t need to say anything about Visual Studio and Office.

Bottom line is I love Microsoft and if they release a great phone with really stable operating system, I’m ready to stand in queue to get one, but until then iPhone 6 will remain my primary phone.