

## Apple's iPhone Update 2.2 Adds Multiple Features (NewsFactor)

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Features galore are included in Apple's new 2.2 software update for the iPhone, which became available a day earlier than expected. Apple released the new software one day before Verizon Wireless and Research In Motion's BlackBerry Storm hit store shelves, but analysts say it was just a coincidence. One of the major features of Apple's iPhone update includes the ability to download the millions of free podcasts available on the iTunes Store over both a Wi-Fi connection and a cellular network connection, according to Apple. The 2.2 update also includes enhancements to the Maps and Mail apps, and improvements to the performance of Safari and visual voice mail. It also rids the iPhone of problems with dropped calls and failing call setup. iPhone owners can now press the Home button from any Home screen and be greeted with the first Home screen. iPhone users can also now turn off the auto-correction feature on the virtual keyboard. Enhancements to Maps include the Google Street View feature, which takes the user on a virtual walking tour while navigating street-level photos of places the user has located in Maps. Also included in the Maps update is walking directions, public-transit schedules, and information on fares and travel times. And if an iPhone user is meeting someone who cannot quite find the meeting place, there is a Share Location feature that sends an e-mail to the person with a Google Maps URL. Apple also thought of those iPhone owners who have been lagging behind on updates. By implementing the 2.2 update, iPhone owners also get all the features that were available in the 2.1 and 2.0 updates. Conspiracy Theory Lately, every move by Cupertino, Calif.-based Apple is being analyzed under a microscope and turned into a conspiracy theory, and the 2.2 upgrade didn't escape the scrutiny. "When it comes to Apple, it is like an Oliver Stone movie with conspiracy theories abound[ing]," said Michael Gartenberg, vice president of mobile strategy at Jupitermedia. He referred to the buzz on the Internet that Apple strategically made the 2.2 update available late Thursday evening to steal thunder from the BlackBerry Storm, which was made available to U.S. customers Friday. "I don't think the timing has anything to do with this software upgrade," Gartenberg said. "They release them when it is done. And I don't think the Storm is even on Apple's radar." The devices are different and appeal to different audiences. Apple's 2.2 features aren't relevant for someone shopping around and in the market for the Storm. "The Apple iPhone, even without the 2.2 update, more than stands up to the Storm," Gartenberg added. The BlackBerry Storm caused people to line up outside Verizon Wireless stores in cities throughout the nation, hoping to get first dibs on the device. Apples and Oranges Although the Apple iPhone and the BlackBerry Storm are being touted as competitors, the only real similarity is that the phones both have touchscreens -- and that similarity is minor. The technology behind the touchscreens on both phones is very different. The Storm has what is called a "clickable" touchscreen, where the user actually presses down on the touchscreen, feeling a click similar to that of typing on a keyboard or using a mouse. The Storm also supports slides, multi-touch taps, and other touchscreen gestures, giving users the ability to highlight, scroll and zoom, according to RIM. Apple's iPhone utilizes a tapping motion with its touchscreen.