



Ustream app streams live video from your iPhone

by Rick Broida, December 10, 2009

With Ustream Live Broadcaster, you can share real-time video with the world.

The race is over. Ustream Live Broadcaster is the first app that can stream live video from the iPhone to the Internet. It's free, and it works. Will society ever be the same?

History may well record that Knocking Live, which debuted with some fanfare last week, was the iPhone's first video-streaming app. But only other iPhone users can watch the feeds; Ustream lets the world tune in.

Indeed, in case you're unfamiliar with the service, Ustream allows anyone with a Webcam to broadcast live video to a private or public audience. In this case, the iPhone acts as the Webcam; all you need is a Wi-Fi or 3G connection. (If there's no connection available, you can record your video and upload it to the service later.)

And speaking of 3G, the app works with both the iPhone 3G and the 3GS--impressive given that the former cannot, on its own, record video.

Other perks include a nifty on-the-fly polling option (just tap your screen and viewers can instantly log a "yes" or "no" vote), video sharing via Ustream and/or YouTube and Facebook, Twitter integration, and even the option to share your GPS location.

In my quick tests of the Ustream app (on a Wi-Fi network), it worked flawlessly--though because it doesn't disable the iPhone's auto-off function, you have to tap the screen every so often (or disable that function yourself before starting your stream).

It will be interesting to see how people end up using--and, I suspect, abusing--this powerful capability. Ustream turns your iPhone into a tiny TV studio, able to broadcast live events anytime, anywhere.

Which begs the question: does this create new privacy concerns? We already live in a society that photographs everything. By adding live video to the mix, are we sacrificing even more privacy? I don't have an answer, but I'd sure like us to have the discussion.