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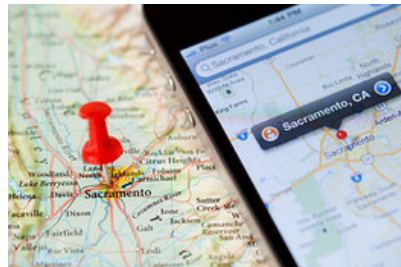
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By Quentin Fottrell



If Apple deletes Google Maps from its iPhones, experts say many users won't even notice.

Once the business of Good Samaritans, giving directions now accounts for \$625 million in mobile advertising annually. In order to get its share of that market, Apple plans to replace Google's software – which had been integrated into the operating system of the iPhone and iPad – with its own "iMaps," according to [The Wall Street Journal](#). Launched seven years ago and featuring its "Street View" photos of much of the planet, Google Maps has a big head start on Apple. But some analysts say most users won't even notice the change. "It would be wrong to underestimate Apple's capability to build a similar product," says Rick Summer, analyst at Morningstar.



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Even if Apple fails to create a map that matches the breath of Google Maps, experts say iPhone and iPad users are likely to overlook its shortcomings. Scott Sutherland, analyst at Wedbush Securities, expects the new iMap to be incorporated into Apple's voice-activated search engine "Siri," Safari browser, and social networking apps. "Apple doesn't need a superior product to win over consumers," he says. "It just needs a large slice of the mobile market." Another advantage: iMaps will have Apple's brand stamped on it, he says. (Google and Apple did not respond to requests for comment.)

However, others say Apple is taking a risk by pulling a premium product. "Google is the pioneer of mapping," says Rick Singer, CEO of [GreatApps.com](#). "Removing Google Maps from iPhone would alienate too many customers." He

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says [Apple risks losing its market share](#) in the U.S. mobile phone market, especially given that over 90% of iPhone owners use Google Maps. He says people rely on Google Maps to find their way in the real world much like they use Google's search engine online.

But by integrating more apps and services, experts say Apple can continue to improve its mobile security. Studies show most malware infections target Android phones and not Apple devices. Some 75% variants of malicious software targeting Smartphones in the first quarter of 2012 were aimed at Android devices, according to a [recent survey](#) released by antivirus firm F-Secure. "You get a wider variety of third party apps on Android phones, but that also comes with risk," says Chester Wisniewski, senior security advisor at Sophos, an online security consultancy.

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3:30 pm June 5, 2012
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