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Mobile Apps Increase Data Use and Potential Bandwidth Issues by [Matt Brooks](#)

Article published on February 8th 2012 | [Mobile Phones](#)

Smart phones are more and more commonplace than ever before. With more and more cell phones pulling and pushing data across 3G and 4G networks, the available bandwidth has been getting smaller and smaller. Specifically with the inception of mobile apps, email, and artificially intelligent personal assistants like Siri on the iPhone4S, data usage has been growing at unprecedented rates. Not only are there more and more data users being added every day, but the average amount of data used per phone is going up by multipliers. Just moving from the iPhone4 to the iPhone4S (with Siri) has shown to double or triple the amount of data used each month on average.

Siri is a novel type of app, and for many users, it is the first real taste of artificial intelligence on a consumer level. Asking a question and getting a response from your “personal assistant” can be captivating, and the more you use it, the better you get at efficiency and staying connected.

The Siri app in itself doesn’t use a lot of data, but it’s ease of use and integration with calendars, search, emails, and texts make accessing information by voice command easier than ever before. This improved access to the services we use anyway increases how often we are accessing that info, which drives up data usage. Combine that with the fun, recreational question and answer sessions with your new pocket pal and you can see how it would be pretty easy to drive up your data usage.

AT&T recently attempted to purchase T-Mobile in an effort that they claimed would open up and expand their bandwidth capabilities. This was on the surface an effort to alleviate the potential issues that will arise from the crowding bandwidth channels, but the SEC decided that the buyout could hurt overall market competition because of T-Mobile’s innovative strategies and pricing. Until the carriers and the regulators get on the same page, there will be the potential issue of crowded and slowing networks as more and more users get access to smartphones, mobile apps, and the newest technologies.

So what is the answer to a growing problem like overloaded bandwidth channels on cellular networks? You can always utilize WIFI in zones that have it. As more and more locations, restaurants, and even retail stores adapt to offering free WIFI, the 3G and 4G networks will see a little relief as data is transferred over a WIFI connection rather than the cellular network. You can also get a cell phone signal booster for your home, car, or office that can boost not only the data speed but the call quality as well. The bandwidth issue isn’t going to go away with the rapid growth, but at least there are ways to alleviate some of the problem on an individual level by utilizing WIFI hotspots or cell signal boosters.

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Article Keywords:
cellular amplifiers, electronics accessories

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