

OTG technology adds massive functionality to smart devices

 By [Ruben Naicker](#)

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One of the biggest problems with smart devices such as phones and tablets is their limited storage capacity, as well as limited interoperability with peripheral devices. USB OTG, short for USB On The Go, is changing this, however.

An extension of USB technology that utilises the standard micro USB port found on many smartphones and tablets, OTG enables users to connect a host of different peripheral devices to their phone or tablet, including external storage solutions. In addition, OTG products can communicate directly with each other, without the need to be connected to a computer. This adds significant functionality to smart devices, not to mention increasing storage capacity exponentially and adding new levels of convenience for consumers.



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Essentially, OTG is a connection platform for smartphones and tablets. A connector plugs in to the charging port on a compatible smartphone or tablet, which includes the majority of Android devices, with a USB 2.0 port on the other end. A wide variety of USB 2.0 devices can then be connected directly to the smartphone or tablet, without the need for a computer. For example, a tablet can be connected to a USB OTG-compatible printer or scanner, or a USB monitor to enlarge the display or a keyboard for easier typing. This technology, which evolved out of the need to enable smart devices to communicate directly with each other while users are away from their PC, has changed the way we use mobile devices and opened up almost endless possibilities.

Expand storage capacity

One of the most useful of these possibilities is the ability to easily expand storage capacity, essential in today's digital world. Many smartphone and tablet devices have very limited on-board storage capacity, and while some offer the ability to expand this using an SD card, even that is not sufficient today. These mobile devices have become more than just communication devices - they are our music players, home entertainment systems, cameras and office productivity tools. All of this requires storage, and as digital content volumes grow, so too does the demand for storage. Using OTG-compatible storage solutions, which include flash drives and external hard drives, solves this challenge.

With many OTG flash drive solutions, users can easily add additional external storage using a device the average size of a thumbnail. OTG technology also allows users to copy files to and from the flash drive or external hard drive directly from their phone or tablet, which makes file storage easier than ever. These drives can also be shared between multiple OTG-compatible devices, so sharing media with friends no longer requires slow and unreliable wireless transfer methods. In addition, users can harness the power of external storage to create a backup of their files without utilising expensive data to upload this to the cloud.

Mobility is the name of the game

On top of storage ability, OTG also allows for charging of the device on the go when connected to a power bank. Various portable power packs carry enough power for a full recharge of a tablet device, or two full charges of a smartphone, and some models even allow for two devices to be charged simultaneously. For users on the move, this convenience ensures they do not run out of battery life while they are away from utility power.

Mobility is the name of the game for today's consumer or business user. Overcoming the limitations of mobile devices, however, has been a challenge. Now, thanks to OTG technology, users can increase storage, charge devices on the move,

and even attach a whole host of peripheral devices including mouse and keyboard. OTG helps to improve functionality and convenience, extending the usefulness of smart devices.

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