

White Paper

Understanding iOS 11 and Apple's New HEIF/HEVC Photo Standard

Introduction

In its June 2017 developer conference, Apple announced the transition from JPEG for photo storage as of iOS 11. This change is the default setting for the iPhone 7/7Plus/8/8Plus and on the iPhone X.

The new photo and video formats—HEIF/HEVC—are new international standards that provide photo storage in a software “container” (where photos are stored together with their live image movies and animation). This format saves up to 40% of the storage space of today's photo compression. It allows consumers to store more photos on their devices and in their cloud storage, also reducing the transmission time for sharing and storing these photos.

Will Apple's new photo storage format affect SnapLab SL620A users?

The vast majority of the time you will not see any effect from Apple's change. For apps running on iOS 11 that share photos with non-Apple devices, the photos are automatically converted to JPEG before sending. Similarly, when iOS 11 receives a request for a photo to be copied to non-Apple devices (a Windows PC, for example), the files are automatically converted to JPEG by iOS 11 before being copied. This transcoding is quickly done by special hardware in the processor on the iPhone.

However, within a few months, tens of millions of iPhone users will be using iOS 11 and it is possible for an iOS user to change settings on his/her device that would cause it to copy an HEIF/HEVC file instead of JPEG. Sooner or later, you might have a customer who runs into a HEIF/HEVC image.

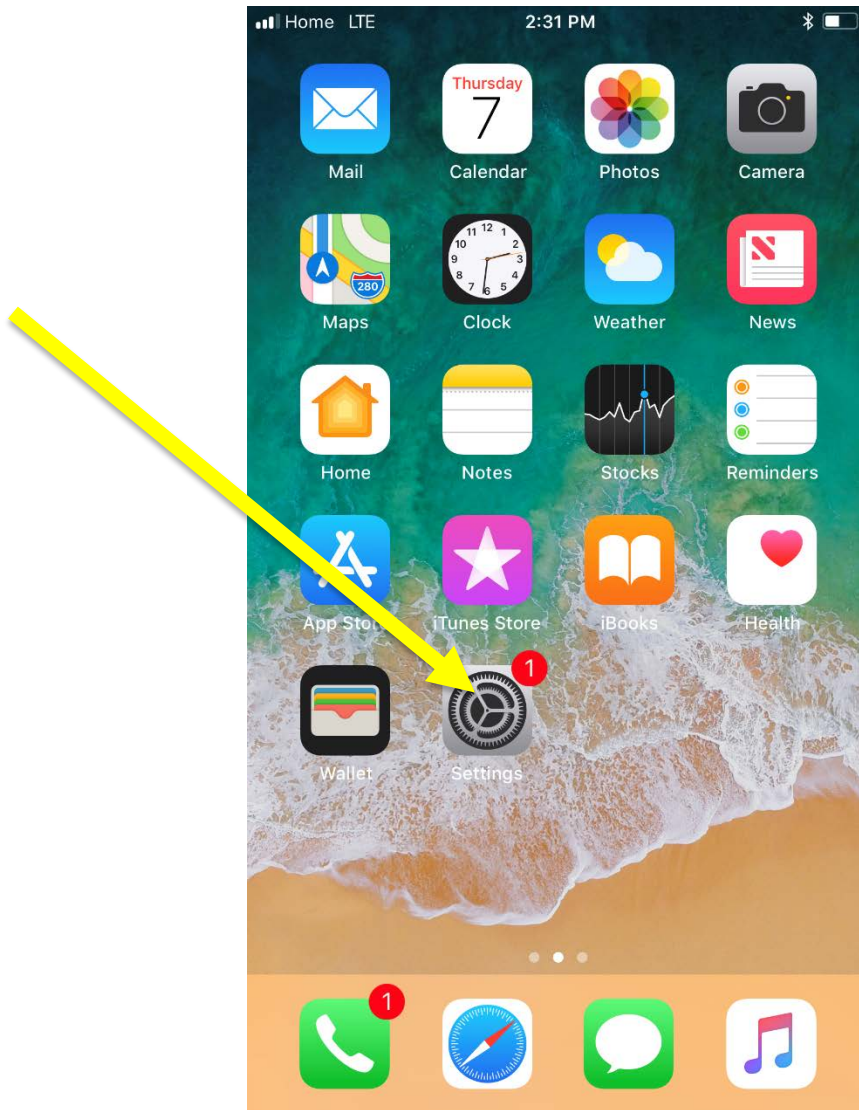
Since Windows does not have a native decoder for this file type, it would result in an error. If customers change this photo setting, then they must change the settings on their iPhone back to the default of automatically sending files in a “compatible” format.

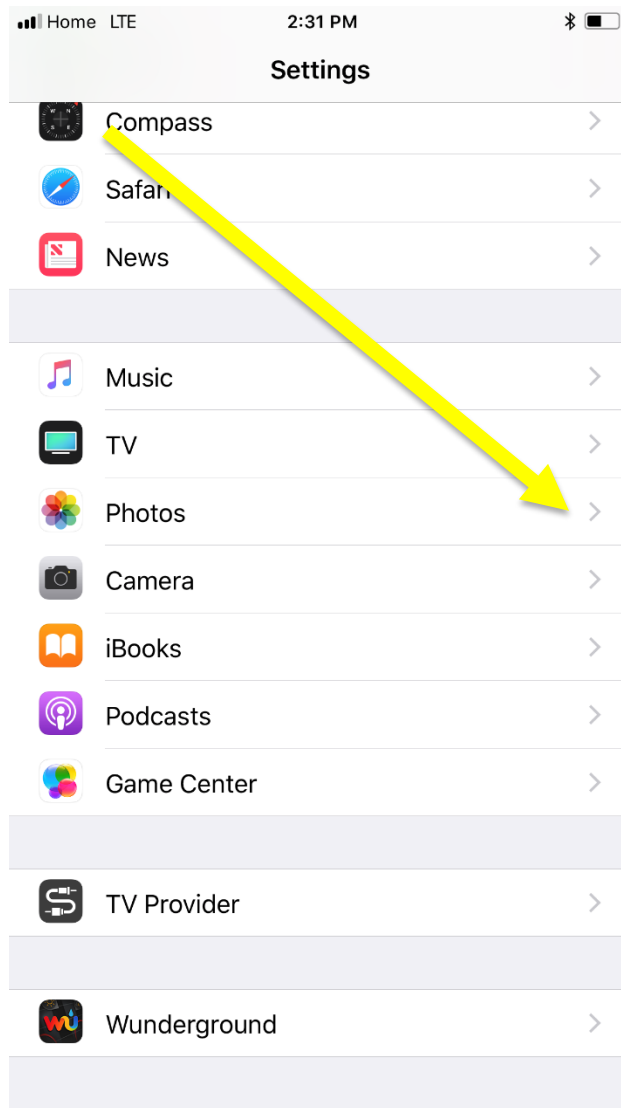
If a customer gets an HEIF file, what should they do?

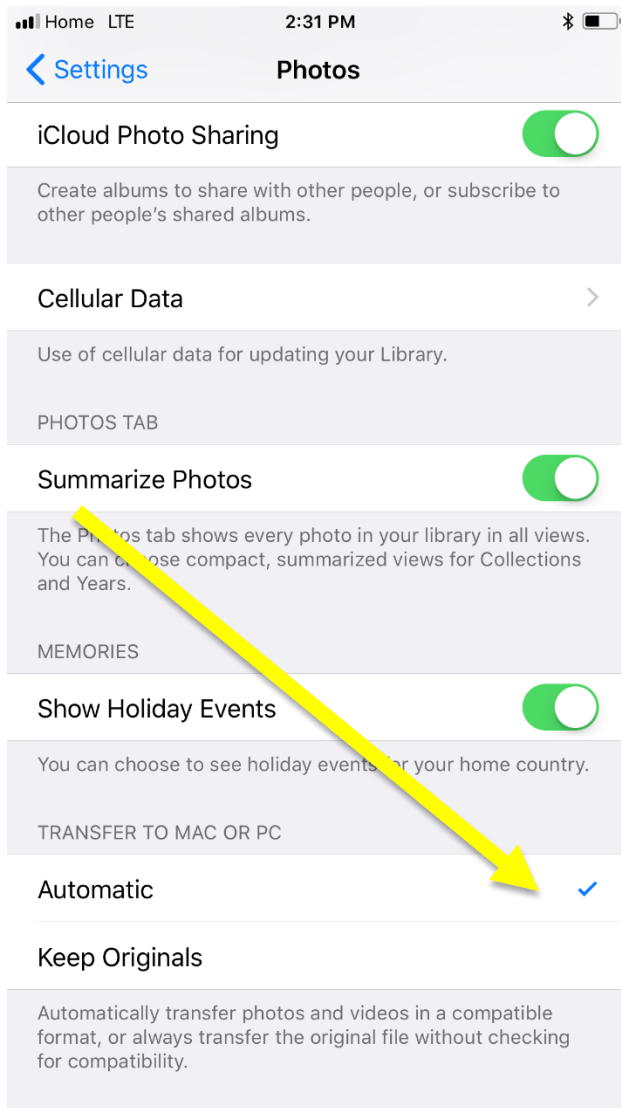
Fortunately, it is very easy for the end-user to go back to using JPEG for maximum compatibility, and settings to not share HEIF/HEVC files.

If you run into a situation where a customer of our solutions can't get the image off of their phone when connected to a PC-based kiosk, please suggest the following:

Reset to automatically transfer photos and videos in a compatible format (the default setting).







Caveats

This information was known to be correct as of September 8, 2017, using iOS 11 Beta 9. Of course, Apple may continue to change iOS 11 through launch and subsequent update releases. If this information no longer appears to be correct, please contact DNP Technical Support.

Questions, or Comments?

Please contact the DNP Technical Support Team:

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