

Nokia's new Android smartphone despite Microsoft

BARCELONA, SPAIN: Nokia showed off a new range of smartphones powered by Google's Android operating system, even though the company is being taken over by Microsoft.



Nokia's new X phone, uses Android's operating system rather than Windows Phone. Image: [BGR](#)

The Finnish group unveiled three Nokia X smartphone models at the opening of the four-day World Mobile Congress in Barcelona, shunning Microsoft's Windows Phone to go with a competing Android-based system.

"The new smartphones use an "Android open-source platform" but are equipped with Nokia's own Lumia user interface and they point users to Microsoft services, not Google's," said Nokia France managing director Thierry Amarger.

Android applications installed on the phones will work, but users will not be able to access Google's services, notably its applications store, Google Play.

"The devices are aimed at customers seeking a smartphone for less than €150," said Amarger, as the market for entry-level smartphones accelerates.

"The Nokia X range aims to capture a the low price markets," he said.

Until now, Nokia phones have worked exclusively with Windows Phone, the operating system developed by Microsoft, which is expected to complete a €5.44bn takeover of Nokia's mobile telephone business by the end of March.

The Android platform is considerably cheaper than Windows Phone, however, allowing Nokia to offer low-cost phones in emerging markets. Nokia's mobile telephone business reported a €789m loss last year.

Holding 13,9% of the market it was nevertheless the world's second largest manufacturer of all types of mobile handsets after Samsung, according to research company Gartner. Nokia's dwindling market share relies heavily on traditional mobile phones sold in emerging markets.

It does not feature in the top five manufacturers of smartphones, which are more advanced, allowing users to download applications and connect to the Internet, but it still sells cheap feature phones in emerging markets.

Another struggling handset manufacturer, BlackBerry, announced its mobile messaging service BBM would soon be available for users of Windows Phone, and owners of the Nokia X range.

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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