

Verizon Wireless, Google in Android partnership

(AP) -- Verizon Wireless said Tuesday it will put substantial resources into developing and selling phones that use Google Inc.'s Android software.

Verizon Wireless had already said it would sell Android phones, but the announcement suggests that the carrier is positioning these "smart" phones as a main means of competing with Apple Inc.'s iPhone, which is exclusive to AT&T Inc. in the U.S.

Verizon Wireless and Google said they plan to "codevelop" Android-based devices that will be pre-loaded with their applications. They will be made by major manufacturers, they said.

The carrier now expects to sell the first Android phones in a few weeks, it said. It has already said it will be a carrier for a new smart phone from Motorola Inc., which is releasing several new devices based on Android software as a part of its turnaround effort.

The announcement adds to the momentum behind Android, which is seeing significant interest from carriers and manufacturers. Sales of the few existing Android phones have been small compared to the iPhone's, however.

Rival carrier T-Mobile USA came out with the first phone based on Google's operating system last year. It recently announced that it will carry Android phones from Samsung Electronics Co. and Motorola. Sprint Nextel Corp. is also set to release an Android phone.

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