

Top 10 Mobile Phones for 2010 Revealed

Source: Kirsten Stevens

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Ashton Moses reveals the top 10 mobile phone contenders for 2010 as based on the Mobile World Congress In Barcelona.

Windows Phone 7 - There's a lot riding on Microsoft's next mobile operating system. For the last 18 months Windows Mobile has lagged newer rivals like the iPhone, BlackBerry and Android. Its market share has dropped.

Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer's keynote speech at the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas was dry and lacked major new announcements, so I was skeptical about whether Microsoft could pull it off in Barcelona.

The jury is still out as we wait until Christmas to see some final handsets but from the early Windows Phone 7 prototypes at MWC, it's clear Microsoft has wiped the slate clean and started fresh with a new platform and a revamped, innovative user interface.

The demo version I saw was an early version and slightly buggy but i'm impressed with the tight integration with social networking sites and online email and calendar sites. The inclusion of Xbox Live for multiplayer gaming and a Zune music player puts it squarely in iPhone territory.

But Microsoft's insistence on manufacturers keeping its tile-based UI may limit phone makers like HTC, which has done wonders to dolly up Windows Mobile 6.5 with its Sense interface. And the inability to upgrade existing Windows Mobile phones to Windows Phone 7 may frustrate those who recently shelled out for a 6.5 device.

Samsung Wave - Samsung is going out on a limb by introducing a completely new phone platform, banking on developers supporting it with enough interesting and useful apps to compete with iPhone and the open-source Android platform from Google.

It's risky. But the 3.3-inch Super AMOLED touch-screen display is gorgeous and Samsung will have complete control of both the hardware and software, which has definitely been beneficial for Apple with the iPhone.

Sony Ericsson Xperia X10 mini pro - Looking at this handset in a picture is deceiving. While other smartphone makers are moving to bigger screens, like the HTC HD2's giant 4.3-inch display, this one is tiny at 2.6-inch. The device measures just 90x52x17mm.

But big phones aren't for everyone and Sony Ericsson makes it work with a good touchscreen user interface and the Timescape app, which puts friends' Facebook posts, Tweets, messages and calls into a single stream. Other apps can be downloaded from the Android market.

HTC Legend - Most phones have a front and back that clip together but the Legend's casing is machined out of a single block of aluminium. As soon as I saw it I wanted one. The Legend is an Android phone running HTC's highly customised, intuitive Sense user interface.

HTC Desire - It's not as pretty as the Legend but while the Legend has just a 600MHz processor, the Desire

offers a much grunter 1GHz chip. It runs the latest version of Android, 2.1, and features a 3.7-inch screen - the closest you'll get to the Google Nexus One, which hasn't yet been launched in Australia. The Desire will be available in Australia from Telstra in April.

HTC HD mini - Think of this one as a smaller version of the giant HD2. Like its sibling, the HD mini runs Windows Mobile 6.5 and includes the unique ability to launch a personal WiFi hotspot, which users can connect to on a laptop to browse the web over their mobile's 3G network from anywhere. A very cool feature that I would love to see replicated by other manufacturers.

Samsung Beam - It doesn't look like this phone will come to Australia any time soon but it's worth a mention because it's one of the first handsets to include a built-in projector for viewing content stored on the phone on any wall.

Samsung definitely gets points for innovation but the market for this one may be somewhat limited and the projector is only really effective in darker rooms. The battery is drained in about three hours with the projector on.

Asus-Garmin Nuvifone A50 - This is the fruit of a partnership between electronics maker Asus and GPS navigation specialist Garmin, so it's designed to replace the GPS device in your car and double as your primary mobile. It runs the Android operating system but the interface has been completely redesigned to the point that it barely resembles other Android phones.

Sony Ericsson Vivaz - The Vivaz has a QWERTY keyboard and 3.2-inch touchscreen but, unlike most phones, is also capable of shooting high-definition 720p video and includes an 8-megapixel camera.

Motorola Milestone - Motorola has been extremely quiet in Australia over the last few years but I'm hoping it comes to market with the Milestone, which is similar to the Droid that Motorola launched in the US.

It runs Android 2.0 and has iPhone-like multitouch support, with users able to pinch the 3.7-inch screen to zoom on web pages, maps and photos. The phone comes with Motorola's turn-by-turn GPS navigation software, MOTONAV, a slide-out QWERTY keyboard and a 5-megapixel camera.

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