

Microsoft in cellphone talks with Verizon

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Visitors check out new Microsoft window mobile 3G cell phones at an exhibition in Beijing in 2007. US software giant Microsoft is in talks with Verizon Wireless to launch a touch-screen cellphone early next year in a bid to compete with Apple's iPhone, The Wall Street Journal reported Tuesday.

US software giant Microsoft is in talks with Verizon Wireless to launch a touch-screen cellphone early next year in a bid to compete with Apple's iPhone, The Wall Street Journal reported Tuesday.

The Journal, citing "people familiar with the matter," said [Microsoft](#) is involved in the design of the phone's software and hardware but a third-party was expected to make the handset.

The newspaper said the device would use Microsoft's Windows Mobile operating system and would also likely include its new [Windows Marketplace](#) for Mobile, a mobile application store like Apple's successful App Store.

The Journal said Microsoft's cellphone project is code-named "Pink."

Asked about the Journal report, a Microsoft spokesman said "Microsoft's strategy has not changed, it is and has always been to provide a [software platform](#) for the industry.

"We work closely with many mobile operators and device makers around the world because customers want different experiences on a variety phones," the spokesman said.

Internet giant and Microsoft rival [Google](#) last year, in partnership with [T-Mobile](#), introduced a mobile phone, the T-Mobile G1, which runs on Google's open-source Android software. The handset is made by a Taiwan company.

The Journal report of Microsoft-Verizon talks came one day after USA Today reported that Verizon and Apple were discussing the possible development of an iPhone for the US telecom giant to be introduced next year.

AT&T is currently the exclusive service provider for the iPhone in the United States, and The Wall Street Journal reported last week that it is seeking to extend the deal, which expires next year, until 2011.

USA Today noted that if Apple produces a version of the iPhone for Verizon it would be the first version of the hot-selling smartphone for a CDMA wireless network, which is different from AT&T's GSM technology.

Vodafone Group, co-owner of [Verizon Wireless](#), sells the iPhone in Europe.

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