

Palm Pre to go on sale June 6

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Palm Inc., a pioneer in handheld devices but suffering hard times lately, announced Tuesday that its much-anticipated new smartphone, the Palm Pre, would go on sale in the United States on June 6.

The Pre will cost 199.99 dollars after a 100-dollar mail-in rebate and will be available through US wireless carrier [Sprint Nextel](#). It comes with a two-year service agreement.

Named "Best in Show" at the 2009 Consumer Electronics Show (CES),

the touch-screen Pre is being seen as the device which could help revive the fortunes of struggling Palm.

The Pre features a new Palm webOS operating system that allows users to move seamlessly from one application to another, as with a desktop computer, and it can run multiple applications at the same time.

Palm came out with some of the first personal digital assistants (PDAs) but the Sunnyvale, California-based company has been lagging behind rivals Nokia, Apple and Research in Motion, maker of the Blackberry, in recent years.

Pricewise, the Pre is comparable to Apple's hot-selling iPhone. It is going on sale two days ahead of Apple's WorldWide Developers Conference, when Apple is expected to roll out updates for the iPhone.

Sprint, which has been losing ground to rivals AT&T and Verizon, is also counting on a good performance by the Pre.

The [Palm Pre](#) was unveiled to rave reviews at the CES in Las Vegas in January.

Encased in an ergonomic black plastic case, the Pre is slightly smaller than other smartphones. In addition to the touch-screen offered by rival models such as Apple's iPhone it also offers a slideout QWERTY keyboard.

Other features of the Pre include a Web browser, Wi-Fi, integrated GPS, stereo Bluetooth, a three-megapixel camera, [video playback](#) and eight gigabytes of internal storage space.

The Palm webOS mobile platform is also open to other developers to write programs for the device and Internet titans such as Yahoo!, [Google](#)

, [Facebook](#) and [Amazon](#) are among its partners.

Palm's shares were lower in mid-day trading in New York, losing 67 cents, or 5.56 percent, to 11.39 dollars.

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