

Acer to offer Google's Android in netbook PCs

June 2 2009, By ANNIE HUANG , Associated Press Writer



Visitors inspect Acer laptops running Google's new Android operating system at Computex Taipei 2009, in Taipei, Taiwan, Tuesday, June 2, 2009. Computex Taipei is the world's second largest annual Information Technology exhibition. (AP Photo/Wally Santana)

(AP) -- Small new "netbook" computers from Acer Inc. will come with Google Inc.'s Android operating system if buyers desire, instead of Windows from Microsoft Corp.

The move by Acer, the world's third-largest PC maker, could raise Android's chances of becoming a widely used alternative to [Windows](#) on mobile computers.

Because Android, originally designed for mobile phones, is freely distributed by [Google](#), netbooks running the software would cost less,

Acer executive Jim Wong said Tuesday at Computex, a huge [computer](#) show in Taiwan. He would not give a specific figure. Wong also praised Android's fast boot-up time.

Netbooks, which are inexpensive little laptops primarily designed for using the Internet, originally were sold with another free operating system, Linux. Microsoft's current operating system, Vista, was seen as too expensive and slow for those computers. But Microsoft regained control of the budding market by licensing the older Windows XP to manufacturers for a low price.

Microsoft's next [operating system](#), Windows 7, is being geared for netbooks as well as larger computers. Several PC companies used the Computex show to highlight coming models based on Windows 7, including Taiwan's [AsusTek](#) Computer Inc.

Also, ARM Holdings PLC, a chip-technology licensing company, said it would launch a new chipset to drive netbooks, taking on a domain dominated by Intel's Atom microprocessors.

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Citation: Acer to offer Google's Android in netbook PCs (2009, June 2) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-06-acer-google-android-netbook-pcs.html>

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