

Motorola, in need of hit, shows off Android phone

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Sanjay Jha, co-CEO of Motorola and CEO of Motorola Mobile Devices, holds up a new Android-based Motorola Cliq during a mobile Internet conference in San Francisco, Thursday, Sept. 10, 2009. The Cliq and other Android-based handsets Motorola Inc. plans to release could be the key to reviving its handset division, which hasn't produced a hit since the wildly popular Razr phone in 2005. (AP Photo/Paul Sakuma)

(AP) -- Struggling phone maker Motorola unveiled its first device using Google's Android system Thursday, banking on it to power features that will attract consumers looking to use their phones to connect with friends, family and colleagues.

The Cliq comes with a touch screen and a standard, "QWERTY" keyboard that slides out from its side. Software on it will let users aggregate contact information from various social networks and e-mail

accounts. Small application "widgets" will show such information as your friends' Facebook status updates on the home screen.

The new device also sports a five-megapixel camera, allowing for sharper images than most other phones, including Apple Inc.'s iPhone and its three-megapixel resolution.

The Cliq, which Motorola unveiled Thursday during a GigaOM mobile Internet conference in San Francisco, will be available from wireless carrier T-Mobile in time for the holiday season. Pricing and release details will be announced within three weeks.

Motorola plans to unveil a second Android phone in the coming weeks. It will also be available for the holidays, most likely through Verizon Wireless, which has already said it will be one of the U.S. carriers for a Motorola smart phone.

The company's Android-based phones could be key to luring back customers. The Schaumburg, Ill.-based company hasn't produced a hit since the wildly popular Razr phone in 2005.



Motorola Click

Sanjay Jha, Motorola's co-CEO and head of mobile devices, said Google Inc.'s Android software is a modern, well-written operating system that allows people do many different things with their phones. He said a vibrant community of programmers has sprung to build tools around Android. Thousands of applications are already available for free or for sale directly from Android phones.

With Android, which Google encourages manufacturers to use and customize for free, Motorola can also offer distinctive features - something that will be key in convincing cell phone shoppers that the Cliq is more worthy of their dollars than the iPhone and Research In Motion Ltd.'s BlackBerry devices.

"I see this as a first step in a long journey where we develop the kind of products which are really relevant for consumers," Jha said in an interview.

Jim Kelleher, an analyst at Argus Research, said the Cliq may be Motorola's best stab at the smart phone market thus far.

"I think for Motorola to retain its tech edge and reputation for engineering, it really has to hit a home run - not necessary with this particular phone, but with its phones in the coming year, including this one," he said.

Outside the U.S., the Cliq will be known as the Dext. It will be available through wireless carrier Orange in the U.K. and France, Telefonica in Spain and America Movil in South America.

Currently, T-Mobile sells two Android-running smart phones made by HTC Corp., and Sprint Nextel Corp. is releasing one also made by HTC on Oct. 11. Samsung Electronics Co. has said it is making an Android phone as well.

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