

Charge your cell phone using light, courtesy SunCore

October 26 2009, By Ian Hamilton



SunCore is a little known Irvine, Calif.-based company that's on the cusp of shipping some potentially revolutionary technology.

SunCore's products charge cell phones using light.

That's "light" power and not "solar" power.

What's the difference? SunCore, a 5-year-old company, has patent-pending technology for absorbing light along with a "high-rate charge transfer" that makes it possible to charge a cell phone using room light, sunlight or any light. Their systems get power from the entire spectrum,

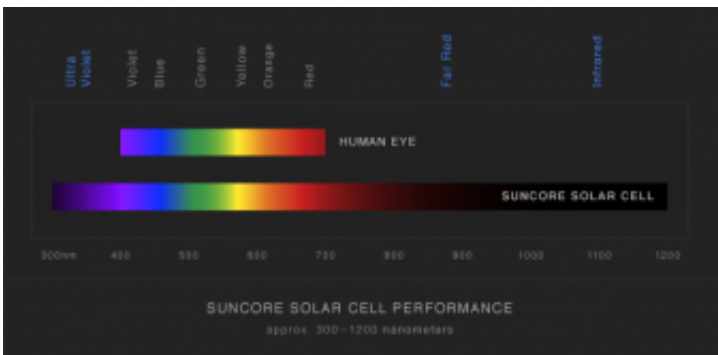
all the way up to ultraviolet and all the way down to infrared and are efficient enough to charge a cell phone in a normal room, according to SunCore CEO Steve Brimmer.

SunCore's upcoming Novacell external solar charger. You can plug in a mobile device and charge it via a USB connection. China gets it first, though.

According to SunCore (suncoresolar.com), the company is preparing an \$800,000 test order of its external Novacell chargers for China Mobile that will be followed by a \$21 million order if the product is successful. Yes, China and their millions of built-in customers get this tech first.

Novacell is an external charger that will power [mobile devices](#) via a USB connection. That's the connection found on most cell phone chargers today.

That's not all SunCore is working on.



The company also develops embedded light-powered batteries.

Virtually any phone can be retrofitted with SunCore technology before or after manufacturing. Which means the manufacturer can sell you a light-powered phone that's ready to go or you can rip the back off your current phone and install SunCore's light-powered battery yourself.

According to SunCore, cell phone maker HTC has ordered 100,000 of the company's embedded batteries for a market test. RIM, makers of the Blackberry, also are allegedly testing out SunCore's batteries.

"The only behavior change that we have to ask of consumers is that when they put their phone down they put it back side up. It's actually a small change in behavior to more or less continuously charge your phone," Brimmer said recently during an investment presentation in Orange County, Calif.

iPhone owners will note the iPhone doesn't have a removable battery. So you'd have to use Novacell or wait until Apple releases an iPhone with a removable battery.

Solar-powered phones are not new. They do exist and have been used for years, but there are limitations. I, for one, would never leave my phone to bake in the sun for four hours as it powers up.

Yes, this tech has the potential of uncluttering your life with one less wire to worry about, but it also has the potential of enabling more powerful applications to run on mobile phones. You'd be lucky to go a day on many of today's smartphones given the way they suck juice if you're watching video, listening to music or surfing the Web.

Then there are the hundreds of millions of people in poorer countries who don't have access to cheap or reliable electricity. Imagine the impact a [cell phone](#) that's powered by light might have on those people.

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