

# S.Korean firm launches fightback against iPhone

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An Android-powered mobile phone is pictured in this file photo. South Korea's top mobile carrier SK Telecom Thursday announced an aggressive plan to reinforce its smartphone line-up after its market share was eroded by Apple's top selling iPhone. SK Telecom said it would try to win more than two million new smartphone users this year by offering models based on Google's Android operating system.

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It plans to introduce 15 new devices this year, with as many as 13 models running on Android.

"Based on the Android operating system, we will adopt various mobile platforms to increase our smartphone lineup," Ha Sung-Min, president of SK Telecom's mobile network operator division, told reporters.

In 2013 [SK Telecom](#) will have 25 smartphone models, or 40 percent of its total handset offerings, he said.

Local rival KT Corp has sold some 240,000 iPhones since the device made its South Korean debut on November 28. Before, SK Telecom had a 50.5 percent share of the local mobile market compared with KT's 31 percent.

The introduction of the [iPhone](#) in [South Korea](#) sparked price competition and forced local firms to present new phones with more content and better services.

South Korean firms grew under the protection of high trade barriers, which helped Samsung and LG become the world's second and third largest handset makers.

But local customers pay some of the world's highest prices for mobile phones and wireless service.

SK Telecom also announced plans to build its own wireless-fidelity network called Wi-Fi in major cities. KT has its own wireless service known as Nespot.

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