

# Google mobile head says Nexus One too ambitious

December 7 2010, By RACHEL METZ , AP Technology Writer

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(AP) -- The head of Google's Android mobile operating software says the search company "bit off a little more than we could chew" with the sale of the Nexus One, a smart phone Google began selling online early this year but then stopped offering after similar devices powered by Android hit the market.

Speaking at the D: Dive Into Mobile technology conference run by the tech blog AllThingsD Monday evening, Andy Rubin said that Google Inc. figured that it could sell the phone over the Web and people would buy it as they already do electronics like digital cameras.

Google unveiled the [Nexus One](#) with much fanfare in January as a challenger to [Apple](#) Inc.'s iPhone. Made by HTC Corp., the phone was sold unlocked so users could choose their own service provider - either T-Mobile USA or AT&T Inc. in the U.S. - or they could buy it locked through T-Mobile. Mobile phones are commonly sold in Europe unlocked, and users pick a carrier.

Consumers didn't flock to the phone, though. And two other carriers, Verizon Wireless and Sprint Nextel Corp., later decided not to sell the phone because they preferred other Android-powered phones. Google closed its online store that was selling the phone in May, saying it would rely on traditional retailers instead.

Rubin said Google's big problem with the Nexus One was one of scale. For each wireless operator it worked with, it had to do things like set

people up with phone numbers, perform credit checks and more, he said. The process was time consuming, and given that there are more than 150 carriers worldwide, it seemed like a better idea to focus on things like building newer versions of Android, he said.

Rubin said that [the Nexus S](#), the follow-up to the Nexus One that Google and Samsung Electronics Co. unveiled Monday, still keeps alive that vision of selling an unlocked phone. But it will be sold in the U.S through Best Buy Co. stores, which already have systems in place to set customers up with wireless carriers. The phone will cost \$529 unlocked, or \$199 when bought with a two-year T-Mobile contract.

The Nexus S uses Mountain View-based Google's newest operating software, Gingerbread, and includes features like Near Field Communication, which lets users wave the phone near a bar code or sensor to make payments similar to swiping a security card to get into a building. Like the [iPhone](#), it also includes a gyroscope, which allows you to do things like zoom in and out in applications by moving the phone closer or farther away from you.

Rubin, who founded Android (which was subsequently bought by Google), also said that the mobile software is profitable, making money through online ads on Android devices. He added that since [Google](#) first released the free, open-source mobile software two years ago on a handset - HTC's G1 smart phone - it has expanded to 172 different phones.

"I think we're doing pretty well," he said.

Rubin showed off a prototype of an upcoming tablet from Motorola Inc. running an early version of what will be the next Android [operating software](#), Honeycomb. The black tablet had a large, glossy screen and appeared to have a camera integrated on its face.

Rubin said that Honeycomb, which will be more optimized for tablet computers, will enable applications to have multiple views, depending on if they're running on a phone or a tablet. For example, he showed off a version of Gmail on the tablet that showed a list of e-mails in one column and the body of the one you're reading in a second column. On an [Android](#) phone, you'd only see one column at a time, as you do now.

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