

Microsoft says to bring full power of web to phones

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Microsoft CEO Steve Ballmer speaks during the 3GSM World congress in Barcelona. Microsoft announced Monday an Internet-friendly revamp of its Windows Phone operating system to help capture new territory in the smartphone wars.

Microsoft announced Monday an Internet-friendly revamp of its Windows Phone operating system to help capture new territory in the smartphone wars.

Microsoft chief [Steve Ballmer](#) unveiled a series of improvements this year to [Windows Phone](#), which got a major boost last week when it was adopted by leading handphone maker Nokia.

The software titan is struggling far behind Google's hugely popular Android system and desperate to replicate some of its success in the

Microsoft-dominated personal computer market.

"We need to give people the full web, the full Internet on their phone, like they've come to expect with the PC," Ballmer said at the mobile industry's annual get-together in Barcelona.

"Later this year we are going to release a version of [Internet Explorer 9](#) (web browser) complete with hardware and graphics and other hardware acceleration for the Windows Phone," he added.

"The web in some senses was designed for the PC first -- we need to make it a first class citizen on the phone," he added.

Together with a free update for Windows Phone 7, which was released just four months ago, the company aims to provide a smoother web experience on smartphones that rivals surfing on a PC.

A prototype demonstration showed similar performance of moving graphics on a website between a smarthphone and PC.

It had markedly superior performance to other [smartphone](#) operating systems due to hardware acceleration, with graphics flowing fast and smoothly instead in shuddering slow motion movement.

The updated version of Windows Phone also aims to make a simpler user experience, eliminating the need to launch different applications to complete different tasks.

It will also allow for fuller multitasking, including for the first time with third-party applications -- a key demand from many users of the Windows Phone system.

"Smart tiles" on users main screen will provide useful information, such

as a calendar tile showing the time of the next appointment.

"I get at-a-glance needed information without going into the application," said Windows Phone designer Joe Belfiore. "That is smart design for making things simple."

Various "hubs" will automatically group users' items together, such as photos whether they are stored in the phone, on their PC, or posted on their social websites.

Ballmer said the partnership with Nokia, which will see the world's largest mobile phone manufacturer shifting to Windows Phone as its operating system, will help accelerate its adoption.

"Nokia's involvement with Windows Phone will drive volume, innovation of new products, and will accelerate adoption of the Windows Phone platform," said the Microsoft chief.

More than 1.5 million smartphones running on the latest version of Windows Phone, WP7, were shipped in the six weeks after the launch in October but Microsoft's share of the market was only about three percent at the end of the year.

"The Windows Phone platform... will only thrive with scale and variety. As Windows Phone evolves we are going to work with our partners to bring into the platform as rapidly as possible their best innovations, said the [Microsoft](#) chief.

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