

## Google adds smartphone 'check-in' deals

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The Google Nexus One (L) smartphone with provider service from T-Mobile and the Apple iPhone (R), with provider service from AT&T, are pictured in this file photo. Google has added a Latitude feature that lets people using iPhones or Android-powered smartphones get rewarded for loyalty to shops or restaurants.

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The feature that [Google](#) rolled out across the United States late Thursday lets people unlock discounts by regularly using location-sharing Latitude applications to check in at a select set of establishments.

"Checking in lets you share the places that you visit and add context to your Latitude location for friends and family," [Google Maps software](#)

[engineer](#) Douglas Graham said in a blog post.

"At the same time, you can keep a history of where you've been while gaining status at the places you visit the most."

Google partners included clothing stores of American Eagle Outfitters, RadioShack consumer electronics shops, and fast-food chains Quiznos and Arby's.

People can check-in places using location-sensing capabilities in smartphones, with deals improving as they advance from "Regular" visitors to "VIP" status and then "Guru" level.

Businesses involved with Latitude check-ins can create their own ranks for frequent visitors. For example, Quiznos has a "Champion of Taste" rank.

Information about the program and companies involved was available online at [google.com/latitude/checkin](http://google.com/latitude/checkin).

In February, Google began letting [smartphone](#) users check into spots on the go as the Internet star jumped into the hot location-based services arena with Facebook, Foursquare and Gowalla.

The check-in feature was added to a Latitude service that lets people with GPS-enabled Android smartphones share their whereabouts with selected friends.

Facebook last year released a Places and Deals applications that let members use smartphones to share their whereabouts with friends and get rewarded with notifications regarding deals at nearby shops or restaurants.

Facebook Places marked the firm's first step into location-based services that have been catching on with the popularity of smartphones.

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