

Optimus LTE 2: LG unveils new smartphone to revive business

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This file photo shows visitors checking the LG Optimus smartphones during a presentation in Barcelona, in February. LG Electronics on Thursday unveiled a new version of its Optimus smartphone with greater memory and a more powerful battery, in an attempt to catch up with its rivals.

South Korea's LG Electronics on Thursday unveiled a new version of its Optimus smartphone with greater memory and a more powerful battery, in an attempt to catch up with its rivals.

The company said the Optimus LTE 2 -- which will be released in the domestic market "soon" -- offers as much memory as a [notebook computer](#), allowing consumers to use several applications simultaneously.

A new battery gives 40 percent more running time on a single charge than the Optimus LTE 1 released last October.

LG gave no timetable for overseas sales of the LTE (Long-Term Evolution) phone, which uses a faster mobile network that is available mainly in [South Korea](#), Japan, the United States and parts of Europe.

Park Jong-Seok, president of the mobile communications division, said a revised model of the Optimus LTE 2 could be released first in North America.

The new smartphone has a 4.7-inch (12 centimetre) liquid crystal display and a single application [processor chip](#), giving its camera a faster [shutter speed](#).

LG has sold one million LTE phones at home since the first model was launched. The Optimus LTE 2 will be priced at 935,000 won (\$803) in the local market.

Park said the new model underscores the company's efforts to catch up with rivals including Apple and Samsung.

"We will focus on quality and continue to release premium phones."

He said the Optimus LTE 2 would be available in Korea "soon" but gave no date.

[Samsung Electronics](#) unveiled its Galaxy S3 smartphone in London on May 3 but has not yet started selling in South Korea.

LG battled in recent years to turn around its loss-making handset operations, where it lagged Samsung and Apple in high-end smartphones.

It swung to a net profit of 242.5 billion won (\$213.5 million) in the first quarter thanks to a marked improvement in its flat-screen TV and handset operations.

On Wednesday data from South Korea's three [telecom companies](#) showed that smartphones now account for more than half of all South Korea's mobile phones.

According to the figures the number of smartphone subscribers hit 26.77 million late last week, 50.9 percent of the total 52.55 million mobile phone users.

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