

Transparent phone display has front-and-back touch

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(Phys.org) -- Japanese wireless carrier NTT DoCoMo and Fujitsu attracted attention at this week's 2012 Wireless Japan expo, with their transparent, dual-sided smartphone touchscreen. This is a see through 2.4-inch display prototype with touch sensors on both the front and flip sides. The demo showed how the user's hand can go behind the icons on the screen to use touch, while the full display on the front remains unobstructed. With this display, the user can deploy touch on the front, back, and sides or just on the front panel or just the back or sides, or touch both screens at once, depending on desired actions.

Showcasing all the multi-touch maneuvers, the demo highlight was in working out a Rubik's Cube on the display. Tapping the puzzle image front and back produced various results. The cube was made to spin and move its parts via different gestures.

[DigInfo TV](#) carried the narration of the [NTT DoCoMo](#) spokesperson on how to work the display:

"You could hold down an icon on the front, and slide on the back to move an icon, or use the message bar, or create a new application. For example, from the front, you can only move the whole Rubik cube like this, but if you slide your finger across the front while holding down the back, you can rotate just one face. So this display makes gripping operations possible."

The creators of the screen would be the first to admit, however, that their transparent, two-sided, concept is not fully baked. One downside is limited visibility in sunlight. The transparent touchscreen as is would be difficult to use in the bright outdoors. Also, the prototype shown at the expo featured a 2.4-inch OLED screen (320x240) and used an unidentified version of Android. The NTT DoCoMo spokesperson recognized that the 2.4-inch QVGA display is "quite small." He said, "We think it needs to be bigger if we're to market this kind of phone." In its present form, he said that it could be used as a sub-display. "In that case, it will have a limited display capability, so we think the range of applications could be wider."

NTT DoCoMo suggests a possible future end use for the touchscreen might be for two-player games. Each gamer would be using separate sides of the display.

There was no news from the two companies about plans to commercialize the prototype, however. Still, the absence of price

information and release timetables has not deterred gadget watchers. Those interested in the display say it may prove to be more than show eye-candy. The concept has potential as a realtime device, as the user interface is designed so that the user can control the smartphone from front or rear, with less finger obstruction over the [display](#).

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