Tech review: Samsung Galaxy S III challenges iPhone

July 6 2012, By Jim Rossman

Apple's iPhone is the most popular phone right now, but as a group, Android phones sell more units per year.

The problem with Android phones - if you want to call it a problem - is that there are way too many models from which to choose.

Android models seem to come out in waves. Sometimes models are introduced with little fanfare, and sometimes the Internet gets buzzing about the next big thing. The Samsung Galaxy S III is the next big thing. It's such a big thing that Apple has been in court to keep the Galaxy S III from being sold in the United States.

The court fight seems to have stalled as some carriers have finally begun shipping the Galaxy S III.

Last week, Samsung said it expects to have sold 10 million Galaxy S III's by the end of July.

That's a bold prediction, but considering that the phone is being sold by all the big mobile phone companies, it's not outside the realm of possibility.

And in an even bolder move, Samsung is selling exactly the same version of the phone through all the major U.S. carriers. So let's dive into the hardware. Running on Android 4.0 (Ice Cream Sandwich), the Galaxy S III is a big phone.

It's got a 4.8-inch Super [AMOLED](#) HD screen with a resolution of 720 by 1280 pixels. It's not the highest-resolution screen on the market, but I found it to be very clear and easy on the eyes. It's covered with Corning's Gorilla Glass 2.0, so it's strong as well.

The phone is very thin (about a third of an inch) and weighs only 4.7 ounces. There is a lot of hardware packed into that thin case. The S III uses a 1.5 GHz dual-core CPU with two gigabytes of RAM. It's a very snappy phone to use.

The 2100 mAh battery is larger than those of most competitors, and it is removable.

The S III ships with 16 or 32 gigabytes of storage, and there is a micro SD card slot that can add up to 64 gigabytes of storage.

The Galaxy S III is about all I could ask for physically. It's beautiful, light and thin, has a huge battery and lets me add expansion as I see fit. I

wish my [iPhone](#) had all those features. Oh, but there's more. Samsung has included a ton of new features - too many to list here, but I'll hit the high points.

-AllShare Play: Automatically locates Samsung TVs and computers on the same Wi-Fi networks and allows the playing of stored video from the phone to the other devices.

-Group Cast: Lets you beam your screen's content to other Galaxy S III users.

-Share Shot: Lets you set up a group of Galaxy S III users in a room to share photos. Pictures taken during the session are beamed to all the other phones.

-Smart Stay: The phone watches for your eyes looking at the screen and keeps the screen bright until you look away.

-S-Beam: Sharing content between two Galaxy S IIIs is as easy as touching the backs of the phones together. Content such as documents, contacts, pictures, music and video can be moved between phones seamlessly.

-Pop-Up Play: Provides picture in picture for watching a movie while doing other things like sending email or texting.

-S-Voice: A little like Siri, in that you can control some aspects of the phone with your voice, such as setting alarms, turning up the volume or even taking a picture.

So the Galaxy S III is a serious smartphone that has a lot of features that make it a great competitor to the iPhone 4S.

Most vendors seem to have it priced at $199 with a two-year contract for the 16-gigabyte version, so it's even priced the same as the iPhone.

I think if I were to switch from my iPhone, the Galaxy S III would be my new phone, but I'll be waiting on that decision for a little while yet.

SAMSUNG GALAXY S III:

-Price: $199 with two-year contract at most carriers; $279 from T-Mobile

-Pros: Beautiful, large screen, fast, full-featured

-Cons: None

-Bottom line: It's nice to see Samsung come out swinging at its competitors. I think the Galaxy S III is going to be popular for all the right reasons.

-On the Web: samsung.com/galaxysIII/

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Citation: Tech review: Samsung Galaxy S III challenges iPhone (2012, July 6) retrieved 27 April 2024 from https://phys.org/news/2012-07-tech-samsung-galaxy-iii-iphone.html