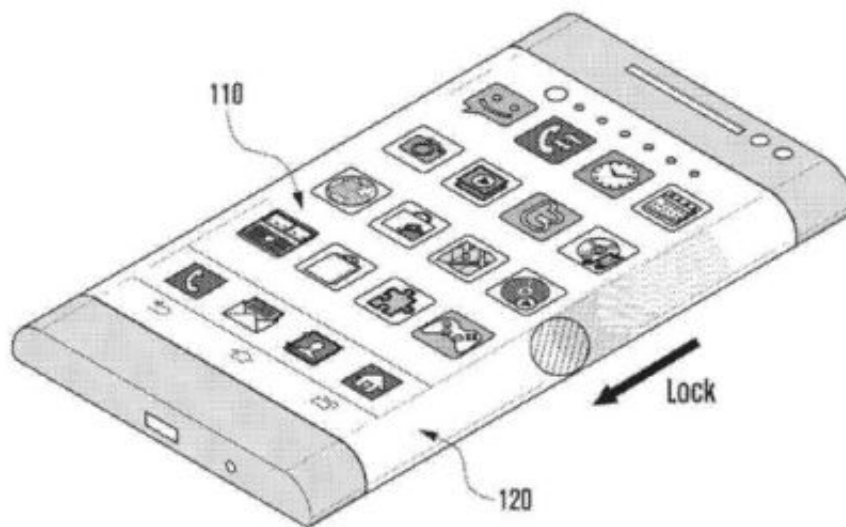


Samsung applies for patent on wraparound phone display

November 18 2013, by Bob Yirka



(Phys.org) —Samsung has applied for a [US patent](#) on a new type of wraparound display for a smartphone. According to diagrams in the patent, the wraparound would be more like single bends on either side of the main screen that take up part of the side of the phone. The result is a beveled look, where the bevel can display images and respond to touches just like the main screen.

Many in the press have been suggesting that the saturation point for smartphones is fast approaching, causing companies that make them, to dig deeper in coming up with new ways to entice buyers. Now that variations in [phone](#) size and allowing for some customizations to cases have been exhausted, [phone makers](#) are looking to change the display. Samsung has been leading the charge with "bendable" displays—most noticeably those with its patented Youm technology that allows for curved displays.

In this new effort, Samsung appears to be exploring the possibility of side screen edges that bend down, allowing images to be seen from different angles. Labels on the diagrams in the [patent application](#) indicate that side displays could be used for icons, as functions, navigation tools, indicators or even as a way to facilitate communication between devices. The bend angles appear to be set at the factory, thus users will not be able to adjust them.

Samsung has indicated in the past that its ultimate goal is to make a [smartphone](#) that can be folded up and placed in a pocket—similar to a wallet or billfold. To achieve that goal, engineers must overcome several hurdles. One of those is how to make a phone strong enough to survive being sat on, dropped, etc. while also being tough enough to withstand scratching or outright breaking. Other issues are how to make a bendable type of plastic screen that doesn't grow foggy, or break apart after repeated bends.

For its part, Samsung hasn't made any announcements about the new side bending technology, but others in the press, citing knowledgeable insider information claim that such a phone could be on the market as early as next year. If so, that should help the company keep ahead of Apple—that company is reportedly also working on a bendable screen—one with sensors that can gauge how hard a person is pressing and allow phone apps to respond accordingly.

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