

LG curved G-Flex smartphone to hit US by April (Update)

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LG representative Amy Sanchez holds LG's new G Flex curved screen smartphone during the LG press conference at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center for the 2014 International CES on January 6, 2014 in Las Vegas, Nevada

LG said Monday that its curved and slightly bendable G-Flex smartphone will hit the US by April in partnership with telecom firms AT&T, Sprint and T-Mobile.

The South Korean consumer electronics giant introduced its new

flagship smartphone in late October, but it is only available in the company's home country as well as Hong Kong and Singapore.

LG did not disclose its pricing plans for the US, but said that subsidies from carriers were expected to make it competitive with other top-end smartphones. G-Flex is currently sold for about \$940 without subsidies in places where it is available.

"G-Flex is the world's first curved and flexible smartphone," said LG Electronics USA mobile communications head Frank Lee during a presentation on the eve of the Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas.

"This is truly a game-changer."

The high-definition curved screen is powered by a similarly curved battery and designed to bend slightly, if for example the user accidentally sits on it.

"I've carried one for the last couple of weeks and I have never had more people stop and ask me about a device I was carrying," said David Owens, vice president of product at Sprint.

"I am so pleased it is coming, and coming very quickly."



Attendees look at LG's new G Flex curved screen smartphone, at the LG press conference at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center for the 2014 International CES on January 6, 2014 in Las Vegas, Nevada

The G-Flex uses flexible OLED (organic light-emitting diode) to produce a curved six-inch display.

In October, Samsung started retailing its "Galaxy Round"—a 5.7-inch (14.5 centimeter) handset with a display that curves from side-to-side to fit the contour of the hand.

The G-Flex is curved on the vertical axis in order to, the company said, "follow the contour of the face."

Curved displays are already commercially available in large-screen televisions offered by both Samsung and LG, with both companies showing off ultra high-definition curved televisions at CES.

The displays are supposed to offer a more immersive viewing experience but are significantly more expensive than standard screens.

Curved screens are still at a nascent stage in display technology, which is shifting towards flexible panels that are bendable or can even be rolled or folded.

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