With One M8, HTC gives smartphone users a choice: Android or Windows?

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Credit: HTC

It's hard to get excited about using the Windows Phone operating system instead of Android or Apple's iOS. There's a long list of official apps that can't be downloaded, including YouTube, Snapchat, Dropbox and Lyft.

But Microsoft is trying a new tactic, hoping that making a big, good-looking phone will entice some customers to give its Windows Phone system a try. Verizon Wireless on Tuesday will begin selling a Windows

version of the HTC One M8. That means customers will have the choice of getting either an HTC One M8 that runs Windows or one that runs Android. It's the first time such an option has been on the table.

To date, most Windows Phones have come from Nokia, whose phone manufacturing business Microsoft acquired earlier this year. But Microsoft is seeking to branch out and make its services available on more devices.

The 5-inch HTC One M8 is among the best smartphones on the market, along with Samsung's Galaxy S5 and Apple's iPhone 5S. The One M8 is on sale for $100 from Verizon Wireless while the iPhone and Galaxy typically cost $199 with a 2-year contract.

Why would someone choose Windows over Android?

Microsoft's selling points include Cortana, a digital assistant that rivals Apple's Siri, and easy separation of personal and work data on the device. Live tiles offer significant customization on the home screen, and sometimes more information in a quick glance than on Android. Windows also promises to take on "the chores of battery, data and storage management and keying in passwords for known Wi-Fi networks."

For those wanting the newest and coolest apps, Windows is probably not the right choice.

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