

Microsoft unveils low-cost smartphones in some markets

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Microsoft on Wednesday unveiled two new low-cost smartphones aimed at pushing its Windows Phone operating system to users in Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

The two Lumia handsets—made by the unit of Finnish-based Nokia

which Microsoft acquired last year—will begin rolling out in February, with prices starting at 69 to 79 euros (\$81 to \$93).

The launch is part of a goal by Microsoft aimed at "bringing devices to as many people and price points as possible," said Jo Harlow, corporate vice president for phones at Microsoft.

"With the Lumia 435 and Lumia 532, we've realized our goal of creating the most affordable Lumia devices to date, opening up the opportunity to reach those people who are buying a [smartphone](#) for the very first time."

Both smartphones come with latest Windows Phone 8.1 operating system, Microsoft's Office suite including Word, Outlook for email, Skype, and up to 30GB of free cloud storage.

The less expensive Lumia 435 comes with a four-inch display, and modest two-megapixel front camera. The more expensive 532 features the same display but includes a more powerful camera and access to some high-speed networks, and the possibility of dual SIM for using more than one [phone](#) number.

The move comes after Google's announcement last year that it would begin selling smartphones for under \$100 in emerging markets to boost the Android operating system.

Other low-cost handsets aimed at the same markets include some using alternative operating systems including Firefox from Mozilla.

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