

Verizon Wireless downplays Linux phones

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(AP) -- Verizon Wireless considers Linux-based software a possible long-term contender for use on its phones, but doesn't view it as a "preferred" solution, the carrier's head said.

Verizon Wireless said last year that LiMo software, a version of Linux created by a consortium of companies, would be the preferred software platform for its phones starting this year, but Chief Executive Lowell McAdam denied Wednesday that LiMo would have any special status.

"We will not be in a position where we shun one [operating system](#) in favor over another operating system," McAdam told reporters at a trade show here. "We want to see what works well over time."

Like other carriers, Verizon Wireless is troubled by the diversity of operating systems among cell phones, which increases development costs, forces the carrier to examine every new model closely and limits the number of phones that software applications can run on. That's a contrast to the world of personal computers, where most computers run a single operating system, [Microsoft](#) Corp.'s Windows.

McAdam said the company's goal was to go from eight or nine [phone](#) operating systems right now, to three or four in a couple of years.

McAdam didn't say which ones might prevail. Apart from LiMo, likely contenders include Symbian and [Android](#), which like LiMo share their software blueprints with developers; [Windows Mobile](#), created by Microsoft; and Research In Motion Ltd.'s BlackBerry OS.

Right now, most Verizon Wireless phones that aren't "smart" phones use a software platform from [Qualcomm](#) Inc.

Verizon Wireless is a joint venture between Verizon Communications Inc. of New York and Vodafone Group PLC of Britain.

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