

Smartphones to rescue for lost cats, grandmas

February 28 2013, by David Williams



French yachtswoman Florence Arthaud makes a call with her cat on her shoulder in Marseille in 2011. Lost your cat? Your grandmother? Or are you injured in a car crash, unable to call for help because your phone battery is dead? Never fear, a mobile solution is near.

Lost your cat? Your grandmother? Or are you injured in a car crash, unable to call for help because your phone battery is dead? Never fear, a mobile solution is near.

[Inventors](#) and manufacturers at the world's biggest mobile fair in Barcelona showed off new inventions to make the ubiquitous mobile even dearer to owners' hearts.

You don't have to be human to benefit.

If you buy a GPS pet-tracking device from Tractive, you can attach it to your dog's or cat's collar and get an immediate alarm on your [smartphone](#) the moment he or she leaves from the garden, or any other area you have defined.

Your pet's hopes of escape can be quickly squashed with the help of your [iPhone](#) or Android-powered mobile.

"With the Tractive live tracking feature you can see your pet's location and see where they are going," the firm boasts.

"By simply flipping a switch in the Tractive app, you can turn on the integrated light on the tracking device to help find your pet in the dark."

Forgetful [grandparents](#) can be traced easily, too.

A new black and silver [flip phone](#) for [seniors](#), Emporia Connect, comes with a system called Emporia Me, allowing a child or grandchild to check the device's location, battery status, or even turn up the volume on the phone to make sure the elderly owner can hear it.

While it is not a smartphone, it does have an [orientation](#) feature that lets a user push a single button to get turn-by-turn audible instructions for returning to a car while on a shopping trip, for example.



Eveline Pupeter of Emporia at the IFA trade fair in Berlin last August. A new black and silver flip phone for seniors, Emporia Connect, comes with a system called Emporia Me, allowing a child or grandchild to check the device's location, battery status, or even turn up the volume on the phone to make sure the elderly owner can hear it.

In a crisis, a dead battery can render any smartphone dumb.

Xpal's new phone, SpareOne Plus, has the answer: the telephone takes a single [AA battery](#), some of which can last 15 years.

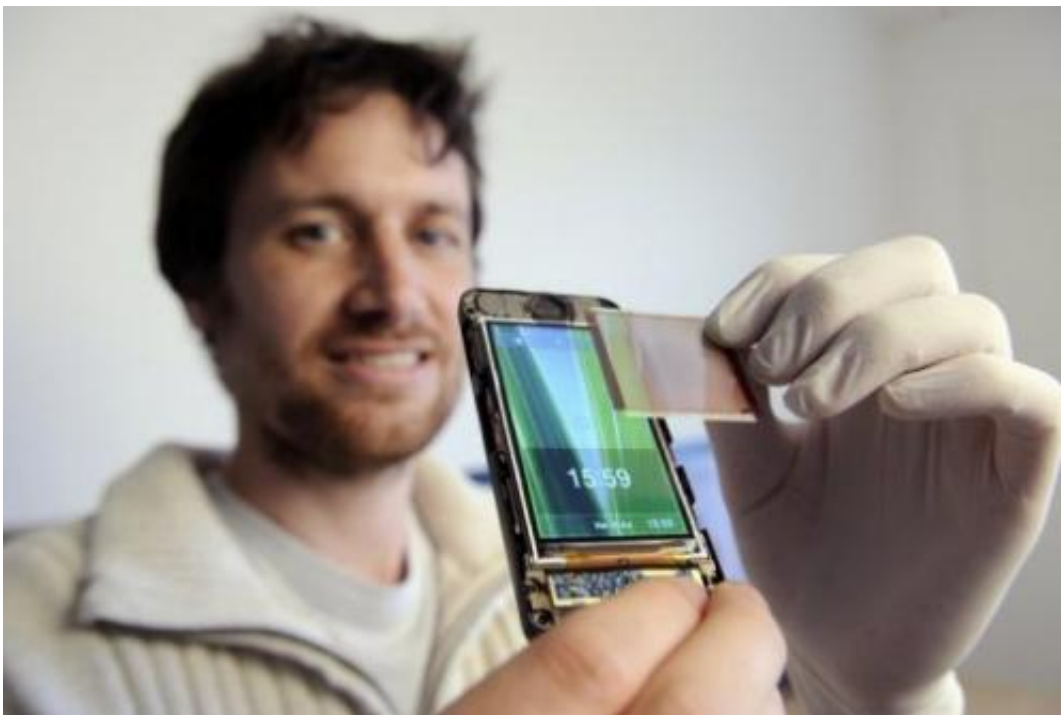
It comes delivered in a waterproof pack, just in case, so you can keep it ready for an emergency in the next decade or so.

"That means I can keep the telephone in a drawer, in a car for example for 15 years, switched off, and if ever I am in an emergency and I have to make a call, it is always charged," Xpal director Alan Cymberknoh

told AFP.

There is no need for a contract because emergency calls are free, but it will take a SIM card if you want to make regular calls.

One year since the first version was launched, sales—mostly online in the United States—are going "very, very well," said Cymberknoh.



Company head Ludovic Deblois demonstrates Wysips's photovoltaic film in Lambesc, France in 2011. Wysips, a startup based in Aix-en-Provence, southern France, has developed a photovoltaic film which can be built seamlessly into a mobile phone screen and deliver the joy of life to a flat battery.

The latest model on show at the February 25-28 World Mobile Congress can send your GPS location, too, when you make a crisis call.

If you only have a smartphone with you, though, and the battery is dead, another solution is on the way.

Wysips, a startup based in Aix-en-Provence, southern France, has developed a photovoltaic film which can be built seamlessly into a mobile phone screen and deliver the joy of life to a flat battery.

Wysips chief executive Ludovic Deblois showed off a prototype of a smartphone equipped with the film at the Mobile World Congress. By just shining a torch on its screen, the mobile's battery icon showed that it had started to recharge.

"With 10 minutes in the sun you will be able to communicate for two minutes," Deblois said.

"So if you arrive at the airport and you have your boarding pass on the mobile you can't have a telephone that runs out of battery so you can just put it in the light and recharge it," he explained.

If reception is a problem when you try to make that desperate call, Ericsson may have the answer.

The communications giant is testing transparent antennas in a project called Window of Opportunity.

It could turn an ordinary window into part of the mobile broadband work, "boosting indoor coverage and providing a great mobile experience," the firms says.

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