

Moto Puts Future on Razr's Edge

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In its first major hardware launch since being acquired by Google, Motorola Mobility expanded its Droid Razr line yesterday with the launch of three new Android smartphones.

The Razr HD, Razr M, and Razr Maxx HD offer a variety of sizes and feature sets, with Motorola putting an emphasis on the speed of Verizon's LTE network, which remains a strong carrier partner for Motorola.

Motorola improved the phones' battery life. The Razr Maxx HD promises 32 hours of normal use, 21 hours of talk time, 13 hours of straight video playback, or eight hours of Internet browsing over LTE.

The Droid Razr M and Razr HD feature a 4.3-inch Super AMOLED Advanced display and a 4.7-inch Super AMOLED HD display, respectively. Motorola boasts that the Razr HD's screen provides customers with a higher resolution while still managing 40 percent greater battery capacity than the original Droid Razr.

All three of the new Droid Razrs come running Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich, upgradeable to Jelly Bean by end of this year. Each packs 1.5 GHz dual-core processors, 1 GB of RAM and NFC capabilities.

The Razr M will be available on Sept. 13 for \$99.99 after a \$50 mail-in rebate with a new two-year customer agreement. The Droid Razr HD and Razr Maxx HD will be available before the holidays, but pricing for those devices was not immediately provided.

Motorola's announcement came only hours after Nokia pitched its new Lumia phones at a press event yesterday and ahead of Apple's planned Sept. 12 event, where it is expected to unveil the next iteration of the iPhone.

Both Nokia and Motorola are fighting to gain share on Apple and Samsung, which continue to take the lion's share of the high-end smartphone market.

Motorola was the fourth-largest OEM in the United States for the three months ending in July, according to numbers from comScore. The Chicago-based company lost 1.3 percent of its market share from the three month period ending in April, taking 11.2 percent share for the most current period. Apple took 16.3 percent, while Samsung controlled 25.6 percent of the total mobile device market in the United States.

Since taking control of Motorola Mobility, Google has installed its own Dennis Woodside as CEO, ousting Sanjay Jha, the man credited with turning around the struggling OEM's devices business.

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While Motorola had some successes with its Droid line, Google has already begun trimming the fat at the company. Google announced early last month that it would cut 4,000 of the OEM's roughly 20,000 employees.

Google also said it would close about a third of Motorola's 90 worldwide facilities. According to an SEC filing where the downsizing was disclosed, the changes are aimed at returning Motorola's mobile devices unit to profitability after it lost money in 14 of the last 16 quarters.

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