

Motorola unveils 'affordable' Moto G smartphone

SAO PAULO, BRAZIL: Google-owned Motorola Mobility on Wednesday unveiled the Moto G, aimed at the half-billion consumers around the world, many in emerging markets, who want a smartphone without a high price tag.



Sao Paulo at night. (Image: JD Lasica, via Wikimedia Commons)

The new handset will sell at less than \$200 without a contract in the US market and, around the world, will be around one-third the price of top-line Apple iPhones and Samsung devices.

Unveiling the phone in the Brazilian business hub Sao Paulo. Motorola chief Dennis Woodside said: "Half a billion people will buy a phone for under \$200.

"Moto G is a smartphone that delivers a premium experience with today's technology at less than one-third of the price of today's smartphones like the iPhone 5s," he said.

The new device is a low-cost version of the Moto X released earlier this year in the United States. It features a 4.5 inch (11.5 cm) display and all-day battery, and will include the latest versions of the Google Android operating system.

Motorola hosted the launch after Britain's Tesco supermarket chain and Germany's Phone House listed it in their catalogs.

Woodside said the phone would be especially attractive in emerging markets around where carrier subsidies for phones are rare and consumers are reluctant to pay \$600 or more for a handset.

"Our industry forced consumers to make a choice between two very bad options," he said.

"The first option is to buy an old technology that doesn't work well with applications like Google maps... the second option is to buy an old premium phone that was typically released in the US two or three years ago. We think the industry should deliver more value for the consumer's dollar."

The handset packs in a 1.2GHz quad-core Qualcomm Snapdragon processor and 5-megapixel and 1.3-megapixel cameras front and rear. This will allow the phone to "punch above its weight," said Punit Soni, software product manager for Motorola.

IDC market analyst Ramon Llamas said the device won't work on high-speed LTE networks but that "most of the initial markets don't have LTE networks. 3G will do just fine."

Llamas said in a tweet: "Users in emerging markets are price sensitive, but not ignorant of what a quality smartphone is. #MotoG is addressing that need."

Woodside said the phone goes on sale immediately in Brazil and some European markets, and will hit the US and a total of 30 countries by early next year.

In the US, the price for an unlocked entry-level Moto G will be \$179. It will have dual SIM capability to allow consumers to roam in other countries with a second identity. It will also allow customisation with a variety of colors and accessories.

Brazil, with its population of 200 million, has a reported 262.2 million cellphones and around 27 million people have a smartphone.

Recent research by Gartner Inc predict mobile-phone growth hitting 5.2% in 2014, outstripping 3.7% this year with consumers chasing competitively-priced handsets fueling the rise.

Google bought Motorola Mobility for \$12.5bn in May 2012, aiming to revive the struggling former star of the mobile sector and use it to battle for smartphone supremacy with the Android platform.

Google also sells its own Nexus-branded phones manufactured by South Korea's LG.

Source: AFP, via I-Net Bridge

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