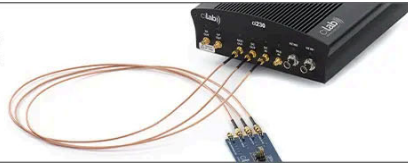


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## Google unveils first Android NFC phone — but Nexus S is limited to tag reading only for now

By [Sarah Clark](#) • 7 December 2010

The Nexus S, the first Android phone to use the new Gingerbread version of the operating system and its built-in NFC functionality, will hit the shops in the US on 16 December and the UK on 20 December. For now, however, it looks as though the phones will only support tag reading applications — mobile payments capabilities will only be available later.

**Google** has released version 2.3 of the **Android** operating system. Codenamed Gingerbread, the new OS includes support for near field communication, **as promised by Google CEO Eric Schmidt last month.**

It looks, however, as though this first version of Android to support NFC **only includes tag reading functionality** — meaning that mobile payments and other applications such as transport ticketing that require NFC's card emulation capabilities will only be supported in a future version of the Android OS.

nexus | S



Tag reading functionality, though, does allow for a wide range of advertising, couponing and other promotional applications, as well as geolocation features such as checking in to venues, all of which may be of more interest to Google and the Android ecosystem initially.

**NEXUS S:** First of many of Android NFC phones?



According to official [Android Developers](#) resources:

**“** *The platform’s support for Near Field Communications (NFC) lets developers get started creating a whole new class of applications for Android. Developers can create new applications that offer proximity-based information and services to users, organizations, merchants, and advertisers.*

*Using the NFC API, applications can respond to NFC tags “discovered” as the user “touches” an NFC-enabled device to elements embedded in stickers, smart posters, and even other devices. When a tag of interest is collected, applications can respond to the tag, read messages from it, and then store the messages, prompting the user as needed.*

*NFC communication relies on wireless technology in the device hardware, so support for the platform’s NFC features on specific devices is determined by their manufacturers.*

The first phone to support Gingerbread and the first Android phone, therefore, to support NFC, is the Nexus S, manufactured by [Samsung](#). It is due to go on sale in the US at Best Buy and Best Buy Mobile stores on 16 December and in the UK on 20 December at [Carphone Warehouse](#) stores. At [Best Buy](#), the phone will cost US\$529 to buy outright or \$199 with a two year T-Mobile contract.

“Nexus S is the lead device for the Gingerbread/Android 2.3 release,” the [Official Google Blog](#) reports. “We co-developed this product with Samsung — ensuring tight integration of hardware and software to highlight the latest advancements of the Android platform. As part of the Nexus brand, Nexus S delivers what we call a ‘pure Google’ experience: unlocked, unfiltered access to the best Google mobile services and the latest and greatest Android releases and updates.”

As well as NFC, the Nexus S features a 4-inch display, Samsung’s own 1GHz Hummingbird processor, front and rear facing cameras and 16GB of internal memory.

The NFC functionality in the Nexus S has been provided by [NXP](#), as part of a strategic collaboration the company has revealed it has in place with Google to provide a complete open source NFC software stack for Android devices. “The NFC stack will be fully integrated and validated on Gingerbread, the latest version of the Android platform,” says NXP. The Nexus S employs the company’s [PN544 NFC controller chip](#).

“We are always looking for creative ways to enhance and extend the utilities of mobile devices with new technologies,” says Eric Chu, mobile platforms program manager at Google. “With NXP’s contribution, the introduction of NFC in Android provides developers, service providers, and device manufacturers a game-changing opportunity to deliver new services while enabling users to interact with each other and the physical world in ways previously not possible.”

“Google’s adoption of the technology will be a catalyst for the industry to drive the further adoption of NFC at both the handset and application levels,” adds Ruediger Stroh, executive vice president and general manager of NXP’s Identification Business. “Open source development environments will push the boundaries of innovation and drive revolutionary new services and applications for mobile devices.”

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**Markus Taubek**

8 DECEMBER 2010 AT 10:27 GMT

Is there any info or idea, when there come an OS update to do more NFC Stuff than reading Tags?

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