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Symbian releasing free developer tool

Are they going up against Android?

by Katie Scott published on 22 October 2008

Nokia is making the Symbian mobile phone format open source - a move which analysts are claiming is a bid to take on the Google Android platform.

The Symbian Foundation has 52 members currently, but previously was a closed book for developers.

But now Nokia, which is going to buy out British smartphone software maker Symbian's shareholders for an estimated \$410 million, is going to make the software behind the platform royalty-free to other phone makers.

Amongst those who will be joining the foundation to get access to the developer tool are ARM, Chinese technology group Huawei, and Visa.

Nokia hopes to release the Symbian Foundation software by next year and then release a brand new platform by June 2010.

ARM is already giving details on its application which will be a profiler and which will add better features and reduce power consumption.

Other companies that have also signed up include Samsung, Motorola, Sony Ericsson and LG.

The Symbian OS competes with Apple's platform on the iPhone and also the Google Android OS, used in the T-Mobile G1 phone, which was launched in September.

Nearly 20 million Symbian-based mobile phones were sold in Q2 2008 which brought the overall total of units shipped to more than 223 million by June this year.

