

Press release

Canonical announces first partners to ship Ubuntu phones around the globe.

- bq and Meizu sign agreements to deliver and ship Ubuntu phones
- Online campaigns with bq and Meizu will make Ubuntu phones available globally
- Strong support for Ubuntu devices has also been received from carriers worldwide

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19th February 2014, London: Canonical today announces it has signed agreements with mobile device manufacturers bq (Spain) and Meizu (China) to bring Ubuntu smartphones to consumers globally. Canonical is working with these partners to ship the first Ubuntu devices on the latest hardware in 2014. Ubuntu has also received significant support from the world's biggest carriers, some of which intend to work with OEM partners to bring phones to market this year.

Development programmes have begun with the partners to provide smartphones with a superior user experience on mid to high end hardware for consumers around the world. Devices will be available to buy online through bq, Meizu and at Ubuntu.com.

Ubuntu introduces a new UI paradigm for mobile devices. Ubuntu puts content and services at the centre of the experience, rather than hiding them behind stores and apps. This gives consumers a fresh and rich way to engage with their favourite videos, music and other mobile activities. It also means OEMs and operators have unprecedented customisation opportunities with a common UI toolkit, which gives devices their own unique footprint and without fragmenting the platform.

Meizu is one of China's most successful high-end smartphone manufacturers with over 1,000 employees, 600 retail stores and a global presence in China, Hong Kong, Israel, Russia and Ukraine. In January, the company announced its strategy to expand into other international markets as well as to ship phones in America later in 2014 and Ubuntu will be a key part of this expansion. Meizu designs and retails phones that are characterised by light, comfortable design as well as ease of use and functionality. "Ubuntu's intuitive and visually stunning user interface aligns with our own ethos of producing simple, innovative mobile experiences. This partnership gives us an opportunity to develop a truly different and compelling offering that will support our strategy to deliver devices to both China as well as internationally," says Li Nan, Meizu's VP Sales and Marketing.

bq, is a manufacturer of multimedia devices operating in Europe and employing 600 people. In 2013, the company shipped almost 1.5 million devices and in less than a year has become the Spain's second biggest seller of unlocked smartphones. bq will bring Ubuntu onto its latest hardware specifications. "Ubuntu's ongoing success on PCs, as well as the huge support it has gained for its mobile proposition provides the best opportunity to bring an alternative platform to market on our hardware," Alberto Mendez, CEO, comments.

Mark Shuttleworth, founder of Canonical and Ubuntu, adds; "The mobile industry has long been looking for a viable alternative to those that reign today. Ubuntu puts the control back into the hands of our partners and presents an exciting platform for consumers, delivering an experience which departs from the tired app icon grid of Android and iOS and provides a fluid, content-rich experience for all."

Carriers and major industry players that Canonical has engaged with have also shown their support for Ubuntu and an alternative operating system for the mobile market. To date, Ubuntu's Carrier Advisory Group has 16 members including Vodafone, EE, T-Mobile USA, Three Group, Deutsche Telekom, Verizon, Telstra and Portugal Telecom. Canonical is also working with a breadth of ISV partners, including The Weather Channel, GrooveShark, Evernote and more, to bring the best applications and services to Ubuntu.

Portugal Telecom

"It is our commitment to keep working closely with Canonical to build a proposition for Ubuntu devices that will deliver a fresh, new and exciting experience for our users," says Pedro Leitão should be: Member of the Board of Portugal Telecom responsible for the Consumer Segment.

Three Group

"Ubuntu is creating an innovative mobile web experience that brings more choice for customers, and opportunities for operators and OEMs who are keen to differentiate their devices."

Telecom Italia

"We've been very active in helping shape Ubuntu for the Italian market by contributing to the Ubuntu Carrier Advisory Group for many months."

Smart

"Ubuntu's entry to the mobile phone market is definitely exciting. We see this as an interesting opportunity to help bring mobile innovations quicker to the market, lower access barriers and provide more choices in terms of apps and devices," says Orlando B.Vea, chief wireless advisor at Smart. "We're very keen to work with Ubuntu and the developer community in making this happen as it supports our goal to bring the mobile Internet to every Filipino."

Smartfren (Indonesia)

"We've been working closely with Canonical and the Carrier Advisory Group for several months, and look forward to being able to launch Ubuntu devices in the Indonesian market," comments Richard Tan, deputy CEO.

ENDS

About Canonical

Canonical is the company behind Ubuntu and the leading provider of services for Ubuntu deployments in the enterprise. With global teams of developers, support staff and engineering centres, Canonical is uniquely positioned to help partners and customers make the most of Ubuntu. Canonical is a privately held company.

Ubuntu is a free, open-source platform for client, server and cloud computing. It is the most widely used Linux on the top 1000 websites by traffic, the reference platform for OpenStack deployments, the most popular guest OS on public clouds, and ships on PCs from Dell, Lenovo, HP and other brands. Since its launch in 2004, it has become the preferred choice for open desktop and scale-out computing, from Fortune 500 companies to hardware makers, content providers, software developers and consumers.

About bq

bq is a company dedicated to consumer electronics, which designs and develops both software and hardware. Its main division is multimedia devices (e-readers, tablets and smartphones), a market in which it is the leader in Spain. Its innovative spirit had led it to operate in emerging fields such as educational robotics, the development of reading platforms and 3D printing. In this latter market, it designs and manufactures its own 3D printer, the bq Witbox, which is distributed worldwide.

About Meizu

Established in 2003 and headquartered in Zhuhai, China, MEIZU designs and produces smartphones created to provide a simple, intuitive mobile experience for people whose time is expected to be simply spent in using their devices, instead of figuring out the way of using them.

Meizu expanded into the smartphone market in 2008 and has been committed to developing high-end smartphones ever since. Based on a business philosophy and commitment to pursuing perfection and long-term development, MEIZU remains laser focused on developing innovative and user-friendly smartphones for consumers. With more than 1,000 employees and 600 retail stores, the company has built a global presence in Hong Kong, Israel, Russia and Ukraine.