

Ubuntu to reach milestone with launch of phone via BQ

February 9 2015, by Nancy Owano



It's on its way: the first Ubuntu-based smartphone is to go on sale soon for a little over \$190 in a flash sale across Europe; there will be a series of online flash sales over the coming weeks. This will be offered as the Aquaris E4.5 Ubuntu Edition.

It's a black-screen, sleek-looking phone from the Spanish company BQ.

According to a press release, the date, time and URL for the first flash sale will be announced via social networking accounts on Twitter and Facebook, namely through @Ubuntu and @bqreaders on Twitter as well as Ubuntu G+ and Ubuntu Facebook. The Aquaris E4.5 Ubuntu Edition is dual SIM and completely unlocked; consumers will be able to use it with their current networks. *Engadget* said a handful of European carriers will be offering special SIM bundles to early adopters. The press release said 3 Sweden, amena.com, giffgaff, and Portugal Telecom are offering SIM bundles at purchase. An Ubuntu phone video reveals a sleek, engaging screen series of displays for getting to one's apps, music, texting keyboards, time-checks for Shanghai and London, and press headline cascades for news-seekers.

But *Gigaom* senior writer David Meyer thought specs were "quite middling": 1GB of RAM, 8GB of storage, an 8MP back camera and a 5MP front [camera](#). Nick Summers, reporter, *Engadget* UK, similarly commented that "the hardware was nothing to write [home](#) about," with its 4.5-inch, 540x960 resolution display. He said the specs were "pretty unremarkable." Vlad Savov in *The Verge* put it like this: "The modest price is matched by this first Ubuntu phone's barebone spec [sheet](#)."

Nonetheless, Ubuntu's phone promotions are highlighting an attractive feature called Scopes, billed as a "reinvention of the mobile UI," a way to access services directly on the home screen. The "unfragmented experience" from Scopes is "a world away from burying content and services inside multiple apps in an icon grid – reversing the industry's hackneyed status quo," said the news release. Jay Cassano in *Fast Company* distilled the advantage in Scopes. He said, "Scopes are essentially contextual home-screen [dashboards](#) that will be much simpler and less time-consuming to develop than full-on native apps." You see presentations of related content from different providers alongside each other on one screen, he said.

Canonical produces Ubuntu. BQ is a Spanish consumer electronics and software development company; the press release noted its European technology presence.

According to *Engadget*, the flash sales are a move to target early adopters. Alberto Mendez, CEO at BQ, said his company supported diversity in operating systems "because it brings positive benefits for the technology sector and also for the user, who has the freedom to choose."

More information: insights.ubuntu.com/2015/02/06...-at-your-fingertips/

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