

Not another new phone! But Nextbit's Robin is smarter

September 2 2015, by Nancy Owano



San Francisco-based Nextbit wants you to meet Robin, which they consider as the smarter smartphone. Their premise is that no one is making a smart smartphone; when you get so big it's hard to see the

forest through the trees. let alone the cloud from the forest. They are here to make the difference.

Two outstanding features are highlighted—Robin makes running out of space history ("our smart storage solution that seamlessly expands as you add more to your phone") so that you keep your apps, your songs, your photos, and it keeps getting smarter. Robin has been launched as a Kickstarter campaign.

By learning the apps you use and the space you need, said the team, Robin offloads the stuff you don't use to the cloud. So you can have everything you want (in the cloud), and just what you need (on your phone).

Wired commented that those who opt for a Robin phone get a lot more storage than your hard drive. "You're getting a phone that's constantly backing up and synchronizing your stuff."

When you start running out of space on the phone Robin "intelligently" removes apps and photos you haven't used in a while, the team said. Robin knows they're already backed up safely. "If you ever want an offloaded app or photo back, no problem. Just tap on it and we restore the full version right away."

The company team behind Robin is proud that the phone has "zero bloatware." They said that "you won't find a single third-party app." Their conviction is that what is on the user's phone should be up to the user, not the vendor.

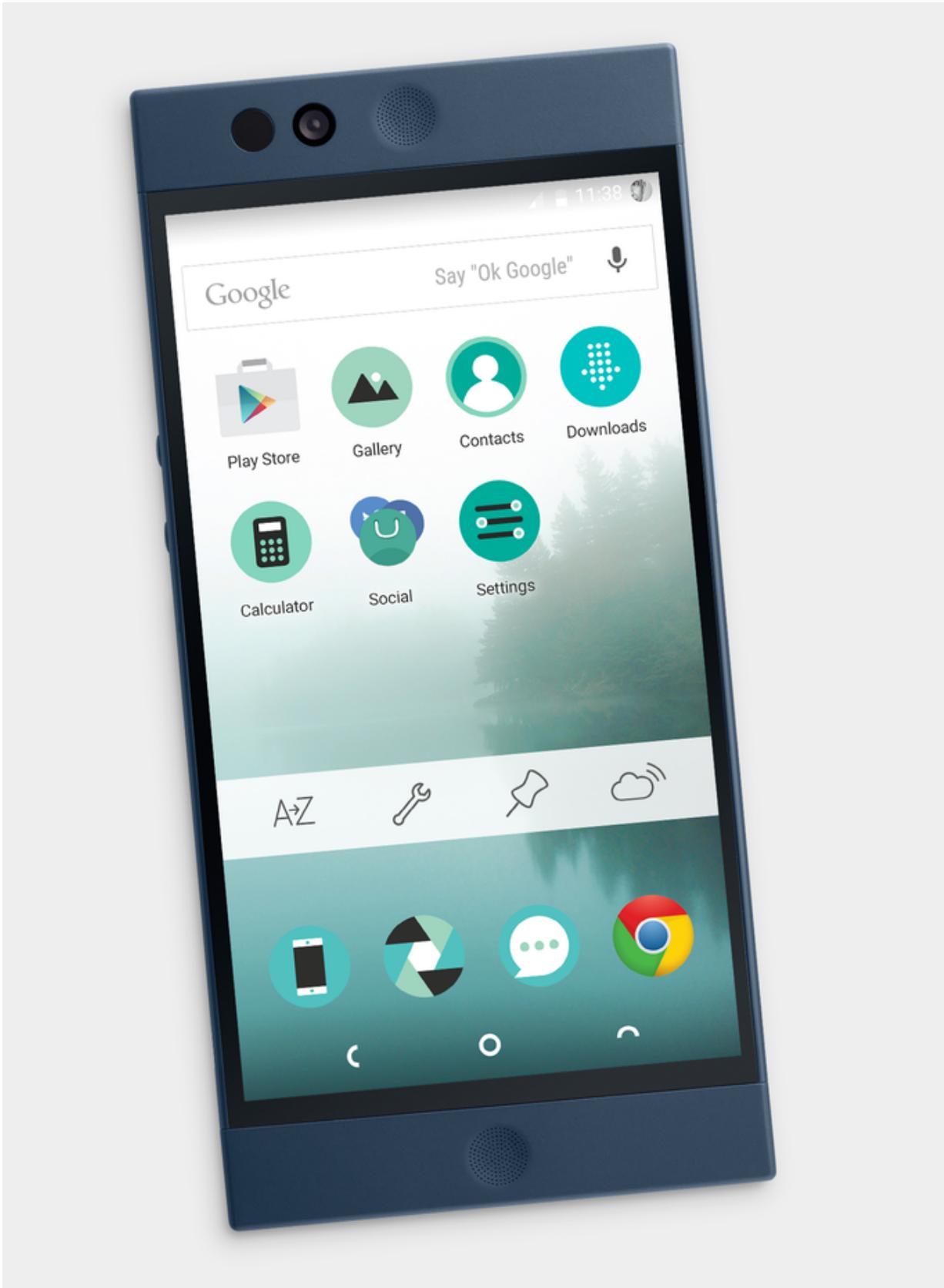
Ron Amadeo, who took a close look at the phone in *Ars Technica*, reported, "Nextbit told us they want to embrace the modding community, too, as they will allow users to unlock the phone's

[bootloader](#) without voiding the warranty."

The team said the drivers are open source. "We think what you run should be up to you, so we've made it as easy as possible for you to customize Robin," they said.

Four tiny lights on the back provide confirmation that Robin is connected to the cloud and working, without interrupting. A LED on the bottom tells the user of important notifications, even if the phone is on silent and face down on a table.

This is an Android device running a Snapdragon processor by Qualcomm (Snapdragon 808). They said "It only uses what you need for what you're asking it to do, so it's always running optimally." They said it was engineered for long battery life.



The phones have front and rear cameras with "phase detection autofocus," to assure the user gets the shot intended even when things are moving fast.

They list the memory specs as 3GB RAM / 32 GB onboard / 100 GB online. The screen specs are: listed as 5.2" IPS LCD 1080p.

With 29 days to go they topped their goal of \$500,000, at the time of this writing, with \$543,893 pledged. They had offered the phone at an early adopter price of \$299 but those are all gone.



A [pledge](#) of \$349, with estimated delivery in February, gets a phone and charging cable. It comes with a special SIM tray and additional online storage (100GB total).

David Pierce, a senior staff writer, *Wired*, reported on his conversations with the team when he stopped by the company's San Francisco office. He said everyone at Nextbit explains the founding idea in almost exactly the same way, as "we're overdue for a smartphone software redesign."

Pierce described their line of reasoning: By connecting your [phone](#) to the Internet at every corner of the operating system, the company thinks it can make your [smartphone](#) more powerful than its spec sheet, smarter, more [personalized](#), infinitely extensible and expandable.

Nextbit was founded in 2012.

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