

Huawei sells folding smartphone with no Google after US ban

15 November 2019, by Joe McDonald



In this May 20, 2019, file photo, a man uses his smartphone outside a Huawei store in Beijing. Chinese tech giant Huawei is selling a folding smartphone without Google apps or U.S.-made processor chips following sanctions imposed by Washington. The Mate X went on sale Friday, Nov. 15, 2019 on Huawei's online store in China priced at 16,999 yuan (\$2,422) and competes with Samsung's Galaxy Fold launched in September. (AP Photo/Ng Han Guan, File)

Chinese tech giant Huawei is selling its first folding smartphone without Google apps or U.S.-made processor chips following sanctions imposed by Washington.

The Mate X, which unfolds to 14.6 centimeters (5.8 inches) wide, went on sale Friday on Huawei's online store in China priced at 16,999 yuan (\$2,422). It competes with Samsung's Galaxy Fold launched in September.

Huawei Technologies Ltd., China's first global tech brand, is scrambling to preserve its business following U.S. controls imposed in May on sales of American components and technology to the company, which Washington says is a [security risk](#).

The company is the No. 2 smartphone behind Samsung Electronics Ltd. and the biggest maker of network gear for phone carriers.

Huawei denies U.S. accusations the company might facilitate Chinese spying. The Trump administration is lobbying European and other allies to exclude Huawei equipment as they prepare to upgrade to next-generation telecom networks.

The Mate X uses Huawei's Kirin 980 and Balong 5000 chipset instead of chips from Qualcomm or other U.S. suppliers. It comes loaded with Chinese alternatives to Google music, maps and other apps.

The screen unfolds to 14.6 centimeters (5.8 inches) by 16.1 centimeters (6.4 inches).

The Mate X uses Huawei's EMUI 9 operating system, which is based on Google's Android. The company can use the open-source version of Android but if U.S. sanctions are fully enforced, it will lose access to Google's [popular music](#) and other apps, making it harder to compete with Samsung.

American officials say companies will be allowed to sell some products to Huawei but they still are waiting for licenses.

Huawei smartphones sold in China already use local music and other apps because Google services aren't licensed by Beijing.

The company has yet to announce Mate X sales forecasts or plans to sell it outside China.

Huawei unveiled a smartphone operating system, HarmonyOS, in August that it said can replace Android if necessary. The company says, however, it wants to keep working with American vendors.

Huawei reported earlier sales rose 24.4% in the first nine months of 2019 to 610.8 billion yuan (\$86

billion). Its chairman, Liang Hua, warned in July it would "face difficulties" in the second half.

Also this week, Huawei said it would pay bonuses totaling 2 billion yuan (\$285 million) to 90,000 employees in chip development and some other units as thanks for helping to cope with U.S. sanctions.

The full 180,000-member workforce also will receive an extra month's salary, the [company](#) said.

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