

March 16, 2011

Now that the excitement of MWC (or, as it's still popularly known among apparently everyone *except* the show's organizers, 3GSM) has faded somewhat, there's some space to reflect on what we saw there, what's happened since we've been back, and – most importantly – what it all means for the mobile app market.

Xoom, Xoom, Xoom

The Motorola Xoom, Android's Honeycomb poster child, is picking up momentum, even outperforming the iPad2 in parts of the recent CNET [site loading test](#) – despite the fact that iPad2 retains the “overall best tablet” title according to [NetworkWorld](#). And the fact that Verizon waved the \$35 fee could definitely impact uptake of the device – although this was just as likely a bone thrown to Motorola following Verizon's iPhone4 launch. At the same time, Xoom is pricy – almost \$300 more than iPad2 - and delivers arguably more or less the same functionality. So whether users will flock *away* from the hottest brand on the planet, pay \$300 more, and get the same product remains to be seen...

Firefox 4

Mozilla has given mobile browsing a shot in the arm with Android and Maemo support in the Firefox 4 Beta 5. The value here is both symbolic - bringing a name associated with PC-based browsing firmly into the mobile world – and practical. From the practical side, the browser supports the latest versions of standard traditional web technologies like HTML5, CSS, and JavaScript – *all on mobile devices*. Exactly how far is this from the pre-loaded browser experience we've “enjoyed” thus far? Think iPhone4 versus this sleek puppy:



What IS Real?

Augmented Reality (AR) has become the standard on sports broadcasting, but is still in its infancy in the mobile world. That said, Qualcomm's new AR SDK, released at 3GSM (OK fine, MWC), will enable a new breed of mobile apps that deliver interactive and 3D experiences on everyday objects. What does this mean, you ask? Check out [Layar's corporate video](#). This is stuff



that we saw 20 years ago in SciFi movies, folks. This is a field to watch – for gaming, travel, and just about anything else you can think of.

What IS the Atrix?

Oops, maybe that should have been “Matrix”. But this hot phone from Motorola takes the term Smartphone to a whole different level, which kind of threw me back to the coolness of Neo, Trinity, Morpheus, and crew. It’s a phone. No, it’s a Smartphone. No wait, it’s a portable computer with a docking station, that’s a phone, too. The Atrix has a 1GHz dual core processor, 1GB of RAM, and a 4-inch display. I’m going to have to call this “mobile fusion” (remember I coined it here first) - mobile meets the processing power of traditional mobile computing. If the release of Firefox4 blurred the lines between PC and mobile, this device *erases* them.

Resistance is Futile. You WILL be Assimilated

The [Borg](#) were nothing compared to Microsoft and Nokia. But Nokia’s strategic adoption of Windows makes sense, especially if you’ve ever struggled to do, well, *anything* on Symbian. It showed some serious market wisdom on Nokia’s part, who swallowed their OS pride in light of the business they’ve been losing to Android-based phones. And for MS, it can spell more marketshare for WP7. However, the most validating argument in favor of the MS/Nokia assimilation came from Google CEO Eric Schmidt in his [MWC keynote](#). Choosing to face the bull head-on, he admitted he would have preferred that Nokia choose Android. Could this mean that this deal represents a real threat to Android’s future?

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