

# The smartphone

## THE SMARTPHONE the 30-second history

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**3-SECOND SURVEY**  
The smartphone has quickly become an indispensable conduit to our digital social lives, the irony being that we have less time for face-to-face connections.

**3-MINUTE OVERVIEW**  
Smartphones are practically ubiquitous, allowing us to carry out the administrative aspects of our lives and stay connected wherever we may be. This is a convenience that we have eagerly adopted, but there are drawbacks to always being reachable: it can mean that work never stops; critics talk of overuse leading to addiction; bad posture and anxiety; and new phenomena such as trolling and cyberbullying have become the negative face of constant connectivity.

The first phone to combine the functions of a mobile phone with a personal digital assistant was developed by IBM in 1992 and marketed two years later by BellSouth. Named Simon, it was capable of sending and receiving emails and faxes and had features for keeping notes, storing addresses and scheduling appointments. The addition of QWERTY keyboards made it easier to work on the move using word processing and spreadsheets. The Nokia 9000, released in 1996, included a touchscreen with stylus and offered web browsing – unlike Simon. With Penelope, the Ericsson G.S. 88 in 1997, the term smartphone was officially coined. The plethora of similar phones that followed shared impediments that slowed smartphone penetration of the wider consumer market: apps were limited, resistive screens required pressure that was not finger-friendly and web pages were often truncated versions of the PC experience. In 2007, the Apple iPhone broke the mould with capacitive digitizer technology bringing a true touchscreen, and incorporating the iOS WebKit browser (quickly followed by an Android OS) allowing for full-colour, completely rendered web pages. This in turn led to the development of a host of apps for everyday and social functions, transforming the smartphone from a business tool into an object of consumer desire.

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**THE COMPUTER**  
page 98  
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### 3-SECOND BIOGRAPHY

**THEODORE GEORGE 'TED' PARASKEVAKOS**  
1937–  
Greek-American inventor and electronic engineer who pioneered the transmission of electronic data through telephone lines; he patented the concept of combining data processing and visual-display screens with telephones in 1973

### 30-SECOND TEXT

Diana Rawlinson

**The smartphone puts the power of desktop computing into your pocket – provided you can get a signal – introducing a potential that has yet to be fully exploited.**

