

Qualcomm, MediaTek, and Android OEMs usher in era of satellite connectivity at MWC

Article

The news: Mobile operators and smartphone companies are investing in mobile satellite connectivity to send messages or make voice calls, per [Android Central](#).

Laying out the mobile satellite connectivity landscape: Apple introduced emergency satellite connectivity for consumers with the **iPhone 14** and **Globalstar's** satellite network, and now the rest of the mobile industry is following suit at this year's **Mobile World Congress (MWC)**.

- **Qualcomm** announced it is working with **Motorola, Nothing, Xiaomi, Vivo, OPPO, and Honor** to bring its **Snapdragon Satellite** feature, with two-way messaging and SMS, to new models in the second half of this year.
- It has also partnered with **Iridium** to bring satellite connectivity to **Android** and **Garmin** devices.
- **MediaTek** debuted its **MT6825** standalone chipset, which supports voice and video on 5G satellite connectivity, per [Forbes](#).
- **Samsung** is working on a standardized 5G non-terrestrial network (NTN) modem for connecting smartphones to satellites, per [Space News](#).
- **SpaceX** is looking to use **Starlink's** constellation of satellites to provide direct-to-cellular connectivity in partnership with **T-Mobile**, per [The Wall Street Journal](#).

From emergency services to ubiquitous satellite connectivity: Apple's solution is designed to access satellites for emergency connectivity and has [already saved lives](#).

While the rest of the smartphone industry may be behind Apple by a year, the involvement of satellite providers, smartphone manufacturers, and companies like Qualcomm and MediaTek ensures expedient adoption.

Our take: Various smartphone manufacturers will integrate satellite connectivity into their flagship devices within a year, and the feature could trickle down to the midrange of the market within three to four years.

- **Satellite connectivity will be a key feature that could spur adoption of new handsets.** It can also evolve into a profit center for mobile carriers looking to add subscription services.
- The ubiquity of satellite access on commercially available smartphones could diminish the satellite messaging market led by **Garmin, Spot, ACR, and Zoleo**, which offer standalone two-way radios and hotspots.

Non-Terrestrial Networks (NTN)

NTN uses satellites to enable 2-way interaction over mountains, deserts or in the middle of the ocean, eliminating communications blind spots.



(Source: Samsung)

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