

# Verizon Nixes Google Wallet In New Phone

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NEW YORK (AP) — Verizon Wireless is blocking Google's new flagship phone from supporting Google's attempt to make the smartphone the credit card of the future.

In blocking the Google Wallet software from running on the new Samsung Galaxy Nexus, Verizon Wireless said Tuesday that it was waiting to provide a wallet application until it can offer "the best security and user experience." Verizon and rivals AT&T Inc. and T-Mobile USA are part of a consortium called ISIS that is planning its own payment system.

Google confirmed that Verizon had asked it not to include the wallet function in the Galaxy Nexus phone, due out soon.

The new smartphone is the latest iteration of the Nexus line, which showcases new features and capabilities for phones running Google's Android software. In this case, the phone is the first to run a new version of Android, dubbed "Ice Cream Sandwich."

The previous Nexus phone, sold by Sprint Nextel Corp., is the only phone yet to work with the Google Wallet application. That means the phone can be used to pay in some stores, by tapping it to payment terminals. Sprint is not part of ISIS.

Phone companies have generally had veto rights on the features sported by the phones they sell. Because of the clout Apple Inc. has gained by making the world's most popular smartphone, it has been able to dictate terms to them. Google doesn't have the same leverage.

Examinations by Wired and other publications reveal that the international version of the Galaxy Nexus has the "Near-Field Communications" chip necessary to run Google Wallet. It's unclear whether the U.S. version will be lacking the chip or whether it will simply be blocked from running the Wallet application. Samsung Electronics had no immediate comment.

Google and Verizon Wireless united in 2009 to push Android phones as the major alternative to the iPhone. Verizon Wireless' "Droid" advertising campaign set the tone, to the extent that many people still call all Android phones "Droids." The Google-Verizon Wireless relationship has cooled this year, as the carrier started selling the iPhone.

Verizon Wireless is a joint venture of Verizon Communications Inc. of New York and Vodafone Group PLC of Britain.

Verizon Wireless' refusal of the Google Wallet was reported earlier on Computerworld's blog.

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