

From the Motorola Dyna-Tac of 1973 to the Nokia N-95 of 2007, mobile phone technology has evolved more in the past three decades than computer technology has in past six decades. The number of mobile phones outnumbers the population in 30 countries (according to Informa Telecoms and Media), and 80% of the world's population today can have access to mobile phone or cellular phone services. There are only a limited number of mobile phone technologies, but a very large amount of mobile phone manufacturers and cellular phone service providers. In places like the European Union and India, there is no charge for receiving phone calls on a mobile phone. Today, mobile phones are the cheapest means of communication.

Mobile phones became accessible to most of the world mainly because of technological advances that decreased the associated costs. Competition among mobile phone service providers to offer prepaid mobile phone services resulted in an even more increased mobile phone penetration in developing and under developed countries.

Mobile phones today are not just a means of communication. Text messages came as a value added feature in the mid 1980s. In Japan, people use mobile phones to pay their bills. Elsewhere in the world, people use mobile phones to browse the internet. Today, mobile phones that can take photographs and capture video clips are the norm, at least in developed and developing countries. Mobile phones that can communicate with other electronic devices using Bluetooth technology are no longer news. Still now, there is confusion as to whether mobile phones take over computers or computers move to hand-held PDAs. Mobile phones today are all-in-one communication devices, duplicating (or multiplying) as phone books, entertainment gadgets, digital cameras, internet access devices, and personal computers.

The latest main mobile phone technologies are GSM and CDMA. People are not very concerned about which technology their phone uses. GSM stands for Global System of Mobile Communications, which, with its standard compliance, ensures worldwide roaming for its users. Someone buying a mobile phone in the UK can use that same phone in Japan and can receive calls to the same number as the subscriber would in the UK. EGPRS or EDGE is an extension of the GSM System that is used for high speed video conferencing and internet access.

CDMA technology offers voice clarity and faster data transfer. CDMA is not used in certain regions of the world, such as the European Union, making the CDMA handsets mostly useless if roaming internationally. CDMA and GSM technologies are both available in countries like India, while in most countries you have only one choice. GSM is the only standard available across the EU, but people have to depend solely on CDMA while travelling to Japan or South Korea.

The price of mobile phones today runs from USD 20 to up to USD 10000. Features range from talking and messaging to recording 30 minutes or more of high definition video. Choosing one of the mobile phones today is a difficult task for the poor as well as the rich.

Mobile Phones