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**Mobile News Roundup**

Posted by [Marin Perez](#), Oct 31, 2008 07:16 PM

 It's Friday again, and this week was filled with Motorola (NYSE: [MOT](#)) backing Android while Sprint (NYSE: [S](#)) [dissed it](#). Qik came to the BlackBerry, Verizon (NYSE: [VZ](#)) Wireless had a [good quarter](#), and we learned that [Twitter could be a tool for terrorists](#). As always, there were a few stories that flew under the radar, and I'm here to help shed some light on them.

**Canada Gets Some Wireless Love, Eh**

Like AT&T (NYSE: [T](#)), Rogers Wireless [reported a great quarter](#) thanks to the success of the iPhone 3G. This is only a little surprising because I remember there being a huge [hubbub](#) about Rogers' data plans for the iPhone -- [RuinediPhone.com](#) even got more than 60,000 to sign an online petition decrying the data plans. To the telecom's credit, it did cave to some pressure and [lowered the cost](#) of data plans. I still can't fathom having to sign up for a three-year contract, though, I don't care how good the 3Jesus Phone is.

Canucks also are the first outside the United States that can get the excellent mobile browser [Skyfire](#). I've touched on this a [few times](#), but can't heap enough praise on it.

While it's not as polished or refined as [Opera Mobile](#), it uses a proxy server to render Web pages so your mobile browser can view Flash videos, and it has support for Java, Ajax, and QuickTime. The latest version is excellent, too, and I've used it multiple times to get my [Hulu](#) fix on the go.

**Why There's No Wi-Fi For The Storm**

I think the touch-screen BlackBerry Storm is going to be a big hit, mainly because of the [great virtual keyboard](#). But the feature-rich smartphone would definitely be far more attractive if it had integrated Wi-Fi.

It looks like we can thank Verizon Wireless for that decision, according to the [Boy Genius Report](#):

You might have guessed it, but the reason is Verizon! We confirmed this a little while back with one of our really top-level sources (you know who you are!) and they did, in fact, confirm our suspicions -- Verizon said hell to the no, we don't play that up in here!

Now, this isn't official, but the Boy Genius has plenty of spies and this wouldn't really surprise me. Verizon's been notorious for crippling the features of its phones so that users are forced to pay for services. I'm still very keen on this handset, but really think it dropped the ball by not including Wi-Fi. That could be easily overlooked if Big V releases it soon at a [cheap price](#).

**Google (NSDQ: [GOOG](#)) Rocks The Vote**

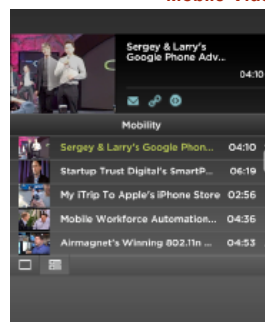
Google is trying to make a difference in the election, and I don't mean [Eric Schmidt](#) endorsing and campaigning for Barack Obama. The company is [rolling out features](#) to let poll volunteers have the same voter-info tools on their phones as they do on their computers.

Volunteers will be able to type in the home address of a voter and find their voting location, use Google Maps for mobile to get directions, and more. Regardless of who you support, it is good seeing companies helping people to vote.

**Weird Of The Week**

This week's story is for all you futbol fans out there, as [Physorg.com](#) has an excellent article on how researchers are working to have a cell phone's vibrations sync with a televised soccer game.

**Mobile Video**



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In their method, a cell phone is synchronized with the ball in the real field, most likely through manual input. As the researchers note, the ball is the focus of most of the attention, which can be seen by TV cameras constantly following the ball. Every time the ball is kicked, the phone vibrates. Depending on where the ball is located on the field (which is divided into five segments), the phone vibrates at a specific frequency and duration.

For example, when the ball is kicked in midfield, the phone produces a light, short vibration. When a player scores a goal, the vibration is stronger and longer. Depending on which team has the ball, the vibration is also different. In a more advanced version, the researchers plan to have a goal event trigger a switch to streaming video so users can watch an instant replay.

The article goes on to say that those who watched games with this system were able to more accurately follow the action. There are a lot of cool things going on with haptics in phones these days, and I'm excited to see how touch, sight, and hearing will be integrated in future phones.

It's been a great week here, and please feel free to shoot me an e-mail with any questions, suggestions or issues. Have a happy and safe Halloween.

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