

Andy Rubin's ESSENTIAL Flagship Android Smartphone Concept

Written by Bob Snyder
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Can titanium trump aluminium? Android creator and former Google SVP Andy Rubin reveals the **Essential**, his take on what an Android-powered flagship phone should be.



As a competitor to the iPhone and Galaxy S8, the Essential features a minimalist design, with a 5.5-inch edge-to-edge display wrapping around the front-facing camera. Inside are a Qualcomm 835 chips, 4GB RAM, 3040mAh battery and 128GB storage and 8MP front-/13MP rear-facing cameras, while the OS of choice is Android.

The Essential promises to be very tough-- its **construction is titanium and ceramic**, a combination of materials the company claims can survive drops "without blemish, unlike the aluminium competitor devices."

Connectivity comes through USB-C and a new magnetic connector featuring a pair of small pogo pins, similar to the Moto Mod connector found in recent Motorola phones. The 3.5mm jack is, alas, missing.

So far Essential has two accessories using the magnetic connector. The first is a miniature VR camera able to capture 4K 360-degree video at 30fps, while the second is a charging dock.

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It's an attractive phone but pundits ask if anyone would care if someone other than Andy Rubin brought out this smartphone. One journalist went as far as to call it "indulgent." But it is Andy Rubin and this premium smartphone is only one of a range of products that Essential will bring to market.

This initiative is also unique in its approach to manufacturing. Not designed for mass market, certain bits are made by the company itself via 3D printers.

Will Essential manage to make headway in a crowded Android smartphone market? The company will be first testing the waters by selling only in the N. America market. But the low-volume, high margin premium business model of Essential gives it a chance to survive without knocking the big boys off their premium perch.

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