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A Flood of Software In Reaction to Apple

By [Roy Furchgott](#)

I don't know if it's the iPhone news that is causing it, but it seems everyone is cutting loose new software.

Mobile



[Android](#) has pushed out its delayed system update, which has spiffed up the overall operation, including improved scrolling and—hallelujah—more accurate GPS. It has also added new features, including an on-screen keyboard, video recording and playback, as well as stereo Bluetooth.

You can get good use from the improved GPS with a new free Google app, Places, which finds things like coffee, bars, movies theaters, parking, near you and arranges it in a directory. Yes, it's stuff you can do with Google Maps, but this is a conveniently designed shortcut.

The [Nokia S60](#) series gets the Google app, which lets you start a search without firing up a browser, and can launch other Google apps like Maps, Gmail, and Google News.

The [Palm Pre debuted](#) with apps like virtual radio Pandora, movie-ticket vendor Fandango, film-review app Flixter, AP news, Accuweather, location service Where, Citysearch, and recommendations site LikeMe, as well as travel site FlightView and social business site LinkedIn.

It also includes stock-market tracker Express Stocks, and one game, Connect 4. E-Reader [Shortcovers](#) has announced an app and there are undoubtedly, more to come.

[Blackberry's Facebook](#) app gets an update to version 1.6, which makes it run a little more like the Web site. Verison 1.6 puts your friends' most recent updates on your home page. It also requires just one-click to upload photos and wall posts. You can comment on photos or poke a friend from the home page as well.

Verizon customers have gotten a speedier browser, thanks to some software wizardry from [Novarra](#). The upgrade is also available to Alltel and U.S. Cellular customers but they have to seek it out. Alltel users need to open the "phone tools" menu and pick "[my mobile web](#)." U.S. Cellular customers can go to the phone's main menu, then click the [EasyEdge](#) star logo then choose "mobile browser."

And finally one, well, not an app, but a useful site for any phone with a browser. Microsoft's new Bing search has a mobile site, m.bing.com. It doesn't have all of the functions as the full Web site, but it never hurts to have another search engine at your disposal.

I feel a little like Oprah. You get an update! You get an update! You get an update!