The Motorola Razr is coming back as a smartphone

Enlarge / The Motorola Razr V3.

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Lenovo, the current owner of Motorola Mobility, will release a new version of the iconic Razr cell phone, according to a report in *The Wall Street Journal* citing sources familiar with the matter.

Like a similar phone announced at Samsung's 2018 developers' conference, the new Razr will feature a foldable screen. A patent filed in May of 2017 describes a clamshell form factor with a flexible screen that folds inward. Also like Samsung's phone, it is expected to cost at least $1,500. Two hundred thousand units will be manufactured, according to *The Wall Street Journal*'s sources.

The new Razr is just the latest in a series of very expensive specialty-phone announcements aimed at consumers who do not intend to upgrade frequently, reflecting the current reality of the smartphone business.

Introduced in July 2004, the Razr V3 (not to be confused with the unrelated and more recent Razer Phone) was one of the first handsets to achieve pop-culture icon and status-symbol status in a similar way to the later-released iPhone and the most popular Android handsets. Its svelte form factor was notable at the time, and fashion-related marketing drove it to

widespread success. The V3 sold more than three million units in its initial run. Several variants were released, including the Razr V3i, which was one of the first phones to have Apple's iTunes built in.

The brand has been revived a few times since the V3 and its variants' run, to mixed success. In 2007, the Motorola Razr2 was released; it did not achieve the same success of the first model. 2011 saw the release of an Android smartphone called the Motorola Droid Razr. It fared well in the market but did not closely resemble the original Razr.

After the iPhone disrupted Motorola's place in the cell phone marketplace, the company was eventually acquired by Google, and then again by Lenovo. The *Wall Street Journal* report says that Lenovo will partner with Verizon to release the new iteration of the Razr this year—possibly as soon as February.

In case you're having trouble imagining what exactly this foldable concept might be like, here's what we saw of a similar handset from Samsung late last year. Just note that the patent filed by Lenovo and Motorola Mobility in 2017 describes a clamshell form factor, which would likely feature the same screen-folding concept but in a different shape and orientation.

Below: Images of Samsung's folding phone.

- Samsung's flexible phone starts in phone mode…
- And opens into tablet mode.
- There are two displays on Samsung's phone: one static phone-style display on the outside and the folding display on the inside.
- Putting the folding display on the inside of the device means putting a serious bend in the display. As you can see here, the hinge keeps a small gap when closed to not fully crease the display.
- Apparently this thing is going to be pretty thick.

- The layers of the display cover.

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