The OnePlus 9 will use Oppo's ColorOS in China

OnePlus is switching to ColorOS, the variant of Android used by Oppo smartphones, for its new OnePlus 9 series in China. The move was announced on OnePlus' forums by Gary C, the product lead on OxygenOS, which is what OnePlus phones use in the rest of the world.

"As a global technology company, we always look for ways to address the different usage habits and preferences among our users worldwide," Gary C says. "We truly believe this customized new operating system will bring our Chinese users a software experience that is better suited to their liking."

This doesn't change anything for the global OnePlus 9 series that's set to be unveiled in full tomorrow — it'll still run OxygenOS. But it does appear to spell the end for HydrogenOS, which is the China-specific version of Android that OnePlus had previously been using for all of its phones that shipped in the mainland.

ColorOS is already used by a lot more people in China than HydrogenOS; Oppo recently became the biggest smartphone brand in its home country for the first time. I'm using it full-time right now as I review Oppo's new Find X3 Pro flagship (pictured above), and I generally find it to be sleek and performant. There's no denying that HydrogenOS (and OxygenOS) provide a more minimalist experience, though — if that's your thing.

Oppo and OnePlus are both owned by Chinese conglomerate BBK Electronics, sharing a supply chain and often critical technology. Realme, another BBK brand, also used ColorOS at

first before developing its own software called Realme UI. The companies tend to publicly downplay the connection between themselves, but OnePlus deciding to use Oppo’s software outright is one of the more conspicuous examples of collaboration to date.

https://www.theverge.com/2021/3/22/22344054/oneplus-9-oppo-coloros-in-china-hydrogenos