

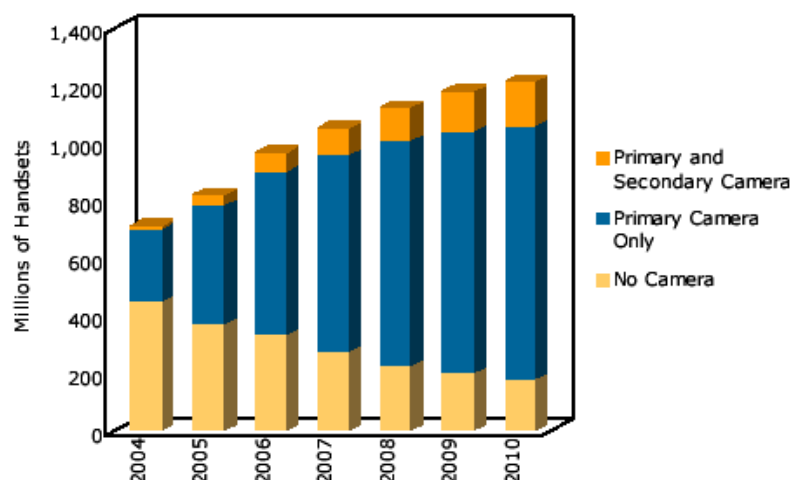
2.5G-3G

Covering 2G, 2.5G & 3G Developments

Vol. 5 No. 12

December 2006

Forecast of Camera Penetration in Mobile Phones, 2004-2010 (Millions of Phones)



Source: iSuppli Corp.

REGULATIONS

ACERP plans to issue the fourth 3G license in France

ARCEP is preparing the issuance of the fourth 3G license and will decide its application procedure in December 2006. In addition, it plans to permit WCDMA networks to use 2G GSM frequencies. Depending upon the publication date, applications might be needed in spring for the issuance of the license before the end of 2007.

ARCEP needs to quickly draft a plan to reuse 1800MHz and 900MHz frequencies for 3G and establish a method for

In This Issue...

WESTEL awarded license to offer mobile services in Ghana 2

Belgian operator BASE launches EDGE network in Belgium 3

China Unicom adds 1.29 million new subscribers in October 2006 4

Hutchison introduces cheap mobile data modem in Australia 5

LiberCell set to launch its GPRS/EDGE network in Liberia 6

Fastap adds an interesting dimension to mobile-phone keyboards..... 8

Etisalat selects Huawei for UTMS/HSPA network provision 9

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using the current 2G frequencies for 3G. This depends on sharing by four operators that will be executed only if the fourth license is allocated. Otherwise, it will depend upon the sharing by three operators.

Another 3G license granted in Estonia

The Estonian National Communications Board said that it granted a 3G license to Grosson Capital, a private limited-liability firm. The price offered by Grosson Capital was \$8.14 million. Other bidders included private limited liability firms like Renberg Investments (\$7.5 million), RealGroup Systems (\$6.6 million), and ProGroup Holding (\$5.8 million). The Estonian National Communications Board had awarded three frequency authorizations via direct offer to EMT, Elisa Mobiilsideteenused, and Tele 2 Eesti in 2003. These firms could not take part in the recent competition.

WESTEL awarded license to offer mobile services in Ghana

Western Telesystems (WESTEL) Ghana Limited has been awarded a license by the National Communications Authority (NCA) to offer a mobile service in Ghana. WESTEL is the second state-owned company apart from Ghana Telecom to get the license. WESTEL was granted the second national operator's license in 1997 and given a five-year duopoly along with Ghana Telecom. By June 2006, the number of mobile users was 3.34 million, increasing from 2.65 million at the beginning of the year and an increase of 82.8 percent on the 1.45 million at the end of 2004. By July 1, 2006, GSM operator Spacefon Areeba had 2.02 million subscribers, ahead of Millicom International Cellular's (MIC's) Mobitel unit, which had 737,749 users.

Georgia's National Communications Commission to auction GSM-1800 license

Georgia's National Communications Commission will auction a national GSM license. The bid was offered at \$4.4 million. November

27 is the last date of the bid, followed by the announcement of the winner on December 15. Following the auction, Mobitel, which already has a GSM-1800 license, has also applied for frequencies.

The country has 1.5 million mobile subscribers, out of which MagtiCom covers 44 percent and Geocell covers 54 percent, as of June 2006, as reported by TeleGeography's GlobalComms database.

CARRIERS

Hanoi Telecom and China Unicom sign MoU

Hanoi Telecommunications has signed an MoU with China Unicom. As per the MoU, China Unicom would provide Hanoi Telecom with wireless data cards, equipment, exchange technologies, and value-added products. The two firms will also launch roaming and other services.

This deal is likely to result in increased sales of CDMA mobile services in Vietnam. Previously, Hanoi Telecom and Hutchison had received government approval to deploy CDMA services. Hanoi's HT Mobile (092) service will be available soon.

Verizon's automatic update feature to allow users to update contact lists

Verizon Wireless customers will now be able to update contacts in their phones without having to manually update the data. Plaxo Inc., which created this service, said that Verizon Wireless is offering it at a fee of \$4.49 per month. This service extracts the contact lists from common email systems like Microsoft or Yahoo! and transfers the contacts wirelessly to the users' mobile phones.

Customers would still need to choose the contacts in email address books they need to copy to their cell-phones, but the need to manually copy numbers from computers or to create a new contact list is eliminated. It will work on around 30 Verizon handsets.

Five years after its launch, W-CDMA becomes leading technology in Japan

NTT DoCoMo launched W-CDMA in Japan in October 2001, and it was joined by Softbank Mobile after 14 months. Now, five years after W-CDMA was launched in the country, the standard has gone on to become Japan's topmost technology, with subscribers reaching 34.75 million by the end of October 2006. PDC, the technology that remained at the top spot for 11 years (launched in September 1995), claimed the second spot, with 34.49 million users by the end of October. The CDMA standard claimed the third spot, with 24.89 million. The mobile number portability (MNP) system was introduced in Japan by October, and the monthly additions showed great success for KDDI, while DoCoMo was the greatest loser, losing 110 points of market share.

Tacom launches 3G services in Tajikistan

Tajikistan-based mobile operator Tacom has unveiled 3G services over the network provided by Huawei Technologies. Huawei was contracted by Tacom to provide GSM and W-CDMA mobile equipment for expanding Tacom's GSM network in May 2006. Huawei will initially supply almost 80 GSM base stations and also many W-CDMA base stations, along with a switchboard. Tacom has the license to offer GSM-900/1800, CDMA-450, and AMPS services in the country. It also holds Tajikistan's third UTMS concession, which was awarded to it in September.

Telkom Kenya to enter cellular market

Telkom Kenya intends to enter the country's cellular market. Telkom could be awarded a full operating concession to cover wireline, wireless, and data services. Telkom is the leading operator in the wireline markets. Its wireless unit is managed by 40 percent shareholder Vodafone. Vodafone is reportedly against this idea, though. Kenya's mobile market has two main players — Safaricom and Celtel

— which served above 6.1 million users by the end of June. Two more operators are expected to join Econet Wireless and Telkom in 2007 to crowd the cellular market.

Afghan Wireless to expand GSM in Afghanistan

Afghan Wireless plans to expand its network in many places in Afghanistan. Additional 50 Siemens BTSs are to be shipped soon. Several shipments of BTSs, BSCs, and MSCs would be executed in the near future. The cost of the equipment is likely to be \$30 million. The new BTSs will enhance coverage in all cities covered by AWCC, including Kabul, Gazni, Kunduz, Kandhar, and many more. The firm intends to increase the number of cell sites by 100 percent by next year.

Belgian operator BASE launches EDGE network in Belgium

Belgium-based mobile operator BASE has unveiled its EDGE network in Belgium to allow users with EDGE-enabled mobile phones to download data at speeds of around 240Kbps. Equipment supplier Ericsson has upgraded the BASE network. The EDGE services would be available to around 98 percent of the Belgian population accessing the EDGE services.

MIC planning to exit the Pakistani mobile market

Millicom International Cellular (MIC) could exit the Pakistan mobile market because of concerns regarding the profitability of its wireless unit there, Paktel Ltd. Millicom stated that the returns on the investments could be threatened by harsh business conditions in Pakistan mobile telephony and some frequency interference matters. Paktel was granted an additional 1800MHz spectrum to settle the frequency interference issues, but this grant was temporary. Paktel had requested a deferral of the newest installment of its \$29.1million license fee. However, this was not granted by the PTA.

In August 2004, Paktel had filed a case against the PTA, and refused to pay a fee of \$38.8 million it supposedly owed to the regulator for the GSM-1800 spectrum. The appeal was rejected by the High Court in Lahore after a few days.

Polkomtel launches commercial HSDPA network in Warsaw

Poland's Polkomtel has upgraded its 3G network with the launch of a commercial high-speed downlink packet access (HSDPA) network in Warsaw. Nokia supplied the equipment set required for the launch. With this launch, Polkomtel customers can access better-quality mobile data services at a much better speed. The new HSDPA solution enables speeds five times faster than the existing W-CDMA service. According to the CEO of Polkomtel Thomas Eberle, for ensuring a speedy rollout capability, a new software was all that was needed, as the Nokia W-CDMA 3G network was already available with the company.

China Unicom adds 1.29 million new subscribers in October 2006

China Unicom added 1.29 million new subscribers in October, compared to 1.23 million new subscribers in September. 924,000 subscribers were added to the GSM network, compared to 894,000 new GSM additions in September. The GSM subscriber base thereby increased to 104.04 million. The CDMA subscriber base increased over the month by 361,000 subscribers, from 35.40 million to 35.76 million. The operator had 139.8 million subscribers at the end of October.

Maxis to expand HSDPA services in Malaysia

Malaysia's Maxis has expanded its HSDPA footprint to serve above 20,000 households in Penang. The company has invested \$1.4 million to deploy HSDPA across Penang. Maxis is expected to invest about \$192 million to create its broadband services in the

next three years. Maxis's chief executive officer, Dato' Jamaludin Ibrahim, said that the rollout of the services was ensuing upon the positive feedback received from the customers about the reliable and affordable Maxis Broadband service, and expressed confidence in the company's product.

Rogers launches HSDPA in Golden Horseshoe region

Canada-based Rogers has launched HSDPA in Ontario's Golden Horseshoe region, a densely populated, industrialized region at the west end of Lake Ontario. John Bonyton, SVP and chief marketing officer, Roger Wireless, said that HSDPA will help users gain access to data, whether inside the office or on the move. Wireless subscribers will enjoy high-speed mobile Internet connection that was earlier available only with wired connections. The HSDPA network will be provided to the Canadian markets throughout 2007 and will include HSDPA-enabled phones and improved user experiences on present applications by Roger Wireless.

Libya set to have its first 3G network

Libya is ready to have its first 3G network, as the country's second-biggest cellular operator, Libyana, is providing a W-CDMA and HSDPA network that will cover 14 cities. The network would have a capacity of 1 million lines. Libyana has selected ZTE of China for the supply of the 3G infrastructure. Libyana had around 700,000 users and 40 percent market share as at June 2006.

Sprint upgrades network with EV-DO Revision A technology in Milwaukee

Sprint has upgraded its wireless broadband network, Sprint Power Vision Network in Milwaukee with EV-DO Revision A technology. The existing network covers more than 170 million people. The upgraded network will enable customers to take advantage of applications and services like video messaging,

large file uploads, high-speed video telephony, and music on demand, among others. Sprint customers will now be able to access the fastest mobile broadband network to send and receive data and information at DSL-like speeds. Sprint will be launching EV-DO Revision A in Milwaukee and in 21 other markets this year, covering around 40 million people. The upgrade will facilitate upload speeds of 300-400Kbps and an average download speed of 450-700Kbps.

Cingular set to launch advanced 3G wireless on the Triad

Cingular is ready to launch its advanced 3G wireless broadband service on the Triad. This places the wireless giant on the same field as its rivals like Verizon Wireless and Sprint/Nextel, who provide Internet access on laptops and mobile phones at higher speeds than the traditional services. Cingular claims that this service also allows Internet access via the firm's standard network (at slower speeds, though) even when users go outside the 3G-enabled region. Cingular will offer these cell-phones with 3G capability for \$49.95 and upwards, which includes rebates and a two-year service agreement. The cost of an unlimited data access plan will be \$19.99. A laptop data plan would cost \$59.95

Hutchison introduces cheap mobile data modem in Australia

Hutchison has unveiled the first ever express-card format mobile data modem in Australia. Though Hutchison is offering its data plans with 2 Gigabytes at an attractive rate of \$69 per month, a full-quota usage outside its 3G network could force users to pay above \$3,000. Hutchison is offering three plans for its 3G services: \$29 a month for 200 Megabytes, \$49 a month for 1 Gigabyte, and \$69 a month for 2 Gigabytes. However, excess data and data for uploading and downloading would cost \$1.65 per Megabyte. Hutchison offers 3G in big centers on the network shared by Telstra. It has

roaming access to Telstra's GSM/GPRS network outside those areas. Thus, if the modem is not able to connect with a 3G base station in the coverage area, the rate of \$1.65 per Megabyte will apply. But a Hutchison spokesman clarified that the card would have LEDs to indicate its communication mode and could be configured to operate on the 3G network only.

DoCoMo selects Motorola and NEC for super 3G network

Leading Japanese cell-phone operator NTT DoCoMo has selected Motorola and NEC for supplying handsets for its "super 3G network." The network will be an upgrade to the operators; current 3G infrastructure and would allow faster uploading and downloading of data like videos and music clips. Earlier this week, DoCoMo Technology President Kouta Kinoshita had said in a news conference that the operator had chosen equipment vendors, without giving away the names. DoCoMo normally buys handsets from domestic suppliers like NEC and Matsushita Electric Industrial, though it has included other vendors for the existing network, including Finland-based Nokia. DoCoMo has spent around \$23.8 billion on its 3G network in the last six years.

Orange Poland to launch fixed-mobile convergence service

Poland's Orange plans to launch fixed-mobile convergence service. Orange planned to begin testing their new service, under the Unifon brand, from the end of November. The new service will allow Orange's customers to make calls on their mobiles at fixed-line rates. TP SA's customers can also take advantage of this service provided they subscribe to broadband Internet services with Livebox! Modem. The company also plans to launch HSDPA technology over its W-CDMA network in Warsaw and Katowice by the end of the year. This will be further expanded to cover 30 percent

of the population within the first three months of 2007.

Bouygues Telecom selects Sierra to supply PC data card

France's mobile operator Bouygues Telecom has selected Sierra Wireless for supplying a new PC data card. Sierra's AirCard 850 wireless wide area network (WAN) is a 3G wireless WAN Type II card; it is compatible with UMTS, GPRS, HSDPA, and EDGE. This PC data card uses the 2100MHz UMTS frequency band to provide average data transfer rates of 500Kbps-800Kbps, capable of going over 1Mbps on HSDPA networks.

Synterra to expand WiMAX network in Moscow

Russia-based wireless broadband operator Synterra intends to expand its WiMAX network in Moscow. It plans to increase the number of base stations from 40 to 60 by end of this year.

This plan would lead to the coverage of WiMAX from the current level of 80 percent to 95 percent. Synterra unveiled WiMAX in April 2006.

Libercell set to launch its GPRS/EDGE network in Liberia

Atlantic Wireless Liberia (Libercell) launched its GPRS/EDGE network, thus providing wireless Internet to its subscribers via PC or mobile phone. Libercell will also launch MMS to allow users to access up-to-date news reports. As per the GlobalComms database, Atlantic Wireless International had established Libercell as an analog mobile-phone operator in 1999.

It was issued a license to operate a GSM network in 2003 and provided commercial services in 2005, after contracting Nortel to supply equipment. In August, it expanded to Maryland County and to Voinjama, Lofa Counties, and Grand Cape Mount in October.

Pelephone to offer HSDPA network in Israel by 2008

Pelephone now intends to offer an HSDPA network in Israel. This will deviate from its current strategy of providing CDMA-based services. Pelephone is a Israel's only CDMA operator and presently offers 3G services based on CDMA2000 1xEV-DO technology. Although Pelephone won UTM spectrum in December 2001, it hasn't yet used it to provide W-CDMA services. It plans to straightaway move to the HSPA upgrade. Pelephone is likely to launch the HSUPA-enabled network in 2008, alongside its CDMA services. HSUPA offers 14.4Mbps downlink and 5Mbps uplink speeds.

3 launches HSPA network in Denmark

Ericsson's customer 3 launched HSPA network in Denmark. Ericsson supplied the software, commercial HSPA hardware, and other implementation services as per the contract. The HSPA network will enable network download speeds around 1Mbps to 1.5Mbps. Also, peak network speeds up to 3.6Mbps can be achieved, which will further increase to 7.2Mbps in 2007.

According to the CEO for 3 in Denmark, Morten Christiansen, Ericsson was one of the first companies to achieve mobile broadband speeds up to 3.6Mbps in place of fixed broadband solutions. 3 and Ericsson will provide network coverage and software upgrades for improving speeds further in 2007.

Cingular Wireless chooses Alcatel to provide 3G mobile services

Cingular Wireless LLC has selected Alcatel's multiservice transport for providing advanced third-generation (3G) mobile services like video-on-demand. This solution will allow Cingular to support requirements of increased bandwidth for High Speed Downlink Packet Access (HSDPA). Cingular unveiled the first-ever HSDPA broadband wireless access services in December 2005. This multiservice

transport solution includes its 7670 Routing Switch Platform (RSP), which supports both ATM and IP/MPLS realms. The Alcatel 1671 Service Connect (SC) multiservice cross-connect provides good traffic optimization. Cingular's 3G wireless service is currently provided in 137 metropolitan areas. The Alcatel 1671 Service Connect is deployed in both mobile and fixed service providers throughout North America.

Turkcell deploys RMSC

Turkcell, a Turkey-based network operator, has deployed the Rich Media Service Center (RMSC) of Moxibell. This RMSC will improve Turkcell's multimedia content services and deliver a centralized solution for its Service Delivery Platforms (SDP). Cenk Bayrakdar, chief service and product development officer, Turkcell, said that the operator can now provide customers with high-quality multimedia content by deploying the RMSC. Turkcell selected Moxibell because the operator needed a proven solution that would lend support to its service delivery platform and meet all the optimization needs. The operator has deployed the RMSC with Content Management System (CMS), MMSC, and a Multimedia Push Application.

MOBILE PHONES

Verizon Wireless to sell new LG smartphone in the US

Verizon Wireless plans to sell a new LG Electronics smartphone, a new handset that has computer-like functions, in the US market. Called the enV, this gadget is the ninth smartphone delivered by Verizon Wireless. Verizon, the No. 2 US mobile service firm, and its contemporaries are relying heavily on high-end handsets offered at lower prices to lure users to data services such as video, email, and music. Despite the fact that analysts are questioning the validity of offering such smartphones since there are many models

available in the market, Verizon hopes that cheaper smartphones will attract the masses. The unit of Vodafone and Verizon Wireless said the enV will be priced at \$149 to users with a two-year contract.

Mobitel unveils PoC services deployed by Nokia

Slovakia-based Mobitel has launched the push-to-talk-over-cellular (PoC) services deployed by Nokia. Nokia has hosted and integrated the Open Mobile Alliance (OMA)-compliant services, which, according to the vendor, will enable the operator to provide the solution at a rapid pace with less investment. The trial for this service was successfully conducted earlier this year.

Oki launches Iris Recognition Technology for Mobile Terminals in Japan

Oki Electric has developed Iris Recognition Technology for Mobile Terminals. Iris Recognition is an authentication technology that uses the iris pattern in the eyes. It is based on OKI's original iris recognition algorithm that uses standard optical cameras equipped in mobile terminals.

The new Iris Recognition Technology uses a standard camera embedded in a mobile terminal. As new services like payments by cell-phone are becoming more common, users and manufacturers have been emphasizing the need of personal authentication in such devices to disallow misuse when the terminals get stolen. OKI intends to make this product commercially available by March 2007.

Samsung to launch a new mobile TV phone in Italy

Samsung intends to launch a new mobile TV phone (SGH-P930) in the Italian market in December via Telecom Italia.

This phone combines the latest mobile TV technology with HSDPA technology for high-speed data transmission. Samsung has

provided a mobile TV phone (SGH-P920) to Telecom Italia since May 2006. The P930 phone has a horizontal LCD screen for optimal mobile TV viewing and supports stereo speakers.

It also features a megapixel camera and a VGA camera for video telephony.

Samsung leads in all three standards of the mobile TV market by providing the world's first S-DMB and T-DMB phones in Korea, Europe's first T-DBM in Germany and DVB-H phone in Italy, and by demonstrating the MediaFlo mobile TV technology at CTIA Wireless 2006 in the US.

SNEC to add Qtopia platform to Medity 3G solution

Trolltech said that NEC Electronics will integrate Trolltech's Qtopia platform to Medity 3G mobile-phone solution. This integration will be the first step in porting Trolltech's Qtopia Greensuite #1 completely to NEC's Medity solution on platformOVIA.

The reference integration of Qtopia Greensuite to platformOVIA comes under the initiative to develop a solution that will reduce joint customers' efforts to target the expanding market for Linux smartphones.

Dopod International launches new PDA phone

Dopod International has launched the C800, a PDA phone that has a semi-auto-sliding QWERTY keyboard. With a sleek design and state-of-the-art functionality, this C800 enables customers to exchange messages and email with a degree of style.

Browsing the Web, downloading, and exchanging data with high-speed Wi-Fi connectivity on 802.11g are all available on this phone. EDGE, Bluetooth V2.0 technology, and GPRS, too, are available on this.

It has a 2.0-megapixel camera on the 2.8-inch, 65K-color TFT LCD screen with a 240 x 320 QVGA display. C800 will be available from late November 2006 at a retail price of \$786.

QUALCOMM Introduces OmniVision mobile computing platform

QUALCOMM has made available the new OmniVision System for Transportation.

It is a wireless enterprise system designed for the logistics and transportation industry.

The scalable system helps operators increase efficiency, manage fleet logistics, and improve driver safety, productivity, and satisfaction.

Specifically created for the transportation and logistics industry, the OmniVision System for Transportation uses industry-specific features in its framework, including several value-added services like automated arrival and departure, SensorTRACS performance monitoring, and more.

The OmniVision system helps firms to manage fleet logistics with efficient management tools that enable back-office users to see and change operational profiles, view the recommended hardware, request a service evaluation, and more.

Fastap adds an interesting dimension to mobile-phone keyboards

Digit Wireless's Fastap keyboard offers a new concept with regard to placement of the letters in the keyboard.

The letters are on 26 raised buttons placed at every corner, between the usual keys on the cell-phone.

The letters are put in alphabetical order instead of the "QWERTY" layout found on Treos, BlackBerries, and the usual typewriters.

Telus Mobility had first launched this keyboard in 2004, and since then, the firm has unveiled two more models with this keyboard. Fastap users exchange twice as many text messages as Telus users with a usual phone.

Also, Fastap handsets create double the revenue generated by comparable handsets.

Fastap is programmed in such a way that it decides which letter the user intends to press.

The error prevention software ensures that accidental misspelled words are corrected.

Pantech signs deal with Orange to supply UTMS phones

South Korean handset vendor Pantech has signed a key deal with France Telecom's Orange to offer UTMS phones in France. Orange is the largest mobile service carrier in the country and has a user base of 23 million. The U400 has a video telephony function with a 1.3-megapixel camera and a VGA camera; it also has a 1.9-inch 260,000-color TFT and 72 polyphonic ringtones.

Dennis Cheong, president of Pantech, Europe, said that this partnership with Orange proved the credibility of Pantech in providing advanced mobile technologies.

Pantech hopes to achieve its goal of becoming a leading handset manufacturer in Europe. Celine Thomas, head of product marketing at Orange, echoed the sentiment. Pantech aims to be among the top five cell-phone brands in France.

CONTRACTS

Etisalat selects Huawei for UTMS/HSPA network provision

Emirates Telecommunications (Etisalat) has chosen Huawei as its national UMTS/HSPA network supplier. Huawei would provide above 1,000 Node-B base stations for constructing this UTMS/HSPA network. It would be the first HSPA network based on lub/IP transmission in North Africa and the Middle East. Huawei's association with Etisalat can be traced back to December 2003, when commercial 3G services were launched in the UAE.

The general manager of Etisalat Network Planning, Naseer Salim, said that the HSPA network in the UAE will set the foundation for the global expansion of 3G technology. The two companies are also working on various other projects in Saudi Arabia and Pakistan.

Nokia wins GPRS network expansion deal with Guandong MCC

Nokia has won a GPRS packet core network expansion contract with Guangdong Mobile Communications Corporation (Guandong MCC) to provide its GPRS packet core solution. This consists of the Nokia Serving GPRS Support Node (SGSN), Nokia Flexi Intelligent Service Node, and the Nokia Charging Gateway. It will provide an easy migration to Nokia's Combi SGSN, since a simple memory and upgrade of interface will help achieve 3G access support. The Finland-based vendor will provide network planning, implementation, and integration services. This new network equipment will serve over 11 million data users in the Eastern Guangdong province.

Transit Telecom signs deal with ZTE

Brazil-based fixed-line operator Transit Telecom has signed an agreement with Chinese telecom equipment provider ZTE for supplying a personal handyphone system (PHS) network that could potentially attract 500,000 new users over the next three years. This combination will deploy the PHS network that is due for launch in 2007. The network is based on a wireless local loop (WLL) that utilizes a cordless phone to provide mobility to the users at rates comparable to those of fixed-line services. The firm plans to increase its revenues by 90 percent in 2006 via better performances by traditional and VoIP services.

Ericsson to supply HSDPA network in Bahrain

The largest operator in the Kingdom of Bahrain, Batelco, has chosen Ericsson for upgrading its network with HSDPA technology. Batelco will deploy a 3G/HSDPA network that would support Batelco in its Broadband Bahrain initiative. The process of rolling out the network has already started. The deal also includes technology consultancy services to help Batelco with optimization of the network performance.

Ericsson will also offer business consultation in a go-to-market program for advanced 3G services. Batelco chief executive Peter Kaliaropoulos said that the deployment of services from Ericsson would serve and entertain the company's customers.

BridgeWave Gigabit radios selected by TransAria

BridgeWave Communications Inc. has announced that business network service provider TransAria Inc. has selected BridgeWave Gigabit wireless links as the solution for implementation of paths concerning their fiber backbone distribution system. TransAria will use BridgeWave Gigabit Ethernet links to build connections between their fiber-optic sites and also to backhaul critical distribution sites. Via the diverse paths within the new backbone, TransAria customers will access multiple points of presence, thus allowing continual availability of network.

Pacifictel to offer fixed wireless service in Ecuador

Ecuadorian telco Pacifictel will start offering fixed wireless service this month, says a report from BNAmericas, citing local newspaper El Mercurio. Pacifictel would provide prepaid and postpaid services to residential and business customers throughout the nation. The target of the company is to have 15,000 lines by the end of this year. Pacifictel's fixed-line network extends to the southern and western provinces of Azuay, Canar, Galapagos, Los Rios, El Oro, Guayas, Loja, Manabi, Zamora Chinchipe, and Monora Santiago. By the end of 2005, it had 694,000 fixed-line users, compared to 647,000 a year ago.

TMN signs contract with Napster and Ericsson

Portugal Telecom's TMN signed a contract with Ericsson and Napster which will help cellular users with file sharing. The Napster

Mobile offering facilitates cellular subscribers' access to more than 2 million full-length music tracks. Ericsson will provide a variety of personalized content for mobiles and will also install the Napster service for TMN.

Globe Telecom chooses OceanLake's mobile gateway platform

Philippines-based wireless-operator Globe Telecom has chosen OceanLake's mobile gateway platform to provide mobile Internet access to its subscriber base of 14.5 million. Toronto-based OceanLake and its partner, Datapax of the Philippines, have signed a deal with Globe for using OceanLake's Mobile Gateway dynamic reformatting engine. As per the terms of this deal, Globe will share some portion of the earned revenues with OceanLake and Datapax.

Bakrie chooses Redknee's messaging and prepaid solution to power its TalkTime service

Bakrie Telecom has chosen Redknee Inc.'s messaging and prepaid voice solution for powering its TalkTime service branded by Esia, SMS, and related marketing campaigns. Redknee said that Bakrie could offer advanced services and attract new users, reduce churn, and increase revenues after engaging its solution. Redknee's solution claims to converge all charging, billing, transaction, rating, and provisioning for supported services like m-commerce, data, voice, and messaging in one system in real time, thus decreasing CapEx and OpEx. Bakrie's monthly rate of customer churn averages 4 percent, as opposed to the industry average of 8 percent to 11 percent.

TVCable selects Airspan for WiMAX network expansion

Ecuador's largest cable operator, TVCable Group, has chosen Airspan Networks Inc. for its WiMAX network expansion in the 3.5GHz band. Plans for future network

expansions are being made to cover the country with WiMAX services. TVCable offers voice, data, and video to consumer and enterprise markets in the country. It chose Airspan after conducting field trials on the 3.5GHz frequency, which it owns, with Airspan's MacroMAX WiMAX platform using Airspan's ProST and EasyST CPEs. The trials proved that MacroMAX successfully met TVCable's need for Quality of Service (QoS) management, VoIP-over-WiMAX, remote diagnosis, and monitoring dispersed base stations.

Ericsson signs four-year deal with Warid Telecom

Ericsson has signed a four-year contract with Bangladesh-based Warid Telecom for managed services like rolling out the operator's GSM/GPRS in Dhaka and a network expansion. Earlier this year, Ericsson signed two deals to supply Mobile Softswitch, backbone transmission equipment, and packet core for Warid Telecom's GSM/GPRS network in various parts of the country. Ericsson will be responsible for the designing, operations, rollout, management, and maintenance of the Bangladeshi operator's network.

Motorola inks deal with SabaFon to expand network in Yemen

An agreement has been inked between Motorola and SabaFon to expand the capacity and coverage of their GSM network using the Motorola Reach GSM solution. The agreement will allow Sabafon, which already covers 85 percent of the Yemini populace, to extend its services to the northern and the southern regions.

Redline to deploy first ever WiMAX network in Iraq

Redline Communications will launch the first WiMAX network in Iraq with Vision Valley, a specialist in systems integration, network design, and implementation. Redline will do so

on behalf of AL Emaar Holding Group's mobile subsidiary, Iraqtel. Iraqtel will initiate the deployment of REDMax in Basrah and will then extend the WiMAX network to other parts of the country. The chairman of Iraqtel, Sheikh Fawzi Al Lami, said that Iraqtel had been looking for a WiMAX solution that could provide an alternative to VSAT networks, which is currently the only feasible solution to provide broadband connections in Iraq because of lack of copper line infrastructure. The chief executive of Vision Valley, Mahir Elfadil, said that the firm was working with Redline to deploy the WiMAX network for major telecom companies like Iraqtel.

NEW PRODUCTS

Samsung to launch new 1GB S-SIM

Samsung will unveil a SIM card with a 1GB memory, called the S-SIM. The 1GB S-SIM uses a system-in-package (SiP) technology that offers high-Gigabit-density NAND flash memory, while the size of the SIM card remains the same. It supports MultiMediaCard and USB interfaces to allow fast transfer of large data volumes. Dr. Chil Hee Chung, senior vice president of the chip card and microcontroller development team at Samsung Electronics, said that this high-performance S-SIM proved Samsung's technological leadership to offer the best technology for the IT and mobile environment. Samsung introduced the industry's first Giga-level density card, 1GB S-SIM, last June after developing the 128-Megabyte S-SIM in 2004.

OpenMoko to launch new Linux-based handset platform

OpenMoko will launch a Linux-based open source handset platform, in collaboration with FIC. The announcement of the OpenMoko mobile communications platform happens to coincide with the launching of FIC's Neo1973 smartphone, to be available in January 2007. OpenMoko claims that this will provide common

storage models for application developers. Sean Moss-Pultz, product manager of FIC's Mobile Communication Business Unit, said that the mobile ecosystem would now be as open as the PC's for the first time. OpenMoko has teamed up with mobile open source software company Funambol to offer full-push email with PIM synchronization support to all applications on the OpenMoko platform.

Samsung unveils its latest mobile phone, SPH-900 Deluxe MITs

Samsung Electronics has exhibited its latest cell-phone, the SPH-P9000 Deluxe MITs. The SPH-P9000 is a convergence tool that can provide voice and multimedia data communications via Mobile WiMAX technology. The SPH-P9000 is a PDA-based device that utilizes Mobile WiMAX and CDMA EV-DO connectivity. Users can have wireless access to the Internet through Mobile WiMAX connectivity. This handset also supports Microsoft Windows XP OS. The 5-inch WVGA screen is suitable for movie viewing, and the 30GB hard drive can store music, movies, and documents. Kitae Lee, president of the Telecommunication Network Business at Samsung Electronics, said that the SPH-900 is just one of the few Mobile WiMAX convergence devices to be introduced globally. It will be launched in Korea in H1 2007.

Firetide announces release of Wi-Fi access control software

Firetide Inc. announced the release of its HotView Controller software. It is designed to deploy, manage, and secure a dynamic mobile architecture. This software allows a diverse range of mobile applications like uninterrupted VoIP calls across multiple IP domains, video surveillance on moving vehicles, mobile Wi-Fi access for public transportation customers, and more. The HotView Controller software functions on Linux-based PCs. This software also uses advanced mobility controls, which enable

Ethernet devices like computers, surveillance cameras, and mobile data terminals, among others, to be connected to the wireless mesh network even in the case of the devices moving from one stationary mesh node to the other at rapid speeds. HotView Controller also provides mobility for Wi-Fi clients like laptop computers and VoIP phones.

Staccato unveils Mini Card that combines Bluetooth and Certified Wireless USB Technologies on one card

Staccato Communications announced its delivery of the SC3224R combo Bluetooth Mini Card reference design kit. The SC3224R combines Bluetooth technology and Certified Wireless USB onto a single PCI Express Mini Card form factor design. It marks the first-phase completion of Staccato's Bluetooth Convergence Roadmap announced in March 2006. By combining both Wireless PAN technologies onto one Mini Card, OEMs need to use just a single Mini Card slot on a notebook PC; it leaves all other slots available for radios (for WLAN and WWAN). A diplexer helps the simultaneous sharing of a single antenna by both radios without deterioration in performance. Future generations of this reference design will also support tri-mode functionality via Bluetooth 3.0 capabilities.

SMC launches new products to integrate Wi-Fi telephony

SMC Networks has made available new products to complement the firm's Wi-Fi phones. These accessories will support the full integration of Wi-Fi telephony into homes and offices. The SMCDPCR Wi-Fi phone cradle and SMCDPCR-AP cradle/access point will be available in December, at MSRPs of \$19.99 and \$69.99, respectively. Both these new Wi-Fi phone accessories provide users with ways to charge and store their SMC Wi-Fi phones with convenience. The SMCDPCR-AP, as a charger/cradle, keeps the phones charged; also the 10/

100Mb Ethernet port (on the back) makes it into an 802.11g access point to allow users to get optimal signal for VoIP calling. The SMCDPCR-AP has two SSIDs, one for VoIP calls and the other for wireless clients. The SMCDPCR Wi-Fi phone cradle and SMCDPCR Wi-Fi phone cradle/access point give an 802.11g signal, apart from keeping the phone charged.

SKY MobileMedia unveils pre-integrated SKY-MAP solutions

Leading application software solutions provider SKY MobileMedia Inc. has announced the pre-integration of its SKY-MAP (Mobile Applications Software Platform) with Texas Instruments' "LoCosto" single-chip platform and OMAP-Vox product family. SKY offers customizable applications solutions fit for the market segments targeted by TI's wireless chipset platforms.

This partnership will help reduce engineering costs for the manufacturers. SKY offers turnkey software solutions that unite all applications software elements needed for mass-market handsets. This includes a complete reference MMI and applications suite (SKY-MMI) and middleware engines like browser, MMS, email, multimedia framework, and more. The complete turnkey software tools also ensure scalability throughout all the high-volume handset segments.

PARTNERSHIPS

Concierge Technologies teams up with Wireless Village

Concierge Technologies and Ohio-based Wireless Village have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to build mesh networking technology-based wireless broadband networks. The pair will be involved in installing, marketing, and maintaining the Wi-Fi networks. Wireless Village President Bill Robb said that Concierge would bring a management team with considerable experience with financial markets.

The chairman of Concierge, Allen Kahn, said that Wireless Village was an apt partner for Concierge that would help revitalize the firm.

The stake of Concierge in Wireless Village, as per the MoU, will depend upon performance criteria and some conditions.

This includes completion of a wireless mesh network in Southern California by Wireless Village, regulatory and board approvals, and availability of authorized shares of Concierge, among others.

HP, Flextronics announce collaboration deal to improve quality of images in cell-phones

HP and Flextronics have signed a five-year technology collaboration deal that will allow cellular camera-phone users to take photos of the same quality achieved by their digital cameras. HP will offer its exclusive image-processing technology license to Flextronics, and will get a royalty in return.

This image-processing technology will help to improve digital images in camera modules designed by Flextronics. Flextronics will use this technology in mid- to high-range mobile devices with cameras that will enable them to achieve better-quality photos. Industry analysts at Prismark Partners forecast shipment of around 600 million camera-enabled phones this year, and this figure could increase to over 975 million by 2010.

Iusacell and Movistar discuss swapping spectrum

Mexico-based mobile operators Iusacell and Telefonica Moviles are contemplating the swap of unused mobile frequencies. This swap could allow both operators to extend their services to untouched areas.

The Comision Federal de Competencia (CFC), the competition watchdog, has stated that spectrum swaps should be made easier to promote competition. Presently, the law prevents holders from selling the spectrum within three years of receipt.

LongBoard and France Telecom to produce and provide multimedia roaming solution

France Telecom and LongBoard Inc., a software provider enabling personalized multimedia-based services, have stated that they signed a deal for jointly developing and providing a multimedia roaming solution which is IMS compliant. This multimedia roaming solution allows service providers to provide seamless multimedia services throughout multiple access networks like GSM, UMTS, CDMA, Wi-Fi, GPRS, and WiMAX. LongBoard will market this multimedia roaming solution to customers. The solution, likely to be available in early 2007, improves mobile users' experiences by leveraging real-time streaming multimedia services for users who shift across different networks.

Meteor Mobile signs roaming agreement with Vodafone

Meteor Mobile has announced a network roaming agreement with Vodafone Ireland to cover the western side of Ireland. Vodafone will provide Meteor's users with GPRS-based roaming services stretching from Donegal to Cork from February 2007. Meteor signed this agreement to cover those areas where the firm has yet to complete building its network, or where the prospect of providing of these services is uneconomical due to less population.

Telcel, Nextel agree on interconnecting SMS services

Nextel de Mexico, a digital trunking operator, has signed a deal with Radiomovil Dispa (Telcel) to interconnect SMS services, according to America Movil, Telcel's parent firm. The two operators are presently involved in interconnection testing. Nextel was the first operator to provide push-to-talk services in Mexico. It had unveiled wireless PTT on an iDEN network in August 1998. But rival operators have been complaining that Nextel has been operating without a valid concession. This

resulted in the four cellcos offering PTT service without valid concessions, which subsequently led to censure by regulator Cofetel in 2005. This instigated the operators to refuse interconnecting text messaging from Nextel users. Finally, Nextel appealed to competition overseer Comision Federal de Competencia (CFC), after which Cofetel ordered the four operators to implement SMS exchange by March 12, 2006.

MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS**ShinSat to bid to acquire license for mobile-phone service in Bhutan**

Thailand-based ShinSat is one of the four companies that will bid for a license for a private mobile-phone service in Bhutan. The officials of the Bhutan Infocom and Media Authority (BIMA) seem to suggest that the auction will take place in December. Bhutan had reportedly invited AIS, Thailand's biggest cell-phone operator, to take part in the bid, but Shin assigned the deal to ShinSat. Shin is the parent company of AIS. Three of the four short-listed firms are joint ventures. BIMA has categorically stated that the Bhutanese partner of any such joint venture must hold a share of at least 51 percent. The winner of the 15-year license will need to pay 25 percent of it straightaway; the remainder can be paid throughout the operating tenure.

BUSINESS**Brand new service to support Wi-Fi/cellular roaming**

Some of the Nokia's combined cellular and Wi-Fi phone users would be allowed to make voice calls that roam between the two networks without having to drop the calls. Cicero Networks will make its client ready for use on the S60 platform, the software based on the Symbian OS. The CiceroPhone supports the handoff of the voice calls between cellular and

Wi-Fi networks. Elaine Tracey, vice president for marketing at Cicero, said that two operators have launched the technology: Hello AS in Norway and Messagenet in Italy. Also, 30 operators (mainly in Europe) are conducting trials on this technology. Users can download this software to the phone; operators also can sell the phones with the software pre-loaded.

Costmote Romania extends its coverage

Cosmote Romania stated that after investing over \$280 million, the company has 92 percent population coverage and above 76 percent geographical coverage. It is presently providing mobile services to around 20 million people in Romania.

The company will continue to invest for expansion of its GSM networks, and aims at over 95 percent population coverage and above 82 percent geographical coverage by this year's end. Cosmote's goal is to provide over 98 percent population coverage and above 85 percent geographical coverage during 2007. Cosmote Romania's CEO, Mr. Nikolaos Tsolas, said that the company puts emphasis on network optimization and is looking to improve and increase its coverage to more areas.

Centennial announces launch of Aptus in Puerto Rico

Centennial Communications introduced Aptus, its broadband telephony service in Puerto Rico. The service has specially been made for business and commercial customers. In the Caribbean, the company will concentrate more in VoIP and will invest a 1,300 route-miles fiber connecting 1,800 buildings.

The company's CDMA2000-based wireless networks will be upgraded with Evolution Data Optimized (EV-DO) technology. The company also plans to launch mobilePBX telephony service, developed along with BroadSoft and Atreus. Aptus will provide control over all voice communications through a single and integrated VoIP platform.

Esnatech releases Mobile UC applications for its Unified Communications platform

Esna Technologies Inc. (Esnatech) has released its Mobile UC applications concerning its Unified Communications platform Telephony Office-LinX 7.0. This allows Esnatech to extend the Unified Communication experience to any cellular device. The Unified Communication system is based on interoperability with messaging, switching, and wireless infrastructure. It allows enterprises to create a single communications platform by integrating their enterprise system with their IT infrastructure.

The Mobile UC software allows users to converse with each other, collaborate with associates, and screen unnecessary telephone calls, among other features. This Mobile UC software uses Mobile UC for call control, total access to messaging, fax and dialing, and accessing corporate presence status. It can work with various cell-phones like Nokia 60 Series phones, Palm OS4 and higher, Sony/Ericsson P800/900 phones, and Research in Motion BlackBerry devices.

Nielsen Mobile signs agreement with Sprint Nextel

Nielsen Mobile has signed a deal with Sprint Nextel to use the latter's weekly ringtones and over-the-air song download sales data for Nielsen Mobile's sales tracking services. It includes sales data from Sprint Nextel's telecom subsidiary, Boost Mobile, which distributes wireless communications solutions. Paul Leakas, general manager of Nielsen Mobile, said that Sprint Nextel would be an important addition to the firm's sales-tracking and trend-identifying services. Paul Reddick, vice president, Partner Development & Product Innovation, Sprint Nextel, said that this relationship with Nielsen Mobile meant that Sprint Nextel was leading the way in the field of mobile music. Nielsen Mobile is a new addition to Nielsen Entertainment's portfolio of providing

information and analysis and marketing solutions to the entertainment industry.

Nokia and Indosat sign WCDMA 3G/HSPA managed services deal

Nokia and top Indonesia-based operator Indosat have signed a WCDMA 3G/HSPA managed services contract to allow Indosat to enable wireless broadband services and 3G services.

Nokia would undertake the task of operating the network. Nokia will deliver Indosat turnkey services that include network planning, implementation, and integration of this WCDMA 3G/HSPA network. It will also build, operate, and transfer the Indosat 3G network.

As part of the deal, Nokia's 3G device will also be provided. The network would be ready for launch by November 2006. Nokia, which currently has 65 WCDMA 3G customers, would support the operators to improve their services and reduce expenses. It is also an important managed services player, with around 60 managed services contracts across the world.

Nokia and T-Mobile team up on WCDMA services

T-Mobile US has selected Nokia's hardware to provide mobile broadband to their users, as the company has started providing high-speed 3G WCDMA. Wideband Code Division Multiple Access (WCDMA) can reach speeds of around 2Mbps for high-bandwidth media downloading and streaming being capitalized by the carriers.

Nokia will provide T-Mobile US with its Flexi WCDMA Base Station, a model that combines low-cost deployment with modular expansion.

Nokia has supplied 3G equipment for T-Mobile in Germany, the UK, and the Netherlands and is responsible for almost half of the 13 launched WCDMA networks. The Flexi WCDMA Base Station would provide T-Mobile with

adaptable deployment options and provide future evolution capacities.

Tektronix unveils RSA-IQWIMAS demodulation and analysis software

Tektronix has unveiled the RSA-IQWIMAX demodulation and analysis software to solve WiMAX design problems.

RSA-IQWIMAX software is an application test tool for troubleshooting WiMAX device designs. It is a result of a partnership between LitePoint and Tektronix. RSA-IQWIMAX gives spectrum measurements on OFDM and OFDMA signals according to the IEEE802.16e-2005 (mobile) and IEEE802.16-2004 (fixed) WiMAX standards. The RSA3408A locates random events usually missed by other solutions, allowing engineers to solve design problems more quickly.

Since issues like packet collisions are becoming more complex, digital RF technology is speeding the shift to packet-oriented network technologies like WiMAX. Via Tektronix's RSA-IQWIMAX and the LitePoint, IQmax WiMAX system, R&D teams would be able to use common test algorithms and data formats.

Ruckus Wireless introduces new Smart-N system for home networks

The phenomenon of the home network, which allows HDTV, data, digital voice, and music streams to be delivered wirelessly through a central device, is becoming increasingly popular. Until recently, there were issues related to quality of Wi-Fi, environment, and noise.

But Ruckus Wireless has solved these problems by introducing "Smart N" technology.

The Smart-N system removes the need for wires and cables, and allows for provision of good-quality HDTV streams, music, data, and digital voice to the home.

The Smart-N increases performance, from the approximately 54Mbps provided by the Wi-Fi technology, to 600Mbps. Ruckus Wireless intends to ship Smart Wi-Fi 802.11 products from the second half of 2007.

Cellvine Ltd. and Wi-Tron Inc. sign broadband wireless market development deal

Cellvine Ltd. and Wi-Tron Inc., a manufacturer of ultra-linear power amplifiers, have signed a joint agreement for global marketing and product collaboration to provide innovative services to operators across the world.

Wi-Tron's CEO, Joe Nordgaard, said that the company had four designs under tests at Cellvine and that more designs were being developed.

The deal will allow for marketing development opportunities in Asia, including China, and also discussions with wireless operators in the US, Latin America, and Europe. Although the process would take some time, the scope of earning huge revenues cannot be undermined.

Wi-Tron boasts over 15 years of experience in custom RF amplifiers manufacturing and design.

Cellvine has developed various mobile coverage-enhancement products for boosting cellular signals in subterranean areas.

Motorola Inc. to open another new research center in China

Motorola Inc plans to open a research center in China to target next-generation wireless technologies. It would focus on important technologies used in wireless broadband equipment and aid the firm in developing worldwide standards.

The executive vice president of Motorola, Gregory Brown, said that Motorola is looking to strengthen its alliance with Chinese parents, as China is emerging to actively develop standards in future mobile communications technologies.

The center will also improve Motorola's cooperation with local firms and universities. Motorola has 18 R&D centers in China, with around 3,000 engineers, and is the biggest R&D base by a multinational firm in China.

LG Telecom penalized with \$5.5 million fine for illegal handset subsidies

The Korea Communications Commission (KCC) and Ministry of Information and Communications (MIC) has asked LG Telecom (LGT) to pay a fine of \$5.5 million for issuing illegal handset subsidies.

Offering financial incentives to customers pursuing particular services along with a new mobile was considered illegal between June 2000 and March 2006.

MIC has booked three national cellular operators for evading these regulations on several occasions. However, MIC eased these regulations from March 27, 2006. LGT, KTF Corp., and SK Telecom could offer financial incentives up to \$208 to users, confining them to an operator for over 18 months. But carriers have to seek approval for the rates. MIC fined these three operators for a total of \$11.5 million within a month of relaxing the previous regulations, for issuing subsidies before the new scheme was approved.

Three other operators, including Korea Telecom, were also fined for a total of \$76.3 million in June 2006 for exceeding the subsidy rates.

Qualcomm to expand its QSC family to support UMTS

Qualcomm will expand its Qualcomm Single Chip (QSC) family to support UMTS. The company claims that the QSC6240 product for WEDGE (WCDMA and GSM/GPRS/EDGE), as well as QSC6270 product for HEDGE (HSDPA/WCDMA and GSM/GPRS/EDGE), are the first solutions in the world that will integrate a monolithic die (with integrated radio transceiver, multimedia processor, and baseband modem), into one chip for HSDPA and WCDMA handsets.

These integration levels will help in reducing bill-of-materials expenses and other components, thus enabling manufacturers to achieve board-area savings of around 50 percent.

These solutions utilize cost-efficient 65nm CMOS process technology and help in boosting power efficiency for lengthy talk/standby times.

STANDARDS

Companies to announce WirelessHD specification in 2007

Several top consumer electronics firms are likely to announce in 2007 a standard for transmission of high-definition audio and video signals wirelessly. Digital interface WirelessHD, which is supported by LG, Matsushita, Sony, NEC, Samsung, SiBeam, and Toshiba, will allow streaming of video and audio signals between TVs, DVD players, game consoles, etc., without the use of cords.

John Marshall, president of WirelessHD, said that it would soon find its way to laptops, digital video recorders, digital audio players, HD disc players, and digital cameras; since it does not compress the digital video, the user experience would be similar to a high-definition multimedia interface (HDMI). WirelessHD would use the 60MHz radio frequency to transmit uncompressed HD audio and video at 5 gigabytes per second at distances of around 30 feet.

FINANCIALS

Maxis Telecommunications reports 28 percent increase in third-quarter net profit

Malaysia's top mobile-phone company in terms of subscribers, Maxis Communications, has posted a 28 percent rise in net profit for the third quarter. The firm's net profit for the period ending September 30 rose year-on-year from \$107.6 million to \$140 million.

The revenue increased 25 percent to \$547.2 million, as its Indian Aircel unit contributed \$68.6 million (12.5 percent) to the group revenue. Domestic business contributed 87 percent of the revenue for Maxis. It added

388,000 local users in the period, reaching a total of 8.86 million subscribers, increasing from 8.47 million in Q2.

O2 Group adds 812,000 users in Q3, plans to launch mobile services in Slovakia in Q1 2007

Pan-European mobile service provider O2 Group added 812,000 new users in the third quarter of 2006 to take its total mobile user base to 34.4 million, a year-on-year increase of 14 percent. O2 UK added 524,000 new users, an increase of 15 percent year-on-year, and took its total subscriber base to 17.338 million. O2 Germany also added 294,000 users to take its total user base to 10.629 million. O2 Ireland added 16,000 users, an increase of 2 percent year-on-year, to end the third quarter with a total of 1.603 million.

But Telefonica O2 Czech Republic suffered a loss of 10,000 mobile users, though its fixed-line division saw the number of connections increase from 221,000 a year ago to 427,000. Group revenue for O2 was \$3.85 billion Q3 ending on 30 September. O2 plans to unveil mobile services in Slovakia in Q1 2007.

MARKET INTELLIGENCE

Meteor Mobile says it has a 16 percent market share

Ireland's third-biggest mobile network operator, Meteor Mobile, claims to have a 16 percent share of the domestic market after increasing its subscriber base from 500,000 in November 2005 to 750,000 subscribers. It was acquired by Eircom in November 2005. Meteor claims that it is also successful in terms of the mobile number portability (MNP) ranking, stating that an increasing number of users are migrating to its network, rather than shifting from Meteor to rivals O2, Vodafone, or 3. Meteor CEO Robert Haulbrook stated that the operator was successfully attracting more users than its competitors. Meteor now has covered 95

percent of the population, a figure which is expected to increase to 99 percent.

Celltel to double number of base stations

Sri Lanka's second-biggest mobile operator by subscribers, Celltel, will invest \$70 million to double the number of base stations in key towns to 400 in the next six months. Celltel introduced mobile services to the country in 1989. It was the only cellco in Sri Lanka until some competition in 1993. The introduction of GSM services by MTN Networks (Dialog Telekom) in 1995 further challenged Celltel. Despite unveiling its own GSM network in 2000, Celltel's market share fell to 17 percent by March 2006. Celltel plans to increase its user base by 50 percent to 1.5 million users by the end of 2006.

Tunisie Telecom anticipates good cell-phone subscriber growth rate

Tunisie Telecom anticipates strong mobile-phone user growth to continue in the near future and will continue heavy investment to stamp its authority in the market. Tunisie Telecom has around 4.2 million mobile and fixed-line customers. The penetration rate in the country with 10 million people has exceeded 50 percent. Michael Foley, chief transformation officer at Tunisie Telecom, said that there is plenty of room for growth in the country even after the 50 percent penetration milestone. Tunisie Telecom has almost 60 percent of existing mobile subscribers. The penetration in the mobile market in Tunisia is likely to increase to 75 percent from 60 percent. Foley stated the company has planned for 400,000 ADSL lines next year, as well as 3G.

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