


News Flash



Singapore Operators Launch 3G with Eclectic Mix

 Singapore's two major operators Sing Tel and Mobile One have brought out an eclectic mix of data services to test out their newly rolled-out 3G networks. Both carriers launched commercial 3G services in February, though most are being offered for free. Other charged services were also offered at attractive price plans and useful applications to win customers.

SingTel introduced a range of 3G data packages to meet customers' varying needs and usage patterns. There is no difference in charges for 3G local video calls and usual local voice calls and the charges are offset against the bundled airtime in each customer's subscription plan. As part of its 3G offerings, Sing Tel has rolled out a platform for showcasing video content created by subscribers themselves. Budding local talents submit movie and video clips as 3G content.

SingTel 3G customers also have access to a broad and growing range of content such as 'live' news broadcasts, music video clips, movie trailers and sports coverage via video streaming. The most popular among these are news from TV channel Channel News Asia, traffic updates, mobile games, movie trailers and music videos.

MobileOne also offers a live feed from Channel News Asia and is marking a big play of video calling at low prices. It slashed its video-calling price from S\$0.40 (US\$0.24) a minute to just S\$0.15, and the announced that the first five minutes of all video calls between MobileOne subscribers will carry no charge in 2005. On its MiWorld Mobile portal, MobileOne has introduced 3G streaming for movie trailers and a library of 4,000 MP3 tracks from the international, Chinese and Cantonese charts.

MobileOne has also partnered with MediaCorp Studios to produce what it claims will be Asia's first drama serial for 3G phones. The 45-episode Chinese drama series will feature leading Singaporean and Asian stars. Each episode will last only two-minute on 3G mobile phones at the end of June before being aired as a 90-minute television program by the start of 2006.

Beyond 3G, MobileOne has rolled out a PC-to-mobile messaging service, the Cyber Message Center, on its website and mobile portal. The service enables the subscribers to send MMSs, video clips and MP3 (upto 295KB) stored in their PCs to their friends' mobile phones.

Sing Tel's new non-3G mobile content, meanwhile, is focused on blogging and a new translation service. Under its new Mobile Blogging service, users are given 5MB of free space to create an online journal and can upload text and images via SMS or MMS. Readers will also be able to interact with bloggers via SMS. Sing Tel's new translation service, meanwhile, translates mobile messages from English to Chinese and vice versa via SMS, MMS, WAP or Java.

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