

News Flash



TV on Mobile

Forget about games and ringtones, the killer application for mobile operators might very well be something everyone is too familiar with – Television. Mobile TV has the potential to become a success in the non-voice segment. Indeed, the ability to watch movie trailers, news, sport and TV show clips is seen as one of the main offerings and differentiators of 3G networks.

This year, Orange announced the launch of UK's first TV-on-the-mobile service – Orange TV allowing customers to watch news, sport and entertainment programmes on their phones. It had an initial line up of 9 channels including ITN News, CNN, Cartoon

Network and extreme sports. Following the trend is the Singaporean operator Mobile One which will be broadcasting a drama serial on 3G phones for their subscribers.



TV phones capable of capturing analogue signals have been around for a while but it is really the addition of Digital Video Broadcast Handheld (DVB-H) technology that will allow Mobile TV to come on its own. DVB-H was designed to deliver TV programs to low-power handheld devices while focusing on power saving, mobility with high data-rates, noise reduction and seamless handover. DVB-H is designed to deliver multimedia content encapsulated in IP packets by means of a terrestrial digital TV broadcasting infrastructure. It can broadcast to a large audiences at low cost without overloading the cellular networks.

With DVB-H technology, mobile phones would soon become a ubiquitous medium for the distribution of traditional TV programming, transforming the mobile operator into a TV station with millions of potential viewers.

Operators are beginning to commit to offering mobile TV services using DVB-H technology. At the end of last year, ETSI adopted DVB-H, which is jointly developed by Nokia, as the standard for European mobile television services, enabling the simultaneous transmission of several television, radio and video channels to mobile devices.

Vodafone demonstrated mobile TV applications based on the DVB-H standard at the CeBIT trade fair in Frankfurt. It is currently testing the possibilities for designing a corresponding service and business model required for the launch of DVB-H technology.

In Finland, operators, Elisa and Sonera – in conjunction with Nokia, local technology company Digita and content providers MTV, Nelonen and YLE – announced the start of a mobile TV pilot, with 500 users in the Helsinki region. Using this network, test users are able to view real-time TV and radio programs on a Nokia 7710 smartphone.

According to Reidar Wasenius, marketing manager Nokia, “Lots of broadcasters are interested in DVB-H technology. There’s a lot of opportunity to build in interactivity around DVB-H broadcasts, which will be good for operators.” Mobile television and mobile video broadly, presents significant opportunities for mobile operators, content providers and OEMs.

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