

## Messaging

**Hong Kong says 'Do not call'**

The Office of the Telecommunications Authority, the Hong Kong regulator, introduced a do-not-call register for unsolicited commercial SMS and MMS messages in early January. The service, which covers SMSes sent over both mobile and fixed networks, requires members of the public to register the phone number in question using the actual phone, via a hotline. People who registered before Jan. 24 will be protected from Feb. 5, while those registering from Jan. 25 will have to wait 10 days before their application is completed. The do-not-call register for SMSes and MMSes is the second register, after one for fax, to be launched since the introduction of Hong Kong's Unsolicited Electronic Messages Ordinance on Dec. 22. More than 19,000 fax numbers have been placed on the do-not-call register since its Dec. 22 launch.

**SMS, MMS still rising in UK**

UK mobile users sent 56.9 billion SMSes and 448 million MMSes in 2007, according to the Mobile Data Association's 1Q08 report. SMS traffic in the country was up 35.5% year-on-year from 42 billion SMSes. No comparable figures were available for MMS, since 2007 was the first year that the MDA measured video and picture-messaging traffic. Meanwhile, 290 million SMSes were sent on New Year's Eve 2007, up 30% from Dec. 31 the previous year. Almost 2 million MMSes were sent on the same day. Also, 6 billion SMSes were sent for the whole of December 2007, representing 40% year-on-year growth, while MMS traffic grew 55% year-on-year to 58 million.

**Sybase to peer in Latin America**

In 1Q08, Sybase 365 plans to enable messaging interconnection to 18 countries in Europe for mobile operators in Latin America, as a result of a peering agreement the messaging aggregator recently struck with Belgacom. "Belgacom has 33 customers but not direct connectivity to Latin America," says Miguel Ramirez, Sybase 365's general manager for Latin America. Sybase 365 has also recently won a deal with two Spanish cellcos, including Telefonica Moviles Espana, which will see it enabling interconnection with mobile operators in the U.S. Ramirez says he hopes the Telefonica wins will help Sybase 365 score more deals with other Telefonica subsidiaries, especially in Latin America.

## Instant messaging

**MIM displaces high where SMS low**

Forrester Research has forecast that 80 million Europeans will be using mobile instant messaging by 2013, equating to a 24% penetration rate. In a survey of 22,000 mobile users in France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden and the UK, the industry analysts found that Sweden and the UK will be the most highly penetrated markets for MIM by 2013, with levels of 35% and 31%, respectively. Forrester also calculates that MIM will displace SMS traffic by 13% in the seven markets by 2013 but predicts that SMS traffic will continue to grow regardless. The displacement of SMS traffic by MIM is likely to be higher in markets where SMS usage is low, for example Sweden, where Forrester estimates that MIM will replace 28% of SMS traffic.

**Rebrand on the cards for PIM**

The GSMA's Personal Instant Messaging initiative is not dead, but it is likely to be rebranded following lackluster mobile-operator response to it in Europe. Allen Scott, the general manager of NeuStar Next Generation Messaging, says that all its operator customers are committed to some version of PIM, whether that involves presence, a rich address book (see "Rich Communications Suite," p. 4) or SMS 2.0. Where mobile operators have failed with PIM, Scott says, it is because they have not followed the Internet service model of constantly tweaking different aspects of the service, including pricing and clients, in response to customer feedback.

**Bouygues backs brands for MIM**

Bouygues Telecom's director of content, Olivier Laury, says the cellco believes it is one of the first in the world to understand that it is better to work with portal-IM providers than create its own IM community. "The movement we saw with cellcos like Vodafone and Orange trying to do their own messengers has been a flop, and these companies have recognized it," Laury says. That was phase one, he adds, and the industry is currently going through phase two, which is to work with brands. The next phase, Laury says, will be to provide MIM free, which Bouygues is trialing (see "Bouygues tests," p. 12). But achieving this will take time. "You still have too many people that have objectives at the end of the year, and bonuses that depend on the money that they make," Laury says, likely referring to mobile-operator employees.

**Key messaging announcements, Jan-08**

Date	Operator/Company	Territory	Announcement
9-Jan	Grameenphone	Bangladesh	Grameenphone launches Research In Motion's BlackBerry, available through its Business Solutions division.
10-Jan	MTN	Ghana	MTN introduces RIM's BlackBerry, including the Curve 8300, Pearl 8100 and the 8800 devices.
11-Jan	Telma	Madagascar	Mobile operator Telma partners with Alcatel-Lucent to launch RIM's BlackBerry. The cellco will launch with the BlackBerry 8800 smartphone.
14-Jan	MTS Ukraine	Ukraine and Belarus	MTS Ukraine introduces MMS roaming, enabling its subscribers to exchange MMSes with MTS subscribers in Belarus. Mobile users can send and receive MMSes up to 1MB at a cost of UAH0.75 (US\$0.15) per message.
14-Jan	Qtel	Qatar	Qtel launches RIM's BlackBerry.
22-Jan	Vodafone Italia	Italy	Vodafone Italia will offer ad-funded mobile video to its customers under the FreeVideo brand, using an Amobee Media Systems platform.

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