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Mobi-tickets for Czech cinefiles

Cellphone barcodes reduce paperwork for Village Cinemas

Czech moviegoers will be able to use their mobile phones as cinema tickets. Village Cinemas in the Czech Republic is laying claim to being the first European circuit to have the ability to deliver and redeem tickets on customers' mobile phones.

Village Cinemas, which currently operates over 1,000 screens around the world, has signed a deal with payment system specialist Vista Entertainment Solutions and mobile ticketing system provider Mobiqa to provide "mobi-tickets" to cinemagoers.

The mobile ticketing service will run in parallel with print-at-home and box office collection.

Mobi-tickets can be ordered through the Czech Village Cinema website www.villagecinemas.cz — which is posted in both Czech and

English versions.

The mobi-tickets contain a barcode and information about the film time in an SMS text message sent to the customer's mobile phone. This ticket is then presented at the entrance to the screen and scanned by a member of staff to allow entry to the film.

The service is designed to eliminate the need to print and remember traditional paper tickets or to queue up at the box office. Customers now have longer to spend at concession stands or they can go straight through to their screen bypassing any ticket queues. The tickets are valid almost immediately after purchase.

Village Cinemas hopes mobi-tickets will reduce the costs involved in printing, handling and

distributing paper tickets. Tomas Palicka, general manager of Village Cinemas Czech Republic, said: "This innovative project is part of our long-term strategy to improve services and comfort for our moviegoers. We hope this service will attract customers who are used to shopping online and use modern technologies."

Derek Forbes, European regional manager of Vista, said: "Mobile phones continue to increase in prevalence and utility, and their use in ticketing is a natural progression"

Iain McCready, chief executive of Mobiqa, said: "Village Cinemas are leading the way in evolving their customer service and offering film fans a more convenient and efficient way of seeing the latest movies."

