

WELCOME TO THE FIRST ISSUE OF MXtra!

In this and subsequent issues, we will be bringing together a number of articles related to mobile and wireless activity from the MX membership and beyond. Learn more about the companies making news, research conducted by national Universities as well as comments from industry leaders and business people alike who recognise the potential of the wireless world.

Tracey Ward – General Manager



Ronnie Forbes of Mobiqa
receiving award from
Mike Grenville

GLOBAL RECOGNITION FOR MOBIQA TECHNOLOGY



Mobiqa, the Edinburgh-based world-leading pioneers in the delivery of barcodes to mobile phones via text messaging has just been recognised at the Global Messaging Congress awards in London. Mobiqa's Australian partner, Aura Digital Communications, was awarded "Best Enterprise Solution". Aura partnered with Trade Show registration company, Info Salons to take the prize against 100 entries from over 20 countries.

Aura provided Info Salons with an application to pre-register and register visitors to conferences, exhibitions, and tradeshows using the Mobiqa mobi-ticket technology. Registrants provide their mobile phone number and receive the mobi-ticket confirmation on their mobile phone. As registrants arrive at the event, the mobi-ticket is scanned and the visitor's badge, containing name and copy of the barcode is generated, allowing for

subsequent scanning by exhibitors building a database of visitors to their stand.

Jo-Anne Kelleway, Director of Info Salons, believes the technology has huge implications for trade shows and conferences. "Printing and mailing name badges is highly labour intensive and costly. This significantly cuts postage and handling costs in the pre-registration process," she said. "It is the fastest vehicle to allow visitors to gain express entry into events without lengthy queuing and it eliminates wasted name badges when badges are printed in advance."

'The Global Messaging Awards are the pre-eminent awards in the mobile messaging arena world-wide, so it is fabulous news that our technology has been recognised in this way,' said Richard Philips, Director of Mobiqa.

"These awards confirm that Mobile Messaging has really come of age," said Mike Grenville, Global Mobile Messaging Awards, Chairman. "Messaging has been taken a step further beyond consumers and is now firmly entrenched in the business and enterprise space. The applications and services industry is now a very fertile ground and it is clearly poised to take advantage of the commercial opportunities available from SMS in particular.

The successful case studies entered from all over the world testify to the huge potential going forward for the Messaging industry."

www.mobiqa.com

WORKING HARDER FOR MOBILE WORKING

More work is required to enable UK businesses to reap the benefits of mobile technology solutions.

In a recent interview, Mike Short, Vice President of Research and Development at O2 and Chairman of the Mobile Data Association told MXtra that according to research conducted by O2, over 63% of UK businesses do not have a defined mobility strategy.

Many employees use both personal and company owned devices with businesses witnessing the evolution of an uncontrolled two-tier work force. Growth and interest in mobile email has increased over recent years, yet many companies lack an >>

adequate security policy. "We face fundamental challenges such as defining the ownership of a phone," Short commented.

Short highlighted the industry's role in understanding customers' needs and simplifying a potentially confusing picture: "In the early days, with the evolution of the Personal Communications Network (PCN), there was a lack of communication. Suppliers must communicate more effectively, using case studies to prove the benefits of mobile solutions". Short also believes that there is a huge market for mobility delivery efficiency gains and highlighted the need for first class support across existing and emerging distribution channels.

Asked where businesses will be in five years time, Short commented:

"Communications needs continue to grow and the distinction between wireless and mobile and indeed fixed wire and wireless will become less prevalent. Buyers and decision makers will be looking for package solutions, embracing a variety of core technologies and applications and demanding well rounded support."

salesman to deliver and invoice at the point of sale. The customer order data is collected electronically and the transaction automatically updates the AS400 mainframe in Broxburn.

Customer service is a prime objective of the system. As Grampian Country Pork's Direct Field Sales General Manager, Gerry Leyden explains: "At point-of sale we want to give a first class service, not only in terms of product quality and order fulfillment but also the quality of information and documentation we are giving to customers".

Allan Bone, Managing Director of Codemove, said: "By working closely with the team at Grampian and fully understanding their business, we have developed a solution which delivers tangible benefits including improved stock and cash control and timely, accurate reporting.

www.codemove.com

THE SUN SHINES ON MICROMATTER

Spanish property company SK Homes has recently selected Micromatter's Mobile Estate Agent application for all of their mobile professionals. The application will improve the company's ability to bring properties quickly to market, and help SK Homes to keep ahead of its rivals.

The Alicante based company is keen to reduce time between collating information and bringing a property to market. The Pocket PC application allows details to be captured on initial point of contact and transferred to the agent's website via a mobile phone when convenient.

Using a simple interface of pull-down menus and tick boxes, the Pocket PC based application automatically generates a property schedule. Pictures captured on a

digital camera memory card are automatically resized for transmission with the schedule to the agent's website.

Sean Kelly, Chief Executive of SK Homes said: "We expect to reduce workload at the office and ease the maintenance of web content. The property market in Spain is booming and competition between property companies increasing. We believe that reduced time to market is essential and see Mobile Estate Agent as key in achieving this". SK Homes expects to roll out the mobile solution to further regions in France, Portugal and the USA.

Alan Craig of Micromatter commented: "We can market a property in minutes, but our application will also be instrumental in reducing administrative overheads, allowing estate and letting agents more time to sell to customers". Referring to future opportunities, Craig added: "We are currently pursuing further overseas opportunities but believe that with the majority of estate agents using laborious manual processes to capture and manage information, the UK market has still to waken up to the benefits that mobile solutions can deliver."

www.micromatter.co.uk

CONTENT: THE BIG PICTURE

Beverley Morrison, Cool Crew Media Ltd, is an entrepreneurial TV producer who is currently developing a pilot drama series for mobile handsets. In the following article, Beverley shares her personal thoughts and perspective on the much discussed world of mobile content:

Courtesy of G Irvine, Mobile e-Services



"Let me tell you the three key secrets I learned as an entrepreneurial TV producer at the 3GSM and Milia events in Cannes this Spring.

1. The mobile content market is set to be the next media gold rush.
2. Telephony firms can share in it if they develop media partnerships.
3. Scotland has all the creative, technical and financial expertise to succeed on this frontier.

You may think these points are not so secret. Yet I was struck at both conferences by how little anyone had actually joined the dots on the big picture. The Scotland/MX Alliance stand at the 3GSM Congress was a refreshing little oasis of creative and technical excellence. Their exhibitors included DA Group who have already formed a successful partnership with SMG Television for the ITV series 'Club Reps'.

But while speaker after speaker at both conferences extolled the future value of video content – by 2008 Strategy Analytics estimate the world market will be worth \$4.7 BILLION – it seems only the really high profile players are actually developing made-for-mobile programming.

News Corporation's Fox Studio in LA launched their first straight-to-mobile reality television series, Hotel Franklin, at Milia. British indie giant Endemol have also announced they are producing a video version of the Dutch mobile soap opera Jong-Zuid for handsets. The BBC is already editing down Fawley Tower clips for mobiles. So the big boys are already on the pitch.

Yet a panel of the top European Carriers – including Orange and Vodaphone – told me at Milia that they didn't see the immediate value in investing in new content for phones. They are desperate for content – why sell handsets that can play video and have only a handful of videos to access. But they would rather programme makers found commercial sponsors to pay for experiments in content. I can understand their hesitance. They've paid millions for 3G licences and don't want to

sink more cash into potential loss makers. Predicting trends for mobiles has been notoriously difficult. An industry that assumed we'd all want to make video calls has been wrong footed by the continued success of texting.

But the panel conceded that the most innovative television in recent years has come from the independent sector and it is this kind of approach that will appeal to the first customers of 3G and video enabled handsets – 16 to 24 year old males.

I saw several MX businesses who were offering technology and services that could be incorporated into a bigger media picture. In some cases, assumptions were made that the carriers or media companies would immediately see the benefits of their products. Sadly this rarely happens.

Better to look at the end user of the mobile phone. What does he or she want? How can my product help them satisfy their need? Who in the industry or market can I partner with to deliver that service or product? Many of you in MX will be doing that now. But further synergy is required to mine the gold.

You can make a fortune selling the picks... you still have to know where the gold is and position yourself at the minehead. Happy digging!"

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WEBSITE WITH TEXT APPEAL FOR BUSINESS

Yakara plc today recently announced the Scottish launch of the m-groups website (www.m-groups.com), an online text messaging service for Small and Medium sized Enterprises.

Analysys Research forecast the annual service revenue from business use of mobile data services across Europe would grow to €8.1 Billion in 2008. In March

2004, there were 59 Billion text messages sent in the UK, an increase of almost 25% on the total sent during the same period in 2003.

The Mobile Data Association (MDA) observed that "Over the last 5 years [the MDA] has witnessed text messaging grow from a popular craze to becoming an essential communication tool."

Stuart Malcolm, Managing Director of Yakara plc commented, "Text Messaging has become a mainstream activity. Our market testing has shown that businesses are looking for easy, convenient and cost-effective mobile messaging. m-groups is the only solution that does everything on one phone number, which means customers pay less and have more flexibility to switch features on and off when needed."

m-groups represents a new breed of on-demand applications, enabling customers to access the applications via the Internet on a pay-as-you-go basis, while removing the burden of IT maintenance, upgrades and licensing.

Stuart added, "After the recent downturn in the technology market Yakara is experiencing a significant growth in demand; this is a great time to be investing in mobile telecom products with global potential."

m-groups enables organizations to instantly communicate with staff, customers and suppliers; resulting in significant benefits for mobile workforce management and mobile project collaboration.

Yakara are offering a limited free trial to businesses who register on the m-groups.com website.

www.yakara.com

GROWING MOBILE GAMING THE QUALITY WAY

Glasgow based testing and technical support company Absolute Quality is playing a pivotal role in the development of the mobile gaming market. The company is currently working with customers such as Orange and Digital Bridges to provide games developers across the world an end to end service incorporating functionality, compatibility and localization testing. Key to this is their Entertainment Submission Portal (ESP), an online mobile and wireless content management service which was showcased in March at this year's Games Developer Conference in San Jose, California.

For the last eight years, the company has provided testing and technical support services for PC, MAC, XBOX and PS2 games titles. The growth of the mobile side is an important strategic development. Campbell Cameron, Business Development Director said: "We believe that in time over 70% of our test revenues will come from mobile. As consumer demand increases, developers, publishers and providers are under more pressure to increase the speed to market of games and content without compromising quality." Campbell added: "We are building the business to support this by increasing the team and becoming providers for industry standard certification and verification programmes such as Java Verified and Symbian Signed."

Gaming is seen as crucial in the growth of non-voice revenues. Datamonitor forecast that global wireless gaming revenues will rise to \$17.5 billion by 2006. In Europe, where mobile gaming is more advanced, the industry is estimated to grow to \$4.2 billion in the same period.

Beyond the abundant gaming market, the company sees opportunities in supporting other mobile applications and believes their investment in flexible, automated solutions, coupled with their deep understanding of clients' needs, will position them well for the future.

www.absolutequality.co.uk

NETWORKS CARTOON



mixipix, a unique new service for mobile phones which allows users to create, download and send animated cartoons to mobile handsets, was launched in Glasgow on Tuesday 1st June.

The mixipix cartoon messaging service allows users to choose from a huge range of animations – or create their own – which can then be sent to their own or someone else's mobile phone handset as a greeting. The cartoons can then be saved and used as an animated screensaver, used in a picture message (MMS) or wallpaper.

The mixipix technology automatically detects which type of mobile phone a user has and dynamically renders each animation to take advantage of the target phone's specifications. mixipix cartoon messages are created online and can be sent to any WAP-enabled colour mobile phone regardless of type. mixipix can be used over all mobile phone networks in the UK except 3.

Lesley Keen, the founder and managing director of mixipix, said: "Personalising your mobile and sending messages are two of the most popular services for mobiles right now. The mixipix cartoon messaging service gives people the chance to combine the two and send their friends and family something a little more funky and collectible than a plain text message. We also provide a simple do-it-yourself cartoon kit so that people can get creative and

customise their own content. Our unique, patent pending technology generates all the cartoon content on the fly, including new cartoons people make themselves, to ensure each user gets the best possible results for their particular phone. By using WAP download to deliver the cartoons rather than MMS, we are aiming to make the service as widely accessible as possible." www.mixipix.net

ABOUT MXtra

If you would like to receive future issues of MXtra, please email info@mxalliance.co.uk stating your name and contact details including email address and phone number. NB MXtra is available to non MX members for a limited period only.

ABOUT MX

MX is an alliance of organisations and individuals involved in the design, development, delivery and usage of mobile and wireless solutions. Working on behalf of its members, MX delivers a range of services including workshops + seminars around both technology and market topics, communication of business enquiries and other networking opportunities. MX works to promote the industry and its members through speaking and presentation opportunities, newsletters and PR.

If you are interested in finding out more about MX and its members, please go to www.mxalliance.co.uk or phone us on 0141 585 6340.

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