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Cox CDMA rollout rumored, as China Telecom invests US\$4.1 bil.

The market for CDMA base stations might be dwindling overall, but vendors are still finding operators that are anxious to buy CDMA equipment. A new CDMA network might be on deck in the US, and the telecoms-industry restructuring in China is opening up CDMA opportunities in that country.

On Aug. 19, Patrick Esser, president of US cable-TV company Cox Communications, announced that Cox was planning a wireless service that would integrate all of the company's communications and entertainment technologies into a single device. Huawei is rumored to already have a contract to build a 700MHz CDMA network for Cox.

The following day, China Telecom announced the award of CNY27.9 billion (US\$4.1 billion) worth of CDMA-equipment orders to Huawei Technologies, ZTE and Alcatel-Lucent. Huawei and ZTE each snared 40%

of the orders, while Alcatel-Lucent secured 20%. China Telecom, which is taking over China Unicom's former CDMA network in a telecoms-industry shake-up engineered by the Chinese government, intends to invest at least CNY80 billion in its newly acquired CDMA network over the next three years.

A Cox spokeswoman would not confirm the company's plans for a CDMA network. "Unfortunately we are not sharing details on our wireless strategy at this time but hope to be able to share more soon," she told *3GWB*.

But during a speech at the Progress and Freedom Foundation's annual summit in Aspen, CO, last month, Esser said: "We'll focus on providing simple calling plans, integrating all our services into one device with a consistent cross-platform interface, and making our content and applications mobile." He added that wireless service

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DATA REVENUES

Worldwide growth continues in non-SMS data revenues

Mobile operators around the world are continuing to see non-SMS revenues grow as a proportion of total data revenues, according to the latest figures from *3GWB* publisher Informa Telecoms & Media. Although the trend is reflected in all regions, operators in Asia Pacific and North America saw particularly strong growth in the 12 months to end-1Q08 (see fig.).

In the US, AT&T Mobility and Verizon Wireless saw non-SMS data revenues grow both in real terms and as a proportion of overall data revenues. Each also saw a significant level of growth in monthly non-SMS data ARPU, putting both in the US\$7-plus bracket for the quarter.

A number of operators in developed markets are now seeing non-SMS-data-ARPU figures in the range of US\$4-7 a month, according to Informa.

But despite seeing a high proportion of data revenues from non-SMS traffic, ARPU figures for many emerging-market operators remain substantially lower than in developed markets. For example, India's Reliance, which receives over 82% of total data revenues from non-SMS traffic, had

a non-SMS ARPU of just US\$0.50 in 1Q08. Ukraine Mobile Communications, which saw non-SMS data revenues climb from just over 46% of total data revenues to almost 70%, had a non-SMS data ARPU of US\$0.62.

Non-SMS data revenues, selected operators, 1Q08

Operator	Country	Non-SMS rev. as % of total data rev., 1Q08	Monthly non-SMS data ARPU, 1Q08 (US\$)
Reliance Comms	India	82.60	0.50
KTF	South Korea	74.91	5.51
Ukrainian Mobile Comms	Ukraine	69.90	0.62
AT&T Mobility	US	65.00	7.02
Mobile TeleSystems	Russia	61.40	0.88
Verizon Wireless	US	61.00	7.28
SKT	South Korea	58.07	5.33
TIM	Brazil	54.00	0.80
Telefonica Moviles	Spain	52.70	4.21
Orange France	France	50.00	4.75

Source: Informa Telecoms & Media



Networks Intelligence Centre

Intelligence for network investment, implementation, and optimisation issues

The range of options in fixed and wireless broadband networks continues to expand. Core network and back office integration issues only add to the complexity. Managed networks add a further strategic aspect to the business and in many cases business models are still unproven and demand uncertain.

The Networks Intelligence Centre focuses on networks, infrastructure and related technology developments in the mobile and convergent telecoms value chains. The main emphasis is on access network and technologies supporting advance applications and services as well as network outsourcing the managed services.

The service also tracks the impact of network technologies and services, from operators and regulators to equipment, software and silicon providers and spans the full range of next-generation broadband wireless, cellular, and convergent technologies and services.

For a detailed breakdown of the content in this Intelligence Centre visit www.intelligencecentre.net/networks

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Just what is a unified product catalog? asks Alon Alter

Vendors have long used the term “unified product catalog” – referring to a system that sets up and manages all sellable items, including telecoms-network services, content services, billing services, physical devices, accessories and third-party products or services – but now that so many claim to offer such products, it’s critical to decipher which are genuine and which are simply look-alikes. Can a single product really enable operators to launch new services at any time, over any infrastructure and from any provider without costly integration projects, as many vendors say? Or are there still limitations? And what does a genuinely unified product catalog look like from a technological perspective?

Service providers need a genuinely unified product catalog that offers the freedom to bundle products and services according to business requirements. A unified catalog can offer a single point of reference for all product-related data in a multisystem environment, composed of customer-relationship-management systems, billing systems and third-party value-added-services.

Part of the problem is that many vendors have grown by acquisition, leaving them with multiple systems with interfaces that weren’t designed to communicate with one another. Moreover, catalogs that are not designed to accommodate external catalogs with different structures and taxonomies will need to be adapted and customized for each external catalog. But the flexibility of a genuinely unified product catalog, offering sophisticated relationships between products and automatic transformation and substitution rules, can be achieved only with a system that is developed from the ground up to be unified, with an inherent architecture that clearly separates the catalog layers, enabling easy integration with external catalogs.

Three-layer architecture

A three-layer architecture – consisting of a component layer, a product-specification layer and a product-offering layer – enables an operator to offer cross-technology service bundles, multiplay packages and varying commercial pricing.

The component layer consists of services and tangible products that customers use, such as network services, content services, handsets, accessories and billing services. The product-specification layer is made up of marketing packages that include one or more components offered to users. For instance, the latest Nokia model can be bundled with an ADSL service to provide a broader telecommunications offering. Finally, the product-offering layer is a commercial representation of a single product specification, and it defines prices and customer eligibility by market segment, channel, time

period and other relevant variables.

A product specification can be associated with more than one product offering, each with different pricing and discounts and targeting different market segments. Additionally, product offerings can be used for time-sensitive campaigns.

The architecture is the most important factor in enabling a genuinely unified product catalog. The need for a system to treat data retrieved from external catalogs in the same way as data stored internally is as much an architectural problem as a technological one. But using the right technologies helps.

Other technologies

Technologies such as J2EE Connector Architecture (JCA) provide a foundation that supports unified catalogs. JCA defines a standard for communicating with external systems, enabling integration of multiple, heterogeneous catalogs into a single and coherent view. XML-deployment-descriptor elements are then used to dynamically map internal entities to external connectors, which are responsible for calling external systems for retrieval and updating purposes.

Combined, the architecture and technologies can create a metadata layer responsible for referencing the actual data, separating the internal mechanisms and the logical entities from the physical location of the data storage.

Vendors have developed connectors that call external systems without needing to change the logical entities and mechanisms of the unified catalog’s core engine. Retrieving an external catalog then requires just the creation of a connector to that catalog so that service providers can connect new product offerings to charging elements and price plans in the billing system, with no need for complex synchronization processes, data duplication or the costly engineering that would be required to make changes to the core engine.

The ability to make changes immediately and in-house is crucial and is generally possible only with inherently unified product catalogs. Service providers need to be wary of only partially integrated product catalogs, which require modification of the core catalog and its logical entities and which need complex synchronization processes to accommodate third-party catalogs or a variety of internal catalogs. It is a risky and costly approach, and the delays such a system would cause in launching new products and services can seriously harm a service provider’s competitiveness. 3GWB

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