The sky’s the limit with cloud computing - pg 4

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Revving up customer services - pg 10
A GOOD Q1

Driven by strong performances from all businesses, SingTel’s underlying net profit in the first quarter rose 10 per cent to $945 million. It registered strong growth in mobile, data and IT and engineering revenue. Net profit in the first quarter rose 7.7 per cent to $945 million from $878 million a year ago.

Singapore revenue grew 10 per cent to $1.38 billion from $1.25 billion a year ago and achieved its highest EBITDA in many years of $578 million, an increase of 11 per cent. Optus delivered 12 per cent increase in operating revenue to $2.20 billion and continued strong growth in mobile revenue.

Earnings from the Group’s regional mobile associates rose 12 per cent to $624 million, driven particularly by Telkomsel and Bharti. SingTel’s mobile customer base grew by 33 per cent from a year ago. As at 30 June 2009, the Group’s aggregate mobile customer base in Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand was 262 million.

POLLING WELL

SingTel has been ranked the second most admired company in Singapore according to the Asia 200 survey by The Wall Street Journal Asia. It reviewed Asia’s largest publicly-traded companies based on leadership qualities, including long-term vision, innovativeness in responding to customer needs and corporate reputation.

In another poll of Asia’s best companies by Finance Asia, SingTel clinched ‘Best Managed Company’, ‘Best Corporate Governance’ and ‘Best Corporate Social Responsibility in Singapore’.
IN FULL SWING
The SingTel Touching Lives Fund (STLF) 2009 campaign got into full swing with a Charity Golf held at the Laguna National Golf and Country Club on 28 August 2009.

The annual charity tee-off drew the support of more than 120 SingTel associates and business partners who sponsored 36 flights of golf and raised about S$650,000.

This year, the STLF is supporting five beneficiaries: APSN Tanglin School, AWWA Early Years Centre, Minds Lee Kong Chian Gardens School, Singapore Cancer Society and Shuttered Care Services. These charities run programmes such as training and special education for those who are intellectually or physically challenged, as well as social work and counselling programmes to help youths from families facing problems or those with learning difficulties.

Other fund-raising activities include an online donation drive among SingTel employees, as well as Fold A Heart which involves SingTel donating S$1 for each folded heart, using a special advertisement in TODAY newspaper, sent in by the public.

To make a donation to STLF, please call 1900 112 8811 (or *8111 if you are a SingTel Mobile customer). Each call is a S$5 donation.

Customers can now enjoy the cheapest BlackBerry® service plan from SingTel called BlackBerry Value. It comes with 1GB of bundled data and is priced at S$10.70 a month. BlackBerry Value is designed for first-time smartphone users who can now enjoy a cost-effective service to access push emails and instant messaging on the go.

ON ‘ICE’
SingTel has joined others to launch a campaign to help the Singapore Civil Defence Force raise awareness of the ICE (In Case of Emergency) programme. It involves getting people to save their next of kin’s contact number in their mobile phones under headings like ‘ICE-Husband’. This makes it easier for people around to contact their loved ones during an emergency.

COMMENDED TO AUSTRALIA
At the recent Australian Chamber of Commerce Singapore (AustCham) Business Awards, SingTel was lauded for its significant commitment to Australian trade and investment. For this, Australia’s Minister for Trade, The Hon. Simon Crean MP, presented SingTel Group CEO Ms Chua Sock Koong with the prestigious Commonwealth Bank of Australia Business Alliance Award 2009.

Ms Chua noted: “Australia has always been a crucial part of SingTel strategy in the region and through Optus, we have been able to expand and strengthen our pan-Asian network – making us even more attractive to businesses. SingTel recently won a number of deals with Australian companies despite the global economic downturn. They include ANZ, Australian Broadcast Corporation and the Australian Taxation Office.

NEW BLACKBERRY PLAN

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OPTUS D3 LAUNCHED

Optus D3 will expand the company’s satellite fleet capacity by more than 30 per cent and provide an in-orbit redundancy capability. It also marks the first use of the Broadcast Satellite Service (BSS) spectrum in Australia. This allows Optus broadcast customers to increase their delivery of the next generation of digital and high definition television to the home.

Mr Paul O’Sullivan, Optus Chief Executive noted: “Optus satellite reaches all corners of (Australia) delivering subscription television, free-to-air TV, voice, Internet and radio services making it an important source of news and entertainment for the entire population.”

The Optus D3 satellite will support existing customers including FOXTEL and Sky New Zealand.
THE SKY’S THE LIMIT WITH CLOUD COMPUTING

Cloud computing has become a hot topic in the info-communications technology (ICT) industry recently. Keylines look at this growing interest and how SingTel’s cloud computing services are helping businesses gain a vital competitive edge.

Cloud computing provides business services on demand via a secure online environment, referred to as the ‘cloud’. Customers enjoy services such as hosted email, web publishing and HR applications on a subscription basis, without the need to install software, purchase licences or manage ICT infrastructure.

Increasingly, businesses are turning to cloud computing to avoid high upfront investments in infrastructure and maintenance and upgrade costs. According to a Springboard Research called ‘Software-as-a-Service in APAC: The Momentum Continues’ (August 2008), the cloud computing services market in Asia Pacific is expected to grow rapidly with a compound annual growth rate of around 60 per cent in 2011.

Mr Bill Chang, SingTel’s Executive Vice President for Business Group, noted: “Cloud computing allows businesses to improve their productivity and yet lower their ICT costs by up to 90 per cent” (Please refer to case study on pg 5).

He added: “Cloud computing is gaining momentum globally as broadband and smart devices become more pervasive and affordable, and virtualisation technologies mature. We expect this market to grow even faster with the launch of the ultra-fast Next Generation National Broadband Network in 2012 in Singapore.”

Virtualisation technologies allow users to pool disparate physical computing resources, such as servers and data storage, so that they appear as one in a virtual environment. This simplifies and optimises the deployment and administration of computing resources.

To help companies enjoy the benefits of cloud computing services, SingTel has introduced Singapore’s first integrated online platform for the delivery of business applications and services on demand, called SingTel Marketplace (mybusiness.singtel.com).

It allows companies to enjoy the benefits of software services, such as HR management applications, on a monthly subscription basis. Customers enjoy immediate activation of services, technical support and consolidated billing from SingTel.

A regional cloud computing hub

SingTel has joined hands with the Infocomm Development Authority of Singapore (IDA), International Enterprise (IE) Singapore and leading technology companies to make Singapore a regional cloud computing hub. Together, they have launched the SingTel Innovation Exchange (SiX), the most comprehensive industry partnership programme of its kind, to accelerate the full life-cycle development of innovative business and consumer applications.

Through SiX, SingTel aims to attract developers, and commercialise and promote their applications to its more than 262 million regional mobile customers and millions of business customers in the region.

Software developers will have access to resources like grid computing and technical consultancy from SingTel and its partners, which help to lower operational costs and shorten time-to-market.

App Zone for developers

Developers of consumer mobile applications can offer their solutions via the upcoming SingTel App Zone. This online platform for prepaid and postpaid mobile customers
Currently offers over 1,300 innovative applications for a wide range of devices, including Android-enabled handsets. Solutions include educational, multimedia and lifestyle applications.

SingTel and IE Singapore have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for this partnership. Under the MOU, IE Singapore will provide both financial and non-financial assistance through its global market connections and programmes such as the International Partners (iPartners) Programme.

Mr Yew Sung Pei, Assistant CEO of IE Singapore, said: “This partnership is an excellent example of how the public and private sectors can work together to increase business opportunities for our local enterprises in the global marketplace.”

“Through the programme, we hope to work closely with SingTel to identify promising Singapore-based software developers and pro-actively match them with potential partners and customers overseas by leveraging SingTel’s connections and our global networks.”

Mr Andrew Khaw, Senior Director and Group Head, Industry Development of IDA, commented “Increasing access to technology and markets to help our Singapore infocomm players gain new competitiveness and market reach is a cornerstone of IDA’s industry development efforts.

“We actively engage infocomm MNCs and large local infocomm companies to groom smaller infocomm companies with their expertise and market network. In this respect, we are glad that SingTel has taken our collaboration to the next level, advancing from its Partners Programme to this larger scale Innovation Exchange.”

Mr Chang also said: “SiX will leverage the strengths and collaborative efforts of an ecosystem of partners. It will accelerate the development and commercialisation of innovative services to empower businesses and consumers, changing the way our customers live, work and play.”

Developers who are interested in offering their applications on SingTel App Zone can email g-singtelpp@singtel.com.

Cloud Computing Services Case Study

The following is a case study of how the cloud computing model can help businesses to lower their ICT costs. By using SingTel Marketplace cloud computing solutions, such as SingTel’s HR Assist HRM service, SMEs can enjoy up to 96 per cent in savings. Even after removing the IT manpower savings, an SME can still save up to 74 per cent of IT costs.

Cost of ownership for HRM solution (Traditional Capex & Opex model) | Cost for cloud services HR Assist (5-user licence for e-Leave & e-Payroll)
---|---
CAPEX ITEMS: | Bundled deal (Broadband 1.5Mbps + HR Assist) |
Servers for data storage & archival & redundancy | $1,110/yr |
Software licences | $1,100/yr |
One-time system integration | $1,100/yr |
Sub-total (Capex) | $5,500/yr |

OPEX ITEMS: |
Maintenance | $1,000/yr |
Software upgrades | $1,000/yr |
Broadband subscription | $1,100/yr |
Manpower for IT support | $25,000/yr |
Sub-total (Opex) | $28,100/yr |

Capex $5.5k amortised over five years | Grand total ($1.1k + $28.1k) |
$1,100/yr | $29,200 per year |

Grand total ($1.1k + $28.1k) | $1,110 per year |

Note: All $ in Singapore dollars. Prices are before GST.
GETTING ON TRACK, ON LINE AND ON TV

SingTel returns as the title sponsor of the Singapore Grand Prix this year, and fans in Singapore have been treated to a host of race-related activities, including a pair of tickets to the 2009 FORMULA 1™ SingTel Singapore Grand Prix given every week till the Singapore Grand Prix race weekend.

A point system rewards fans every time they visit the site. They can participate in online activities, ranging from driving a virtual simulator and playing games to correctly predicting the winner for each Grand Prix race in order to earn points.

With these points, they then visit the online SingTel Garage, which only opens during ‘magic moments’. Lucky fans who manage to catch these moments can use their points to redeem tickets and other prizes.

In total, race tickets and premiums worth over S$100,000 would have been given out by the time the Singapore Grand Prix is held.

Grid Girls ‘live’
Crowd favourites, the SingTel Grid Girls are also back. These ladies - whose role is to hold up the national flag of the driver and the number of his car before each race - took on an additional task this year.

The top 20 girls hosted a reality TV programme called SingTel Grid Girls on Tour. Each episode saw a trio visiting a different Formula One™ race venue to meet the drivers and fans while taking in the sights and sounds of the host countries.

The finals of the SingTel Grid Girls competition saw 23-year-old Low Shu Min, a Psychology student, winning the top prize of S$20,000 cash and securing her place at the front of the starting grid at the 2009 FORMULA 1 SINGTEL SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX. Constance Lau, 18, and Cordelia Low, 20, took second and third place, winning themselves cash prizes of S$7,000 and S$3,000 respectively.

The results were determined by a combination of viewer votes - which comprised 50 per cent of the final tally - and a panel of seven judges.

The entire season of SingTel Grid Girls on Tour is available on-demand free-of-charge to all mio TV customers.

The 2009 FORMULA 1™ SingTel Singapore Grand Prix is held from 25-27 September 2009.
WATCHING THE WORLD

From Asia to Europe and the United States - viewers can now catch some of the best sporting events, dramas, entertainment and documentaries around on mio TV.

Best of European football – free!

From now till the end of October 2009, SingTel is giving all Singapore fans a ‘no-strings-attached’ free access to its Football Frenzy offering on mio TV.

Football Frenzy is Singapore’s first multimedia social football experience. It allows fans to catch Europe’s top football clubs in action via SingTel’s mio TV, web and mobile platforms.

SingTel currently holds the rights to the Italian Serie A, UEFA Champions League and UEFA Europa League. All three are included in the Football Frenzy package.

The free access to Football Frenzy is available to all mio TV customers. Even non-SingTel customers can enjoy this service provided they have a SingTel fixed phone line. The free service includes the installation of the mio TV set-top box and modem.

Great Brit picks

Anglophiles can rejoice at three exciting new channels and video-on-demand titles with choice UK programming on mio TV.

With Granada TV, viewers get a combination of hit contemporary dramas, comedies and the best in talk and entertainment shows. Many of the programmes have never been seen before in Asia.

Catch award-winning actors in shows such as Spooks, Doctor Who and Jane Eyre at the British Drama channel. Fans of genres ranging from horror, literature to comedy will find something to suit their fancy.

The British Documentary channel showcases the best of UK’s award-winning documentaries, as well as wildlife, science and natural history programmes. Audiences can unravel the mysteries of the Bermuda Triangle or witness the last terrifying moments of Pompeii as its inhabitants were caught in a volcanic death trap.

Both British Drama and British Documentary are available on-demand, and customers can subscribe to the channels on a monthly basis and watch the episodes at their leisure.

Life inspired – in HD

Turn to mio TV’s Channel 22 for Asia’s first regional lifestyle high-definition TV channel called Li (short for Life Inspired).

Programmes include Iron Chef America, one of the most riveting reality-food formats, and Deserving Design, a feel-good interior design show hosted by multi-award-winning celebrity designer and author Vern Yip.

In addition, Li will showcase international celebrities like Martha Stewart and the funky designer cast from HGTV Design Star.

Hot from the USA

mio TV has also lined up more new content under its Season Pass US TV Series offerings.

Glee is a teen drama and musical comedy that follows a high school teacher as he tries to inspire a group of ragtag performers to make it to the Nationals. Vampire folklore fans can feast on The Vampire Diaries which follows the lives of two vampire brothers at war for the same object of their passion. Drama comedy Eastwick centres on three young witches whose powers are awakened when a mysterious man moves to town.

Meanwhile, those who remember the 1980s sci-fi blockbuster TV series V will be glad to hear that the remake of this seminal series will debut on mio TV in November this year.

New seasons of favourite series will also return including Supernatural, The Mentalist, Grey’s Anatomy, and the final season of Lost.

Current mio TV subscribers can subscribe to Season Pass titles directly through the mio TV on-screen guide or contacting the SingTel Hotline at 1800 555 6000. New subscribers can sign-up for mio TV through the SingTel Hotline (1800 555 6000), via www.singtel-ustv.com or at any SingTel retail store.
By having a technology-driven and paperless administrative environment for forensic medical services, the Health Sciences Authority in Singapore is able to achieve cost efficiencies and facilitate the speedier processing of cases.

The Health Sciences Authority (HSA) is a multi-disciplinary agency in health sciences expertise in Singapore. It is responsible for administering the national regulatory frameworks for pharmaceuticals, complementary medicines, medical devices and other health products. Apart from running of the national blood bank and provision of transfusion medicine services, it takes care of the provision of forensic medicine expertise, investigative forensic and analytical science services.

Introducing FIONA

Forensic Integrated Operations Network Applications (FIONA) is an IT initiative by the HSA to streamline its administrative processes and workflow associated with forensic medical services such as death investigation, autopsy, scene investigation, clinical histopathology laboratory service and forensic medical consultancy.

It supports all Forensic Medicine Division (FMD) services, including the histolab. It aims to reduce the manpower required for data entry. At the same time, FIONA has to improve the data flow among the sections within FMD, streamline administrative process with external agencies for case registration as well as reinforce the document flow processes. It also has to accurately track movement of bodies and specimens using RFID and/or barcodes technologies.

Integrated technologies

NCS was awarded the contract for the supply, delivery, installation, testing, and commissioning of a fully operational FIONA.

To achieve the stated aims and HSA’s direction of moving towards a paperless environment, NCS proposed and implemented an integrated suite of technologies for FIONA.

One was the use of clinical mobile notebooks in the autopsy suite to facilitate activities such as body-charting and note-taking while the pathologist is performing an autopsy. This makes for ease of data synchronisation to the servers.

NCS also introduced an integrated Track and Trace framework with RFID solution to track the movement of the body/body parts and specimen.
NCS' success in using information technology to reduce manual work processes and improve cost efficiencies can also be seen in the area of homeland security.

Enhancing police services
To meet growing demand for police services to be available anytime and anywhere, NCS developed an electronic Police Centre (ePC) for the Singapore Police Force.

The ePC allows members of the public to lodge reports relating to loss property and general crime without the need to head down to a police centre. The solution helps to free up the manpower resources at police centres, allowing police officers to deal with time-critical cases more efficiently. Currently, the ePC handles an average of 1,200 reports a month.

Another solution to improve police services is the Self Report Lodging System (SRLS), which can be accessed at selected Neighbourhood Police Centres (NPC).

At the SRLS stations, members of the public can key in their own reports which are then verified by the counter officers. Self-lodged reports include loss and found property, general crime and traffic accidents. The SRLS has improved the workflow in NPCs, resulting in a shorter waiting time for members of public and a more efficiency report lodging process.

On PATROL for drugs
The Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) regulates the declarations of precursor chemicals necessary in the manufacture of controlled drugs. Declarations are required for every import, export and shipment of these precursor chemicals.

Previously, traders had to send the declaration forms and supporting documents through fax. To streamline this time-consuming and resource intensive process, NCS worked with CNB to develop a web-based system called Permit Administration and ConTROL System (PATROL).

It enables registered traders and forwarders to perform permit transactions online and to have immediate access to required information anytime and anywhere. Tracking of all permits and status is also available at a glance.

Facilitating immigration applications
The Immigration and Checkpoints Authority (ICA) is responsible for immigration and registration functions such as the issuing of travel documents and identity cards to Singapore citizens and various immigration passes and permits to foreigners.

An e-Appointment system allows the public to make an appointment with the ICA for a wide array of immigration services and facilities, reducing their waiting time at the ICA building. The system also helps the ICA to alleviate any security concerns that could arise in an overcrowded services centre.

Another service is the e-Visit Pass (e-VP) which allows the public to apply for a Visit Pass (long term) without making a trip to the ICA. All applications submitted and approved through e-VP are required to have the processing or payment fees paid online. Once the payment is successfully completed, applicants will be notified of the application status either by email (if provided) or via a “Status Enquiry” when they go online.
Inchcape Australia is part of London-based Inchcape PLC which operates in the distribution, retail and logistics market for automotive services. Its subsidiary, Subaru Australia, is the importer and distributor of Subaru vehicles and parts in Australia. The company’s automotive retail arm carries brands such as Hyundai, Kia, Mitsubishi, Subaru and Volkswagen. Inchcape also provides premium parts logistics and vehicle delivery services via another subsidiary, AutoNexus.

With over 1,000 employees across the Australian market, Inchcape wanted to consolidate its communications and IT services to ensure customer information, billings, and logistic and delivery schedules are accurate and readily accessible to its employees at its headquarters as well as retail sites.

A need to consolidate IT and comms

Inchcape’s previous network did not have the capacity to handle large data transfers. This created delays in receiving information and caused significant time lags in scheduling customer orders. As a result, Inchcape had to dispatch more than one vehicle for multiple deliveries to the same area on the same day, adding to cost and time inefficiencies.

As the custodian of Subaru and dealer for other international car brands in Australia and New Zealand, Inchcape has a reputation to maintain by providing quality customer service. It wanted to consolidate its communications and IT services to ensure its customer records and billings are up to date, and that its logistic and delivery schedules are accurate and readily accessible to its employees at its headquarters as well as retail sites.

Inchcape stabilised its ICT systems when it migrated to Optus Evolve network.

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accessible. It also wanted to maximise employee productivity. In short, it needed a network that provided secure remote access over a robust, reliable connection.

**Getting greater scalability**

To help consolidate their network platform, Inchcape turned to its longstanding telecommunications partner, Optus.

After thorough assessment, Optus recommended their Optus Evolve™‘99 network; a new generation Internet Protocol (IP) network, to connect Inchcape’s offices in Australia. The network offered greater bandwidth and scalability and architecturally supports Inchcape’s current and future information and communications technology (ICT) requirements.

Mr Morrie Camporeale, Head of Information Services for Inchcape Australia and New Zealand, explained how the migration to the Optus Evolve network helped the company to stabilise its ICT systems. He said: “Accessing and sharing current information is critical for the smooth functioning of our operations nationally. We also require a single, easy to manage view of our systems.

“Optus took the time to get behind our business in order to ensure all our ICT needs were met. We were given regular updates and reports which were concise, accurate and informative.”

The move to Optus Evolve IP Virtual Private Network (VPN) allowed Inchcape to have voice and data services running on a single converged network. This has given the company greater visibility, and control over its core system. It has also simplified Inchcape’s billing and lowered the cost of ownership by reducing the amount of infrastructure required to carry its voice and data traffic. Network management has also benefited as the need to run disparate traffic reports has been removed.

**Smarter software and cohesive communications**

After only three months with the Optus Evolve network, Inchcape has started to notice a return on its investment. The robust Multi Protocol Label Switching (MPLS)-based IP VPN has enabled Inchcape to install smarter software offering advanced functionalities across the business. This has led to a boost in staff productivity as communications have become more cohesive.

Mr Camporeale said: “It is measuring that the network allows our systems to easily track deliveries, parts availability and most importantly keep us all connected and focused on being customer-centric.”

Inchcape is currently considering enhancing its use of mobile services and digital signage over the Optus Evolve IP VPN network. Digital signage will enable Inchcape to push out high quality marketing and promotional videos and content to LCD screens in its retail centres across the country.

On the mobile services front, Mr Camporeale said “We want to take our customer service to the next level by launching an on-site evaluation programme. This means our sales representatives can remotely access core applications to create invoices, handle deposits and generate appraisals whilst visiting the customer. We are confident that Optus Evolve will help us achieve this.”

**ABOUT OPTUS EVOLVE**

Optus Evolve is a new advanced communications network designed to help business adapt to the converged communications landscape of the future.

Built from the ground up to support convergence, it features a new simple, modular, end-to-end IP network with streamlined backend processes and greater bandwidths than previously available.

It allows Optus customers to replace legacy networks with a single, easy-to-manage network platform and deliver outstanding business efficiencies, including faster data speeds and simpler network management.

Businesses will be able to reap a considerable competitive edge by making interaction between sites faster and more cost-effective, streamlining IT administration and giving staff secure off-site access to core applications and data.

The offering also delivers greater flexibility of choice in order for customers to balance the need for bandwidth with features and affordability.
AIS NAMES NEW CEO

The Board of Directors of Advanced Info Service (AIS) has approved the appointment of three executives to new posts effective from 1 September 2009.

Mr Wichian Mektrakarn has been promoted from AIS President to Chief Executive Officer (CEO), replacing Mr Vikrom Sripataks. He will be responsible for leading the company’s business operations and subsidiaries.

Mr Vikrom will assume a newly created post as Vice Chairman of the executive committee in charge of strategic direction. AIS Deputy President Mr Hui Weng Chong has also been promoted to Chief Operating Officer.

The changes were in line with AIS’ management succession plan and are aimed at strengthening the company’s operations in view of intensifying market competition. It is also preparing to move into the third-generation (3G) wireless broadband space by attaining a 3G licence at the auction by Thailand’s National Telecommunications Commission.

AIS is Thailand’s largest mobile communications operator with 27.9 million customers as at 30 June 2009.

BHARTI ARLTEL TO GROW ICT IN BHUTAN

Bharti Airtel will launch a new terrestrial cable network to Bhutan and as part of this initiative, it has inked a memorandum of understanding with the Royal Government of Bhutan to extend fibre connectivity to the Himalayan kingdom.

Mr Manoj Kohli, CEO & Joint Managing Director of Bharti Airtel, said: “We are deeply honoured to have the opportunity to partner the Royal Government of Bhutan to help build a world class ICT infrastructure in Bhutan.

“The launch of Bhutan Fibre Connect is a reiteration of Bharti Airtel’s commitment to building a truly global network.”

The initiative will enable enterprises in Bhutan, to reach out to the world by accessing Bharti’s cable assets, through its International cable landing stations in Chennai and Mumbai.

Mr Lyonpo Nandalal Rai, Minister for Information & Communications, Royal Government of Bhutan, noted: “The Royal Government of Bhutan has identified Information and Communications Technology as a priority sector for creating an Information Society, providing Government services to citizens and businesses through the deployment of e-Government solutions and further the growth of the IT/ITES industry & Data Centre market in Bhutan.”

GLOBE SPEARHEADS INNOVATION WITH DUO

Wireless service provider Globe Telecom has hailed it not only the first of its kind in the Philippines, but possibly in the world as well. It is referring to Duo, a mobile phone and landline converged in one for mobile phone users, which it had launched in recent months. The new service aims to help customers do away with expensive mobile-to-landline calls.

Duo stores two numbers - one mobile and one landline - in the SIM card of customers’ mobile phones. This allows them to use their phones like landlines.

They can make unlimited calls to any landlines and other Duo-ready phones, and talk for as long as they want, for a fixed subscription fee. Customers thus benefit from significant savings on their phone bills.

Customers do not need separate handsets, two SIMs or a dual SIM phone to enjoy the service.

Mr Ernest Cu, Globe’s President and CEO said: “We are excited to offer the public another pioneering service from Globe. Globe has always been at the forefront of service innovation to deliver superior value and the best mobile experience for consumers.”

Mr Ferdinand de la Cruz, head of Globe’s Consumer Wireless Business Group, added: “Technology today drives innovators toward convergence, as the market demands more efficient and effective means of communicating. For this reason, Globe is breaking the barriers between mobile and landline services by coming up with this revolutionary two-in-one service.”

The service is currently available in some areas in the Philippines such as Metro Manila and Cebu for both Globe prepaid and postpaid subscribers.
CITYCELL OFFERS FASTER WIRELESS INTERNET

Citycell (Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited) has unveiled a new and upgraded package high-speed wireless internet service, called Zoom™ Ultra.

Customers can experience download speeds of up to 512 kbps, and the Zoom™ Ultra connection enables them to access the higher speeds by simply connecting to their laptop or desktop computer through a plug-and-play USB device.

With higher wireless surfing speeds, customers can enjoy a superior internet browsing experience with video streaming, video surveillance, and rich media content.

Currently the Zoom™ Ultra service is available in Motijheel, Dhanmondi, Banani, Gulshan, Baridhara, and Uttara areas of Dhaka city. Since the Ultra Modem is downward compatible with Citycell’s Zoom™ 1X network, it ensures connectivity throughout Bangladesh across 64 districts.

To give customers a first-hand experience of the new package, Citycell recently started a Zoom™ Ultra Experiential Campaign in select areas where the service is available. Visitors can enjoy free Internet browsing at Zoom™ Ultra kiosks.

TELKOMSEL SUPPORTS DREAMS OF YOUNG RACER

Coinciding with Indonesia’s 64th Independence Day, the country’s largest cellular operator has announced its support for a young national driver, Rio Haryanto, to grow his potential in the international racing circuit.

As his sponsor, Telkomsel will provide funding over the next few years to support Rio Haryanto’s race preparation for the Formula 3 circuit, or even potentially future F1 races. The 16-year-old has hitherto been racing in Formula BMW Asia Pacific championship.

Mr Sarwoto Atmosutarno, President Director of Telkomsel, said: “These last few years, our national sporting achievements have been less encouraging. Though we have many potential young athletes who can excel in the international arena, they are hampered by a lack of funds.”

He said that Telkomsel has chosen to support Haryanto because of his talent and passion, as well as his potential to help Indonesia stamp a bigger mark in the international sporting arena.

Apart from support for the entire race preparation, Telkomsel is providing access for customers who want to support Haryanto via encouraging messages using SMS. They can also enjoy the latest information and wallpaper featuring the young driver.

Haryanto, who hails from Solo, Indonesia, started his professional pace in karting. He recently finished in second place in the Formula 3 Australian Driver Championship. He will be participating in the Formula BMW Asia Pacific in Singapore from 24-27 September.

A YOUTHFUL GLOW FOR WARID

Warid Telecom has launched a new youth brand called ‘Glow’ which aims to cater to the tastes and preferences of young people in Pakistan.

Users get to define a circle by nominating ten members into their Glow group. They can decide how and when they want to communicate via voice, SMS or Facebook through flexible bundles and pre-paid tariffs.

They can share with friends and family members the latest music, movie reviews or download the latest games. A separate web and WAP portal called ‘Libab’ (which means best of the best in Arabic) has been created to provide free downloads.

Mr Ali Tahir, Group CCO of Warid Telecom International, said: “Glow gives value for money and provides mobile entertainment to the youths of the country. This is just the beginning of a journey that will enable our customers to share, communicate, and learn to become the leaders shaping Pakistan’s future, and Glow is going to be with them.”

Mr Suhail Jan, Warid’s General Manager Sales added: “Glow is all about empowering youths by giving them total control hence making them feel free. The new prepaid brand Glow has been launched to further enhance customer satisfaction and provide flexibility of choice. Our entire sales networks, including retailers, franchises and affinity partners, have termed Glow as a ground-breaking initiative that will surely render positive results.”
Regional enterprises operate across multiple countries and often face challenges in managing their business operations across a highly diversified business environment. With the global economic downturn, cost control and efficiencies have become even more critical to enterprises.

Mobile services are often regarded as a ‘domestic service’ where regional enterprises have to purchase mobile lines and value-added services from the respective in-country mobile operator. This was unlike fixed and managed network services which regional enterprises have long been able to streamline and consolidate their total communications requirements on a regional and/or even global basis, working with communications service providers to achieve better cost control and efficiencies.

With Bridge Alliance, regional enterprises can now look towards a ‘single entity’ to fulfill their mobile services needs on a regional basis, allowing them greater cost control and higher efficiencies across their total communications needs including fixed and mobile.

Facilitated by Bridge Mobile, Bridge Enterprise provides one-stop shop convenience to support Bridge Alliance member operators in their efforts to better serve the regional mobile needs of enterprise customers.

Through Bridge Enterprise, the enterprise sales account teams of Bridge Alliance member operators are able to tap the synergies created.

A ONE-STOP PARTNER TO REGIONAL ENTERPRISES

These include collaboration on sales approaches, regional account management and regional bid co-ordination service provided by Bridge Mobile.

Beyond the Asia-Pacific, Bridge Alliance also collaborates with FreeMove Alliance in Europe and other partnerships to extend its reach and ability to better serve the needs of global enterprises.

With these initiatives in place, Bridge Alliance presents a very attractive value proposition to regional enterprises, allowing them a greater ability to manage their mobile services requirements on a regional and global basis, through a single point of contact, thus enjoying the conveniences of simplifying their purchasing decision.

Speaking to Keylines on other initiatives in the pipeline for Bridge Enterprise, Yeo See Kiat, Senior Director, Alliance and Partnership of Bridge Mobile said: “We are working to introduce a ‘bill analysis portal’ which will enable regional enterprises to analyse and consolidate their regional mobile bills. This will give them more visibility and tools to manage their mobile expenses more effectively. We are also working to identify and develop regional applications that are useful to enterprises and we hope to share more development progress in the months ahead.”

Please contact your SingTel Account Manager for more information on Bridge Enterprise.

FOOTPRINT IN CHINA WITH BRIDGE DATAROAMPLUS

Bridge Alliance has extended its footprint into China with the launch of Bridge DataRoamPlus, increasing the coverage of its one-flat rate data roaming offer to twelve territories across Asia Pacific.

Customers who subscribe to Bridge DataRoam suite of data roaming plans can now enjoy extended coverage to China at no additional charge, as well as significant savings of up to 90 per cent on their data roaming charges across the twelve destinations.

Customers can subscribe to the following plans - Bridge DataRoam5 for 5MB, Bridge DataRoam15 for 15MB and Bridge DataRoam40 for 40MB - available in daily, weekly and monthly subscriptions.

Bridge DataRoamPLU5 is already available to the customers of Airtel, AIS, Globe, Maxis, Optus, SingTel, SK Telecom and Telkomsel.

Please call SingTel Customer Service Hotline at 1626 or visit any hello! store to sign up for Bridge DataRoam.
A LOOK AT THE INTERESTING OR INNOVATIVE SIDE of the tech world that made the news...

Teenager reunites with dad through Facebook

A 19-year-old girl has been reunited with her dad, thanks to the man’s girlfriend - and Facebook!

Sophie Featherstone was adopted by her maternal grandmother when she was barely two years after she was given up by her then 18-year-old mum. Her dad Paul Bridge was not aware that Sophie was his daughter.

The 37-year-old said: “I was young and told that Sophie wasn’t my daughter. I had tried looking for her about two years ago and told my girlfriend that I wanted to meet her to see if she looked like me.”

Bridge’s girlfriend, Sarah Prescott, tracked Sophie down via Facebook and started chatting with the teenager who had recently lost her grandmother to cancer. Sarah soon sent her a Facebook message: “Your dad would love to get in touch with you.”

Sophie was thus reunited with her dad. But her happy story does not end there. She has also managed to find her biological mother following an appeal in the newspapers.

Mobile ride-sharing

Technology could be changing the way hitchhikers get their rides.

Researchers in Germany are developing a mobile ride-sharing service that combines Internet and mobile technologies to match passengers to drivers, without them having to arrange a trip around town long beforehand.

Traditional car-sharing services typically require passengers to register routes in advance but with this, drivers can enter a destination on their mobile phone when they are already on the road. A server then tracks their vehicle’s location and scans for ride requests.

If the software finds a match, the driver is notified and can choose to pick passengers up on route. We say ‘thumbs up’ to this!

Movie rentals on YouTube?

YouTube is in talks with several major movie studios about renting movies to users by streaming the films over the Internet. The movies would be available for rental for a fee in a system similar to Web rental programmes. YouTube would likely charge a similar fee around US$3.99 a rental.

It is in touch with media content partners as it ramps up efforts to build a substantial library of current and archive professional movies and videos that it can monetize.

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