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YOUR MONTHLY GUIDE TO THE ASIAN COMMUNICATIONS MARKET

SIEMENS
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news in brief

Corporate

Intelsat **has obtained two credit facilities totaling US$1 billion, its initial financing as a private company, from a syndicate of lenders arranged by** Salomon Smith Barney**. The credit arrangements include a 364-day facility for US$500 million and a three-year facility in the same amount. They are intended to provide liquidity support for general corporate purposes and to support Intelsat's commercial paper programme…** Advantech Advanced Microwave Technologies **has acquired UK based** Signal Processors Ltd **and Arizona-based** ACT Wireless**. The acquired businesses, which design and manufacture state-of-the-art satellite modems and antenna tracking technology, will continue operations under the name of SPL-ACT Wireless…** Jim Pratt**, representing Australia's** Singtel Optus **has taken over as chairman of the** GSM Association **from Scott Fox.** Craig Ehrlich**, executive director of Hong Kong mobile phone company** Sunday Communications Ltd**, has been elected deputy chairman. He is also chairman-elect for 2003-2004.**

Korea

Wavecom SA **has signed a contract with** ASE Telecom Co Ltd **(ASE) of South Korea to supply Wismo ISMO Pac P3103B modules for ASE's new series of GSM/GPRS mobile phones, targeting the Chinese market. ASE is the first South Korean mobile telephone maker to use Wismo Pac…** KT Icom **of South Korea,** Korea Telecom**'s 3G mobile group, has selected** Comverse**'s Multimedia Messaging Service Center (MMSC) for deployment on its new UMTS network. A demonstration of KT Icom's MMS applications will take place at the World Cup: MMS-enabled handsets will be made available by KT Icom for the duration of the event in order to enable participants at the World Cup to enjoy the ultimate experience of composing, sending and receiving multimedia messages. KT Icom is planning for the large-scale launch of its MMS offering to take place in early 2003.**

AT&T launches first Sino-foreign telecom services jv

Formed by AT&T, Shanghai Telecom (STC) and Shanghai Information Investments (SII), Shanghai Symphony Telecom is China's first Sino-foreign telecom services joint venture (jv). Marketing its services under the brand name Unisiti, the jv will offer IP-based services to multinational business customers. Unisiti will also boast a wide range of services from parent companies AT&T and China Telecom.

Growing demand from multinational corporations for advanced data communications in China and seamless connections with other global operations proved the catalyst for the jv. Following China's entry into the World Trade Organisation, Unisiti's communications services will greatly benefit the rising number of foreign investors in Shanghai. A showcase for China's economic development, the Pudong area of Shanghai is a base to more than 100 of the Fortune 500 US multinational companies.

TOT/CAT merge as Thai Telecom

Under a new government, the Telephone Organisation of Thailand (TOT), which runs the country's fixed-line network, and the Communications Authority of Thailand (CAT), which oversees international calls, will become business units of the new Thai Telecommunications plc, scheduled for November stockmarket listing. CAT's postal service will be held in a separate company owned by the Finance Ministry.

The privatisation follows months of delays due to uncertainties over future regulatory policies and the status of existing concession contracts, and is seen by the Thaksin-led government as the way to ensure successful listing. The new TOT/CAT merger plan, despite the voiced objections of TOT's top management and union (who would prefer to list on the stockmarket without merging with CAT) is expected to go ahead as planned, says Srisook Chantrangsu, transport permanent secretary and chairman of the merger panel.

India yields on IP telephony

Lengthy and heated debate has led to the Indian government allowing ISPs to provide Internet telephony (conventional carriers had argued against this step as they have to contribute levies to Universal Service Obligations (USO) unlike ISPs). ISPs have welcomed the news as they can stay afloat in a consolidating market and can now offer a suite of voice-based services such as unified messaging, Internet call waiting, and call centres.

Pyramid Predictions believes that in order to get new services up and running, at the very least, existing network providers will need to replace their old technology switches. BSNL, for instance, has embarked on a VoIP project, building an IP-based network in seven major cities including Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Delhi, and Pune. Other conventional carriers are expected to follow suit.

Pyramid also believes that conventional carriers will need to minimise customer churn in the face of competition from new network players such as Reliance and Tata with state-of-the-art infrastructure.

China's surfs to second place

Nielsen/NetRatings now places China as second only to the USA in the number of home internet users. The company claims nearly 57 million Chinese have home web access, as against 166 million (USA), 51 million (Japan), 32 million (Germany) and 29 million (UK).

Internet subscriptions in China are growing by 5-6 per cent every month and in just three or four years 25 per cent of the population could have internet access: over 250 million people.

The survey found that a typical web user in China is male, aged 16 to 34. More than half of those surveyed said home was their preferred place to log on, followed by Internet cafes (27 per cent) and work (24 per cent). The survey randomly interviewed 1,000 households in mainland China with fixed telephone lines.

China is keen to promote the growth of the Internet for business and plans to spend US$120 billion to develop its telecoms and information technology industries over the next five years. However, it also tries to maintain strict control over what its citizens read on the net, blocking access to certain Internet domains such as bbc.co.uk.

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news in brief

Myanmar

The first phase of Myanmar's long-awaited GSM system, managed by Myanmar Posts and Telecommunications (MPT) and built under a BTO contract by British Virgin Islands-based Skylink Communications, has been launched. The release of 70,000 GSM handsets in Rangoon and 30,000 in Mandalay forms part of a project using equipment from Germany's Siemens and China's ZTE, valued at US$144 million.

China

Hong Kong's largest independent local bank, the Bank of East Asia Ltd (BEA), has embarked on a customer relationship management (CRM) project with NCR Teradata Division. It aims to provide BEA with the capability to better understand its customers' needs, deliver more personalised services, increase revenue income through cross-selling to targeted segments and, most importantly, boost the Bank's bottom line. The first stage gives BEA a "single view" of customers. With a comprehensive picture of its customer profiles, BEA can provide tailor-made services that best suit differing needs. The personalised service would enhance the bank's customer service level and utilise the Bank's resources more cost-effectively. The companies also signed a new contract for stage two of the project. This will enable the Bank to better understand the relative value of each customer as to the detail activities they interact with the Bank

Macau

Macau University of Science and Technology has chosen Cisco Systems for its new campus-wide IP telephony network, becoming the first education institute in Macau to implement such a system. The new network will combine all the University's data and telephone (150 Cisco IP phones) traffic onto a single robust system capable of handling all forms of data, voice and video communication.

<end>

Sri Lanka Telecom set to float

The Sri Lankan government has revived plans for a stock market flotation of the state telephone company, planning to list between 10 per cent and 15 per cent of Sri Lanka Telecom. The move follows the release by the International Monetary Fund of US$60 million for Sri Lanka as approval of the country's economic restructuring, which includes planned privatisations. Local stockbrokers are expressing scepticism over the delayed listing plans, but say the move could boost overall share turnover on the local stock market.

The listing is expected to boost the Colombo stockmarket's capitalisation by about 50 per cent. Last year it jumped 39 per cent but it has remained flat in 2002. Sri Lanka Telecom posted a net profit of US$22 million last year and has a subscriber base of 650,000. A 35.2 per cent stake, valued at about US$250 million, of Sri Lanka Telecom was bought from the government in 1997 by Nippon Telegraph and Telephone.

KDDI turns to CommWorks

CommWorks is providing core data network equipment for KDDI, the latter having launched its 3G high-speed wireless services to its subscribers across major cities in Japan. Subscribers from 33 municipalities as well as 47 regional communities will be able to enjoy KDDI's "au mobile" services. Based on its "Mobile & IP" concept, KDDI is bringing mobile telecommunications under this new national brand: the A in au stands for access, always, amenity etc, and the U for unique, universal and user-oriented.

New Zealand

TVNZ Satellite Services, a New Zealand-based broadcaster and global satellite carriage provider, has doubled its capacity on New Skies' global satellite network. A customer on New Skies' NSS-703 satellite (57 degrees East longitude) since 1994, TVNZ will expand its network to include increased capacity on NSS-703 as well as two additional New Skies spacecraft. The multi-transponder, multi-satellite agreement gives the TVNZ Satellite Services network and its clients a combination of C- and Ku-band global coverage for the delivery of television news and sports events around the world.

Nokia speeds up Jixi

Nokia and Jixi Telecommunications Bureau have signed a contract for the supply of the Nokia DSL access network to Heilongjiang province, bringing high-speed Internet access to Jixi TB subscribers. Nokia will supply D50e Digital Subscriber Line Access Multiplexers and Network Management Systems as part of its end-to-end broadband IP access solution.

CCPCNet selects Cisco MPLS for Greater China VPN service

CPCNet Hong Kong, a CITIC Pacific, a provider of IP-based solutions for businesses in Greater China, has chosen Cisco's Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS) technology to implement its next-generation corporate private network solution TrueConnect. TrueConnect is an MPLS-based Virtual Private Network (VPN) service providing companies with secure, direct high-performance links to locations across Greater China. Service coverage includes Hong Kong, Taiwan, Shanghai, Beijing, Shenzhen, Guangzhou, and Wuhan with extensions to be established to other cities and countries in the next few months.

Broadband quintet for Shin

Shin Satellite Public Company Limited has signed five agreements with companies to use its iPSTAR satellite broadband system for business and educational purposes. The company has signed a framework agreement with Shanghai VSAT Network Systems Co Ltd (SVC) to be an iPSTAR National Service Provider (NSP) in China. Once the installation of an iPSTAR gateway is completed in China, SVC projects it will sell more than 5,000 iPSTAR user terminals nationwide.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) has also been signed with Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) in India to provide an Internet backbone and international private leased circuit network. Shin and VSNL are confident that iPSTAR will be able to expand the broadband satellite Internet market in India.

In Thailand, Shin has signed the agreements with VSAT providers SiamSat and Samart Telcom which will provide services using iPSTAR terminals to SME customers. An MoU with EdNet (National Education Network of Thailand) will provide iPSTAR technology to connect schools in a national education network.

China's Internet Technologies

China currently has seven telecom operators: China Telecom, China Mobile, China Unicom, China Netcom, China Jitong, China Railcom and China Satcom. All except China Satcom own backbones with different Internet and access technologies. The backbones are: ChinaNet, CMNet, UniNet, CNCNet, ChinaGBN, and China Railnet respectively. In addition, China has some experimental networks, eg, Nokia and CERNet's IPv6 network.

Following the restructure there will be six operators and five commercial Internet backbones. According to the Ministry of Information Industries (MII), China Telecom will split its assets along a north-south divide. China Netcom will inherit the northern assets and merge with China Jitong; the new company will be renamed the China Netcom Group. China Telecom will retain its southern assets and operating name, and China Mobile, China Unicom, China Railcom and China Satcom will all stay as they are. Since 1992, China Telecom has rolled out three core networks: the China Digital Divide Network (DDN), the Chinese Public Frame Relay Wideband Business Network (ChinaFRN) and ChinaNet.

The construction of ChinaFRN, the first such network adopting Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) packet switch and packet exchange, signaled a new phase in Chinese digital communication as the enhanced technology created a high-speed network environment. This was supported by ChinaNet, China's pre-eminent carrier of business traffic, which now has points of presence (POP) in almost all cities across China as well as some developed countries.

China Telecom is rapidly shifting from circuit switched to next generation packet switched technology, actively adopting Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS), IPv6 and Wireless Local Access Network (WLAN) technologies. The expected international IPO later this year will release further funds to support this transition and network upgrade.

Dominant mobile carrier China Mobile is currently rolling out an IP network called CMNet, oriented towards 3G applications. This network can support WAP, GPRS, and VoIP. CMNet trunk network consists of core tandem nodes and ordinary trunk nodes, mainly adopting IP over SDH technologies.

UniNet, China Unicom's digital network, is based on wideband ATM packet switch and includes an IP network. The optical fibre trunk line constructed for the transmission network is about 47,000 km, with basic transmission rates reaching speeds of 2.5Gb/s and 10Gb/s.

China Netcom has built CNCNet, a high-speed wide band network adopting IP, Dense Wave Division Multiplexing (DWDM) and MPLS technology. Netcom's backbone will be soon be enhanced by the addition of China Jitong's infrastructure under the current restructuring guidelines. Jitong's owns GBNet, the smallest of China's commercial networks. This network has also recently started to use advanced technologies such as DWDM, SDH, ATM, and IP.

GBNet's national network is connected through digital transmission and controlled by the Beijing Network Control Centre, backed by the Shanghai Network Control Centre. In July 2001, Jitong began to construct its ATM multiple-business trunk network between Beijing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen with transmission bandwidth as high as 155Mb/s, soon to be enlarged to 622Mb/s.

Finally, in July last year the newly established carrier, state-owned China Railcom, opened the 9,000 km Jing Hu Hui high-speed ring and a DWDM/SDH optical fibre trunk network. Other regional rings are now under construction. Railcom owns the right to roll out a network along existing railway infrastructure, with a legacy of 70,000 km of trunk optical fibres and 12,000 km of digital microwaves.

However, as the network was designed for management of railway transportation, coverage is restricted, bandwidth is limited, and the network is far from competitive. Railcom hopes to construct a national network and to invest significantly in upgrading infrastructure and equipment in the coming year.

According to the Beijing Internet Institute Group, dial-up is still the most dominant access mode in China and will be for some years to come. Low access cost and multiple billing methods make payment affordable and straightforward. According to a recent survey 73.3 per cent of dial-up users pay an hourly rate with their phone bill, 53.3 per cent paying a monthly fixed fee for unlimited access and 33.3 per cent using a fixed value prepaid card.

Other Internet access technologies such as ISDN, ADSL, Ethernet and cable are becoming more widely used. However, they are suffering from damp consumer demand, lack of content and regulatory infighting between the MII and the State Agency for Radio, Film and Television (SARFT).

By the end of 2000 the number of ISDN subscribers had reached 690,000 and now stands at approximately 1 million. The disappointing market performance of this technology and China Telecom's inconsistent interest in promoting it may be attributed to the challenge from superior broadband technologies, eg, Ethernet and ADSL.

ADSL is regarded by China Telecom as having the greatest potential, despite some regional China Telecom companies adopting optical fibre and Ethernet. China Telecom has a target of 20 million broadband subscribers by 2005, most ADSL. Installed capacity is concentrated in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangdong, together forming 1 million lines. However, take-up has been disappointing with only 400,000 subscribers nationwide. Shanghai accounts for 25% of these.

Broadband Ethernet has been rolled out by regional branches of China Telecom, China Netcom and local network companies, mainly in urban densely populated residential areas but especially in new housing developments; suffering from a lack of service and content, it is not surprising that paid subscribers are low.

Finally, boasting the world's largest cable market with over 90 million viewers, broadband Internet access by cable has tremendous mass market potential. However, disputes between MII and SARFT over the right to regulate the network have slowed its development. This clash and an additional technical problem, the need for "two-way reconstruction", has hitherto hindered uptake of Internet access over cable.

In China, the consumer is king. Despite a rapidly growing Internet user population there is a massive divide between what China's networks can offer and what the consumer wants and, in the end, can afford. After this restructure, the new operators should concentrate on using this excess capacity, so justifying investment to date in Internet network and access technologies. **Dan Margo** <end>

CommunicAsia 2002: Exhibitor preview

For four days in June, from the 18th to the 21st, **CommunicAsia** at Singapore Expo will offer the world's telecommunity the chance to learn from and to update the vast markets of Asia-Pacific. Some of the many companies exploiting this opportunity are profiled here.

STM provides quality satellite communication networks for voice and data services, using two-way satellite-based telecommunications technology. STM's proven combination of technical expertise and deployment skill ensures a cost-effective, expandable and flexible network with powerful architecture. STM has installed networks in more than 50 countries worldwide and maintains regional sales offices in the US, Europe, South-east Asia, and China, with in-country sales representatives in Latin America, Middle East, Africa and Asia/Pacific.

STM's product for broadband, Internet, and multimedia access, SpaceWeb Olante, combines a Digital Video Broadcast (DVB) channel that allows receipt of up to 48 Mb/s data with a TDMA satellite return channel at up to 192kb/s. Solante, STM's rural telecom product family: is focused on full-mesh rural multi-channel applications; provides up to 16 voice channels plus gateway stations that can provide hundreds of trunk channels; supports data communication with up to 2Mbps data rates; and offers a feature-rich Network Management System.

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Teleconsult is a telecommunications engineering consulting firm, which specialises in providing consultancy, training, technical assistance and project management services to the telecommunications, railway, highway, defence, petro-chemical and oil/gas industry sectors.

Teleconsult has over 130 instructor-led and recently-launched e-Learning format training courses, covering most areas of telecommunications, and undertakes inhouse training assignments or delivers training specifically to customers needs, which can be delivered in a classroom or mounted on your intranet.

Teleconsult also delivers technology and industry talks and an executive series of short training sessions designed for top management to keep them abreast of technologies and trends.

Teleconsult undertakes Training Needs Analysis (TNA) studies, designs and builds training centres and provides a host of other training services.

Teleconsult can offer quality audit, risk management, occupational health and safety, market intelligence, master planning, network detailed design and general consultancy services covering specifications and processes.

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Gilat Satellite Networks Ltd (Nasdaq: GILTF), founded in 1987, is a leading provider of telecommunications solutions based on Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT) satellite network technology. With global subsidiaries, the company provides satellite-based, end to-end enterprise networking and rural telephony solutions to customers in more than 70 countries, and markets interactive broadband data services to residential and small office/home office (SOHO) customers.

Gilat's networks feature a small satellite dish, sophisticated networking electronics and software providing reliable satellite connectivity, and the ability to connect where alternatives are too costly, limited, or non-existent.

The company's VSAT networks are changing the face of:

- **enterprise networking** for data, video and audio applications that ranges from credit card authorisation, online banking and corporate intranet to interactive distance learning, nationwide or worldwide;
- **bundled telephony and Internet** solutions that converge voice and always-on Internet access for government and public telephony operators, rural public call offices (PCO) and remote business, and that provide fax and Internet connections that bridge the digital divide.
- **Internet access and broadband IP**, with high-speed, always-on interactive connectivity for Internet-based unicast, multicast and interactive content delivery applications any time, anywhere.

www: *http://www.gilat.com*
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Mipox Malaysia Sdn Bhd is a subsidiary of Nihon Micro Coating Co Ltd, and is a micro-polishing material manufacturer located in Penang, Malaysia.

Mipox products include lapping/polishing film, cleaning tape, flocked pile film, cleaning cassette, cleaning stick, slurry (oil and water base), polishing pad, diamond powder, coolant, lubricant, FO connectors, non-woven cleaning cloth for various industries that requires highly precision finishes such as fibre optics, hard disk, VCR heads, magnetic disk, semiconductor wafers, LCD flat panel etc.

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Stand No: 2D2-12 in Hall 2

Followap™ is a leading provider of advanced end-to-end mobile messaging and presence solutions for mobile operators. Followap solutions encompass distributed server platforms and a wide range of messaging clients and applications. Followap's Mobile Instant Messaging (MIM) platform, iFollow™, is being installed by major carriers worldwide, providing millions of subscribers with advanced mobile messaging services.

Today, the expanded Followap product line encompasses:

- **iFollow** – an MIM platform that includes support for a number of messaging clients, as well as chat, dating, mobile locator, and voice add-on modules;
- **iPresence™** – a presence server that enables users to see if their messaging partners are on- or offline;
- **iMMS™** - (Instant and Multimedia Messaging Services) – a platform that enables the delivery of MMS content to the entire range of iFollow clients.

In addition, Followap enables mobile device manufacturers to integrate chat and MMS services into their mobile devices. For more information, please contact us at +1-877-820-4984 and visit our web site http://www.followap.com

Hear us speak on "IM, UM and MMS. Killer Applications?" Wednesday, June 19 at 9:50am.

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interWAVE is a global provider of compact network solutions and services that offer the most innovative, cost effective and scaleable networks, allowing operators to "reach the unreached." Its solutions provide economical, distributed networks that minimise capital expenditure while accelerating customers' revenue generation. interWAVE's solutions feature a product suite for the rapid and simple deployment of end-to-end compact cellular systems, 802.11 integration with GSM network solutions, and broadband wireless data networks that deliver scalable IP and ATM broadband. interWAVE's compact and fully-functional solutions provide vital and reliable wireless communications capabilities for customers in over 50 countries. interWAVE's US subsidiary is headquartered at 312 Constitution Drive, Menlo Park, California, and can be contacted at http://www.iwv.com or at Tel: +1 (650) 838-2000.

CommWorks Corporation, a 3Com (Nasdaq: COMS) company, builds high-end, Internet protocol (IP) -based multi-service networks for the world's largest service providers. Of the world's 20 largest telecommunications service providers – representing 71 per cent of public telecom service revenue – 16 are CommWorks customers.

CommWorks offers service providers an IP platform based on common hardware that allows them to deliver more services for less cost, with the same high availability and better performance than the traditional telecommunications network. Regardless of the transport medium or the type of traffic, CommWorks allows the service provider to turn the traffic into revenue-generating services.

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Optibase is a pioneer and market leader in broadband media gateways, MPEG-1 and MPEG-2 encoding platforms, and DVB-PCI interface platforms. Propelled by sophisticated technology and market expertise, Optibase's products are at the core of professional digital video solutions worldwide.

Optibase's media gateways are helping to push the boundaries of digital video networking and streaming over IP networks by enabling applications such as TV over IP and business TV. The Company's MPEG encoding/decoding and DVB-PCI interface platforms are an integral part of professional digital video solutions such as distance learning, video transport, news gathering and video-on-demand. At CommunicAsia Optibase will be demonstrating its new integrated carrier-grade video-streaming platform, the MGW 5100. Designed to enable operators to provide reliable and stable TV over IP streaming services, such as live TV, video on demand and Interactive TV.

Optibase's MGW 5100 can support a mix of up to 24 live encoded or transcoded channels, received from various live or pre recorded sources. For further details e-mail: infoa@optibase.com.
See us at: Booth No. 21656

UK Pavilion at CommunicAsia 2002

As Asia's premier ICT event, CommunicAsia 2002 has attracted great interest from British IT and telecommunications companies keen to introduce exciting new technologies and services to the market. The show's international focus, combined with the dramatic growth in opportunities for trade within the region, has attracted a group of companies who will be attending under sponsorship from the Telecommunications Industry Association, and benefiting from assistance provided by Trade Partners UK.

The show continues to prove an effective vehicle for UK companies to gain recognition and partners within the region, with the UK Pavilion attracting new companies exhibiting in Asia for the first time, together with those returning to CommunicAsia to build on previous commercial success. The show will open up many opportunities for British companies and allow them, once again, to demonstrate the UK's ability to produce world-class products and services to meet the needs of this important market.

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A year of rapid change is on the way

Michael Schwartz summarises a recent discussion with the GSA's top executives.

There is a refreshing frankness about the GSA presidential trio of president Alan Hadden and vice-presidents Wolfgang Groenen (Lucent) and Peter Reinisch (Siemens). Despite the apparent obsession of the industry with technology, they appreciate that customers are worried about branding and services; terms like 2G and 3G do not enter consumer minds.

In fact, one of the GSA's main worries is the pace of change in the industry. In one year's time it anticipates thats the entire mobile landscape will have changed. While mobile technology to support voice communication in particular will have declined the mobile network will be re-oriented towards all forms of mobile communication. As if that is not enough, the GSA is encouraging unbroken worldwide communication with full roaming facilities – seamlessness is the guiding philosophy.

Another worry is the telecommunications traffic jam, that is, people having to wait to send or receive their information because the infrastructure is over-burdened.

Alan Hadden is convinced that people's habits will change. Leisure, betting and entertainment are the likeliest consumer applications to accompany or inspire these changes, supplemented by the more commercially-oriented location finding, booking, and daily scheduling. A global system is on the way, and Asia-Pacific will not miss out. Indeed, Hong Kong is singled out as *the* place for the intelligent operator.

Even more excitement is promised over the next year. One person in six on the planet has a mobile phone: 70 per cent of all digital subscribers are on GSM (650 million people in all). And voice is evolving into multi-media SMS and camera services. Customers will be able to switch on and access their favourite subjects.

The opportunities are huge. First, there is Asia-Pacific, the champion of communications. China is growing – tremendous for GSM, where there is even a waiting list. Indeed, where GSM is running in the region it is expanding. SMS, too, is sweeping Asia, in Singapore, for example. Asia-Pacific's cultural/social background will mean opportunities – such as games and gambling by mobile phone. M-business will also be crucial.

Further grounds for optimism come from 3G: new businesses will emerge, the licensing process will take several more steps towards completion over the next year as payment patterns fall into place, and the high concentration on voice is yielding to multi-media messaging.

One very important market will be India. The structural reforms going on at the moment are creating very strong growth, while the original ban on roaming has now been lifted.

More than anywhere else, Asia-Pacific has placed infrastructure orders. The need to communicate – by mobile rather than fixed – is there. New ideas are adopted more readily, not least in SMS, with over 100 applications now in place. The region excels when it comes to learning the uses for mobile technology.

Content can always be described as local – but it will require local people to generate it in the first place. Operators will need to understand and practise teamwork – and how to generate money. The GSA's own perspective follows this idea, pressing for those with content ideas to work with GSA members. New ideas will be necessary.

Technology in itself can only be a partial solution. For technology is very special to Japan – but not to Europe. Other applications and uses must emerge. Tourism is one such opportunity. Mobile phones dealing in the local foreign language will be crucial, eg, with handsets in Chinese and Japanese.

Remote areas have their own particular demands – systems will have to be quick to install and to employ "off-the-shelf" equipment. Once again, China is building up very rapidly in this area. Indonesia and The Philippines, too, are countries where remoteness can be tackled through GSM. Content will be the key. And the GSA sees itself as that bridge between content generator and supplier. <end>

For GSA's views on the mobile Internet, please turn to page 46.

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