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Mobile World Congress 2009 Preview

By Alana Grelyak

The 2009 Mobile World Congress is coming up next month in Barcelona, Spain, from February 16-19. In order to get our readers a more in-depth look at this massive event, we've conducted a Q&A with GSMA spokesman David Pringle. In addition, we've surveyed several OSS/BSS vendors to find out why they think attendees should stop by their booths during the event.

Pipeline: What are some of the biggest highlights of Mobile World Congress 2009?

David Pringle: The Mobile World Congress will bring together executives of the world's largest and most influential mobile operators, software companies, equipment providers, Internet companies and media and entertainment organizations. CEOs from companies including AT&T, Microsoft Corp., MySpace, Nokia, NTT DOCOMO, Telefónica, Telenor, Verizon Communications and Vodafone will address head-on the challenges presented by the global economic slowdown and will outline strategies for sustaining growth.

Under the theme of "Think Forward," the Mobile World Congress will explore the impact of the economic crisis, as well as focus on issues critical to the development of the communications industry, including the adoption of advanced mobile broadband technologies, such as Long-Term Evolution (LTE), the shift to an open mobile ecosystem, and the proliferation of mobile entertainment and advertising services. Widely-recognized as the mobile industry's must-attend event, the Mobile World Congress will showcase mobile products and services from approximately 1,300 companies.

Keynote speakers for the 2009 Mobile World Congress include:

1. Ralph de la Vega, President and CEO of AT&T Mobility and Consumer Markets
2. Steve Ballmer, CEO, Microsoft Corp.
3. Chris DeWolfe, CEO and Co-founder, MySpace
4. Olli-Pekka Kallasvuo, President and CEO, Nokia Corporation
5. Ryuji Yamada, President and CEO, NTT DOCOMO
6. César Alierta, Executive Chairman, Telefónica
7. Jon Fredrik Baksaas, President and CEO, Telenor Group
8. Dick Lynch, EVP and CTO, Verizon Communications
9. Vittorio Colao, Chief Executive, Vodafone

Academy Award-winning actor Kevin Spacey will also deliver a keynote at the Mobile World Congress, and he will host the MOFILM Mobile Short Film Festival as part of the Congress. (This is the very first mobile film festival of its kind. -Pipeline)

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Pipeline: With more than a thousand exhibitors already signed up, Mobile World Congress is going to be quite a large show. Can you mention a few highlights or events that would be specifically of interest to Pipeline's OSS/BSS audience?

David Pringle: A key session for OSS/BSS specialists will be the Business Services Forum, running from 9am to 4pm on the Thursday (19th February) of the Congress. That forum will focus on the need for telecoms operators to evolve to a new OSS/BSS architecture that provides flexibility to address changing business requirements and the importance of speed to market. With the economic upheaval, upgrades maybe put on hold so optimizing existing OSS and BSS platforms and billing processes is critical to keep business running smoothly in a difficult time.

This year's agenda also addresses how operators can best expose their service platforms to third parties and the move to real time charging and the implementation of SOA (Service Orientated Approach) across an organization.

Pipeline: Do you have any stats on what percentage of your attendee list will be made up of service providers?

David Pringle: Of the 54,284 attendees at the 2008 event, 19% were from mobile operators.

Pipeline: Will there be any kind of networking function that will allow your OSS/BSS attendees to make direct contact with these service providers?

David Pringle: There is a networking session at the end of the day on Thursday for all of Thursday's attendees. Although the session won't be specific to OSS/BSS, vendors will have a chance to mingle with service providers.

Pipeline: Why Barcelona? Do you think the choice of Barcelona brings a certain type of attendee that other locations might not?

David Pringle: Barcelona is one of only a few cities in Europe suitable for holding a prestigious global industry event, such as the Mobile World Congress, in February. Blessed with a mild winter climate and a rich cultural tradition, Barcelona is an attractive city to visit. It also has a broad selection of reasonably-priced hotels and restaurants with the capacity to cater to the 50,000 or so visitors that come to the event each year, together with excellent transport links between the airport, the city centre, and the Fira de Barcelona, the venue for the Congress.



Pipeline: How does this year's event differ from last year's? Is there anything new that you've added or anything you've decided to cut?

David Pringle: Perhaps the most significant change is a move to hold all the keynote sessions in the mornings, making way for the creation of several specialist conference sessions running for three and a half hours in the afternoons.

Pipeline: As previously mentioned, our readers are specifically interested in the OSS/BSS side of telecommunications. Which of your keynote speakers do you think will have the most valuable information to share with Pipeline readers?

David Pringle: We haven't yet announced the speaking lineup for the Business Services Forum, but the main keynote speeches by CEOs from mobile operators, such as AT&T, NTT DOCOMO, Telefonica, Telenor, Verizon and Vodafone, will be highly-relevant to the OSS/BSS community. By laying out their visions for these world-leading mobile operators, these top executives will provide the strategic context necessary for OSS/BSS suppliers to develop their own strategies for dealing with the economic slowdown.

Pipeline: What is the draw for entering the Global Mobile Competition? What kind of prestige do you think winning such an award brings to a company?

David Pringle: The GSMA Global Mobile Awards is the most respected program of its kind in the communications industry. The Awards attract entries from around the world and are judged by a panel of independent, respected experts. Being recognized by the GSMA, the global trade association for mobile operators, helps distinguish a vendor from their competition.

Winning an Award brings with it many other benefits, including increased awareness amongst sales prospects – the Awards ceremonies are attended by dozens of C-level executives from all the major

mobile operators and vendors. Winners are also promoted by key media around the world: The GSMA has high profile marketing agreements with national, international, and online publications.

Pipeline: Are there any categories that OSS companies would be particularly interested in entering and possibly winning?



David Pringle: OSS companies might be particularly interested in entering the Best Billing or Customer Care Solution award recognizing the innovative programs developed by operators and the products or services developed by CRM or Billing solution providers that will increase profitability, reduce costs, and maintain a high standard of customer loyalty in this increasingly competitive environment.

Pipeline: Do you have anything else you'd like our readers to make note of?

David Pringle: The backdrop of the financial crisis, wildly-fluctuating stock markets, and a broad economic slowdown, means the 2009 edition is set to be the most compelling Mobile World Congress yet. We expect the Congress to provide a valuable insight into the significant challenges presently facing our industry and how the global economy can leverage mobility to create new opportunities, and drive productivity and prosperity going forward.

Here's what some vendors had to say about why our readers should seek them out in Barcelona:

AMDOCS (Stand No. 8B101, Hall 8 and AV 65, Avenue)

"Attendees at this year's Mobile World Congress should seek out Amdocs to learn more about how Amdocs is enabling service providers to meet the demands of the digital lifestyle in several key areas, including digital commerce, self service, and personalization. We'll also be unveiling the latest development in branded portals, which represents a huge growth opportunity for service providers and sharing insight on how service providers can rise above the challenges of today's economic climate to build a sustainable business of the future.

"Amdocs is obsessed with ensuring service provider success – from assuming full accountability for the deployment of our products and services through consulting and delivery services, to continuing to invest in our CES product portfolio that enables service providers to introduce, manage, and deliver services that meet the needs of the digital lifestyle. We're helping SPs with the three major challenges, introducing new products to market quickly, embarking on projects that provide quick wins to meet ambitious business objectives and modernizing systems for long term sustainability."

ORACLE (AV44, Avenue)

"Communications service providers (CSPs) competing in today's challenging business environment must address three fundamental business requirements for success: Customer Intimacy – CSPs must understand customers and serve them like never before; Rapid Service Innovation – CSPs must be the fastest and most efficient at bringing innovative new services to market. CSPs truly must operate at Internet speeds to compete; Achieve Operational Excellence – CSPs and their supporting IT, business support system (BSS) and operations support systems (OSS) must deliver at significantly lower costs than before. With the top line under attack, the bottom line must be able to respond.

"Oracle is focused on these requirements, and at Mobile World Congress it will demonstrate its commitment to the communications industry, as well as the breadth and depth of its product offering, which integrates BSS and OSS solutions with industry-leading enterprise applications, business intelligence tools, and carrier-grade middleware and database technologies. CSPs should seek out Oracle to learn about how it can help transform and evolve their businesses."

TEKELEC (Stand No. 1F44, Hall 1-0)

"Service providers face unprecedented pressure to differentiate themselves, retain customers, and lower capex and opex. Tekelec gives operators unique solutions to: Improve the customer experience ; Cost-effectively support mobile messaging growth; Identify new revenue streams through mobile advertising.

"Operators must support SMS traffic grown (3.5 trillion messages in 2008 to nearly 5 trillion in FY 2011, according to Portio Research), while revenue per message decreases due to competition and "all-you-can-eat" plans. Tekelec breaks down SMS delivery into separate cost-effective modules. In comparison, the legacy monolithic, inflexible approach cannot scale efficiently, forcing operators to add message centers and/or expand signaling bandwidth. Tekelec also includes an SMS firewall which blocks spam and provides advanced anti-spoofing features, protecting customers from threats and preserving a positive customer experience. In addition, Tekelec's Text Insertion Engine generates new revenue and increases subscriber loyalty by leveraging SMS delivery to create relevant, targeted advertising."

COMPTTEL (Stand No. 2E58, Hall 2-0)

According to a December 2008 report from Infonetics Research, mobile broadband subscriber growth will continue to be strong in 2009, as will technologies to enable faster network access speeds. With this combination, service providers will have their hands full managing and delivering a consistent quality of service (QoS) to an expanded number of consumers through a finite range of radio frequencies.

At 2009's Mobile World Congress, Comptel will be highlighting their Comptel Dynamic OSS™ offering for mobile broadband services, covering the whole order-to-cash cycle, including service fulfillment, active catalog mediation, charging, roaming management, and settlements. Comptel staff and executives, including CEO Sami Erviö and CTO Gareth Senior, will be on hand to discuss relevant case studies, such as how Comptel helped SmarTone-Vodafone in Hong Kong effectively implement OSS solutions to provision and guarantee QoS for bandwidth-intensive services like mobile TV and online video over an HSDPA mobile broadband network.

Comptel will also highlight work they have done with mobile services provider Blyk, an advertising-funded MVNO. They will explain the platform and business strategy that Blyk employs to provide free mobile services to 16-24 year olds.

INTEC

Intec's customer base comprises over 400 telecoms customers worldwide; most significantly, 70 of the world's top 100 telcos rely on Intec for OSS or BSS systems. We continue to be the market leader in Wholesale Business Management systems including Interconnect and Trading & Routing Systems; we lead the market with our Total Service Mediation Portfolio incorporating real-time and post event mediation together with activation; and we are a leader in retail billing with Singl.eview - our market leading convergent system providing Prepay, PostPay and Customer Care.

Intec is the only vendor to provide a truly convergent billing portfolio. We implemented the first Singl.eView convergent solution for the Hutchison 3 group over five years ago enabling them to manage voice, content, data and video services whether post paid or prepaid on a single system. We therefore are best placed to enable operators to respond to their market challenges and have a track record of helping operators extend their subscriber bases, gain market share, and manage ARPU. Just as importantly, we support our customers with our world-class services implementation and solutions support capability, which underlines our ethos as a truly committed customer centric team.

NEC (Stand no. 8A125, Hall 8)

NEC will introduce the latest broadband technologies, mobile phone, solutions and services. Booth will feature innovative mobile wireless broadband related products and solutions such as Femtocell, Long Term Evolution (LTE), Mobile WiMAX, and Mobile Backhaul.

NEC's Femtocell Node B connects to the operator's mobile core network over the secure broadband connection using fully open-standard interface. Also as a leading participant in the 3GPP group that developed the LTE standard, NEC is committed to LTE solutions that feature the highest levels of quality, scalability and interoperability. NEC's Mobile WiMAX enables operators to increase revenue by adding value to their existing networks and lastly but not least, NEC's PASOLINK has proven high performance for radio link network around the world, satisfying customers' demands rapidly and being strategically used in their radio links. Concisely, NEC's PASOLINK has been contributing to and improving world-wide communications network with its latest wireless advanced technologies. NEC exhibition also include IMS/OSS, Semiconductors, R&D and LiMo Foundation

NETCRACKER (TM Forum Pavilion and NEC Stand No. 8A125, Hall 8)

"NetCracker is proud to announce that it will be exhibiting in the TM Forum Pavilion at Mobile World Congress. In addition, the company's solutions will be on display at the NEC booth. In both locations NetCracker will be discussing and demonstrating solutions that reflect the importance of service provisioning across the network to end user devices.

"In this spirit, NetCracker will be spotlighting its device management solution with NEC. This solution provides comprehensive capabilities to facilitate targeted marketing, monitor customer service usage, and improve customer experience. Customer experience is improved through network optimization and configuration management — and leads to increased customer loyalty."

COMARCH (Stand No. 1F47, Hall 1-0)

"Comarch, as one of the key players in the telecommunications market, will be participating in Mobile World Congress 2009, in Fira de Barcelona – Montjuic.

"Comarch would like to bring your attention to the following solutions that it has to offer: Comarch Interconnect Billing Solution is designed for all telecommunication operators and service providers who maintain relations with other providers, and therefore, have the need to exchange settlements, invoices and share revenue or costs.

"Comarch Wholesale Billing Solution is a complete solution for supporting wholesale departments in everyday operations, and for protecting the operator's business. Comarch End-to-end WiMAX solution is suitable for start-up WiMAX operators and also for already established operators that want to expand their service portfolio into WiMAX services. NGSM - Next Generation Service Management is the new Comarch OSS Solution and is based on two pillars: Next Generation Service Assurance solution and CMDDB (Configuration Management Database)."

ARICENT (Stand No. 1E44, Hall 1-0)

"Communications is in the midst of a vigorous wireless revolution as the boundaries of the Internet are redrawn. Insatiable demand for smarter devices, faster access, and an explosion of multimedia applications and social networking are creating huge market opportunities. This opportunity presents many challenges for the mobile broadband ecosystem as subscribers demand a seamless application experience, require high-speed access to a robust network, and expect a variety of options in terms of access plans and services.

"At Mobile World Congress, Aricent will present a complete cross-section of communications experience engineering, the proven design and development capability required to deliver the most innovative user experience for mobile handset users and enable Long Term Evolution(LTE), WiMax and femtocell products, infrastructure, and operations.

"Aricent represents a new breed of supplier, with a long history and a pure focus on providing the communications expertise, development experience, and deployment services geared specifically toward co-creating unparalleled innovation, value, and quality, enabling the best possible broadband wireless user experience!"

POLYSTAR (Stand No. 2F33, Hall 2-0)

"Polystar OSIX, a leading OSS/BSS supplier, will showcase its world-class Service Assurance and Network Performance Monitoring solutions, side by side with the innovative Customer Experience Management (CEM) platform, which grants a competitive edge to any mainstream CEM offerings. Use the opportunity to learn how to gain real-time visibility into the service quality delivered to each individual subscriber. See Polystar's MediaProbe demo and find out how it helps in performing payload analysis, to accurately receive, aggregate, and sort terabits of real-time data and present it on a per-user basis. Learn how to establish a customer-centric business strategy that results in customer loyalty, company profitability, and growth.

"Find out how Polystar T&M`SOLVER - a high-performance load, stress and feature test tool for mobile core, PSTN and converged networks helps isolating and correcting problems before they affect the end-users. SOLVER's appreciated GUI-based test control ensures short time-to-test and unprecedented ease-of-use combined with high performance."

HIGHDEAL (Stand No. 2D82, Hall 2-0)

"Service providers, who are interested in saving on costs in their billing and charging system while investing in innovation, need to visit Highdeal at Mobile World Congress. Highdeal will be demonstrating how the Highdeal Transactive solution can lower TCO while guaranteeing fast ROI.

"Seems impossible? It is not. There are significant savings to be gained by: eliminating the costly change request process; scaling hardware horizontally across smaller, more cost-efficient servers; consolidating billing, prepaid and postpaid, and partner management systems to lower costs; and increasing staff efficiency with an easy to learn and easy to use solution.

"Highdeal knows that in the current challenging market environment credit is tight, customer spending growth cannot be counted upon, and cash is king. Highdeal will be speaking with service providers at MWC about how Transactive can deliver significant savings while staying ahead of the competition."

CERILLION (Stand No. 2D65, Hall 2-0)

"Visitors to the Mobile World Congress will be bombarded with a vast range of advanced next-generation services - everything from the latest "Web 2.0" applications to bleeding-edge multimedia and IP-based services and state-of-the-art mobile handsets. However, whilst many will be excited by these new technologies, few will understand how to capture the revenue potential these new service capabilities may provide. That is where solutions providers like Cerillion Technologies can play a key role. Cerillion will be at the show demonstrating its end-to-end pre-integrated CRM and billing solutions on its stand and showing how users can deploy these solutions to ensure they maximize revenues from new service technology."

MARBEN PRODUCTS (Stand No. 2.1A16, Hall 2-1)

"Marben Products addresses next generation carrier networks with its MARBEN™ Diameter and MARBEN™ GMPLS solutions. MARBEN™ Diameter product line covers the authentication and charging requirement of IP Multimedia Subsystems (IMS) and convergent networks. Secure, real-time authentication and charging capabilities of Diameter is a powerful enabler for building advanced added value and revenue generating services.

At Mobile World Congress 2009, Marben Products will unveil the Full Java Diameter implementation for Java-based IMS application server or billing systems. This new version is designed to match scalability and reliability of carrier grade Java J2EE environments. MARBEN™ SPBB and MARBEN™ GMPLS Traffic Engineering solutions provide with automatic provisioning and reconfiguration of Carrier Grade Ethernet or GMPLS networks. These solutions are key components for building highly dependable, self reconfiguring, traffic optimized nation-wide carrier core networks."

INNOVA (Hall 7, Stand No. 7D72)

"No wind no wave! People in Innova Group ardently work towards a total communication environment where communication will be the result of seamless interactions. Technology and passion for communication are interrelated in Innova.

"Innova, a Greek interest group, founded in 2006, aims at operating within the Telecommunications and IT Ecosystem, providing solutions in the following business lines: OSS & IT; Value Added Services and Billing; Information & Network Security; and Next Generation Networking. Innova Group has managed in a very brief period to become a trusted source of solutions and an appreciated fountain of innovative ideas.

"Our areas of expertise are synonymous with innovation and creativity, and Innova revolves actively around these two notions, desiring to offer to our customers the best proposal to assist them in their effort of being in the first line of progress, within the frame of continuous interactive personal communication. For Innova, every new project undertaken is a new way to empower its fleet of ideas and implementations."

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