



Smartphones change mobile broadband demand

Press release

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Omnitele predicts that in the near future the next generation smartphones will generate significantly more traffic in the mobile networks than today. The generated traffic will be more challenging to operators to plan for, due to high mobility of smartphone users. As a result of this, the management of user experience network quality will be more difficult.

The present wireless broadband traffic is mainly generated by laptop-USB-dongle combination users. For the next five years, smartphones are globally forecasted¹ to be shipping approximately triple the volumes of embedded and external modems (USB dongles) combined. New smartphones have increased usability and an ability to easily install and use applications with. These properties have significant effect on mobile broadband use. "As an example two characteristics of the iPhone stand out for an average end user: the touch screen based input, which provides higher usability, and the ability to run a wide variety of applications to make use of the higher usability," says **Sampsa Laamanen**, Principal Consultant from Omnitele. "Smartphones will drive the next wave of mobile broadband traffic growth."

On average iPhones have been reported to generate ten times the traffic of other smartphones. Significant, sometimes massive increases in mobile broadband traffic have affected network loads dramatically and decreased service quality. It is likely that the iPhone as a device and possibly also its typical users currently represent an extreme case in traffic generation. "However, Symbian and RIM operation systems are used in two thirds of the smartphones of today. We expect these mainstream devices to start shipping with the usability improvements described above in the near future. We therefore believe that mobile broadband traffic generated by smartphones will increase significantly in future." says Sampsa Laamanen.

As a result of the developments described above, Omnitele estimates that several mobile broadband markets will start experiencing smartphone based traffic increase and traffic pattern changes in 2011. Some parts of the network will experience significant increase in user and signaling traffic, and this must be managed by operators to avoid end-user quality degradation.

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Omnitele Ltd. is an internationally operating telecommunications consultancy established in 1988 upon a combined core of engineering and operator business expertise. Our consultancy services range from network planning and procurement to strategic business and technology advisory services. Omnitele main customers are mobile operators and system suppliers in Europe, Africa, Middle East and the Caribbean and in Finland. Omnitele headquarters are located in Finland. For more information, please visit www.omnitele.fi.

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¹ Informa Telecoms and Media 2009, Ovum 2009, Omnitele analysis.