

4G: Why the Rush?

Contributed by IMS
Monday, 09 October 2006

4G: Why the Rush? - 05 October 2006

Â

Wellingborough, UK (5th October 2006) – There have been several announcements over the past few weeks regarding the next level of development for cellular infrastructure, be it 3G LTE, 4G, NGN or another great sounding acronym. What a lot of people are still asking is “Why the rush?”

To some degree they may have a point: the deployment of 3G solutions is still to be started in many countries and where it has the level of uptake from subscribers has frequently been described as underwhelming. After all the hype in the early years of this decade 3G could be viewed as something of a let-down. After all, ARPU has hardly gone through the roof for those operators that shelled out many millions, if not billions, of pounds, euros and dollars on licenses.

However this has not stopped Siemens from demonstrating its next generation mobile network (NGMN) solution or from Sprint Nextel, Motorola and Intel partnering to deploy a (4G) WiMAX network in the US whilst Samsung continues to push its WiBRO solution in South Korea. At the same time operators are making moves themselves with the formation of NGMN Ltd. Several high profile operators from the Americas, Asia and Europe have formed a new company with the aim of informing vendors of their specific requirements for their next generation infrastructure solution. Their aim being to direct development to extract the maximum from the available spectrum, effectively removing the need for stepped upgrades – la UMTS-HSDPA-HSUPA.

So what is the rush to spend millions more on the development of the next generation of infrastructure equipment? Perhaps what is being forgotten is that there is increasing competition from outside the traditional mobile space; that it is not just about what mobile can offer. End-users have experience of high data speeds, quick downloads and real-time services from their fixed service providers and (whether fair or not) will always view their mobile experience as inferior or disappointing unless it can measure up to this. With the arrival of HSDPA and HSUPA the claim of “mobile broadband” can be stated with a degree of self-belief and it forms a valid stepping stone to this end. However, with the advent of the next level of performance (be it 3G LTE, WiMAX, or another OFDM-based solution), end-users may no longer have a reason not to start using mobile solutions to access these services.

About IMS Research

IMS Research is a specialist supplier of market research and consultancy services on global electronics markets. Information from IMS Research is used by major companies worldwide to assess market trends, solve marketing problems, and improve the efficiency of their businesses. IMS Research is an international company, selling in more than 35 countries around the world and is supported by headquarters in Wellingborough, UK and offices in Austin, Texas and Shanghai, China. IMS Research’s Cellular, Mobile Radio & GPS Group provides consultancy services, detailed databases and reports on the cellular, mobile radio and GPS markets.

Â www.imsresearch.com

Â