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WEEKLY INSIGHT
Industry giants merge to simplify wireless technology
Almost 200 companies, including technological giants such as Microsoft, Nokia or IBM, telecoms like Vodafone or NTT DoCoMo and even content providers like Walt Disney and America Online-Time Warner have joined together to forge a standard which simplifies the mobile technology of the future. Conspicuously absent from the alliance is Palm Computing, whose popular operating system for mobile devices still accounts for more than half of all handheld computers sold.
The Open Mobile Alliance, which is the name of the new consortia, hopes that telephone and other wireless devices may be used on any kind of network, whether to play games, share photos or trade instant messages. (From Reuters) [Full Story]

Highlights
- The Open Mobile Alliance (OMA) plans to define minimum specifications for any wireless platform or application, thereby enabling compatibility and interoperability among different mobile devices regardless of the software used.
- According to the alliance representatives, the new standard will also solve business issues, such as digital rights management and mobile payments.
- There have been many forums in the wireless industry. Some analysts number about 50 of them, but none
of this range. In fact, OMA will replace the **WAP Forum**, whose wireless application protocol hasn't been very successful. OMA is an extension of the open mobile architecture initiative supported by many in the mobile industry today, pooling resources from groups like the SynchML Initiative and the Location Interoperability Forum (LIF) to create universal mobile application programming interfaces (APIs) on the Java framework. Other groups dedicated to wireless messaging have agreed to merge with the alliance.

**Press Review**

From *Internet News*

"The significance of the announcement shouldn't be overlooked - in the PC world, this would be very like Windows, Linux and Sun developers coming out and saying they were working together on a common solution. According to Mark Winther, research firm IDC group vice president for worldwide telecommunications, the OMA is a good step forward for the mobile industry. 'The Open Mobile Alliance reflects a very welcome new attitude in the mobile industry,' he said. 'An individual technology, product, vendor or operator will have little success without engaging all aspects of the mobile value chain - devices, networks, applications, and content'."

[Full Story]

From *New York Times*

"The most important value to consumers is that no matter what device I have, no matter what service I'm going to get, no matter what carrier I'm using, I can get access to the information. The consumer will see no issues of access to content," Jon Prial, IBM's Vice-President of content, told Reuters. It will also be good news for companies, he added, as consumers surfing the Internet on wireless devices **boost usage rates and sales**. That would be welcome in an industry where sales have slumped over the past year. (...)

Nokia's Vice-President Pertti Korhonen said the problem up to now has been industry fragmentation, as too many standards caused headaches for companies and consumers alike, slowing development of new content and applications. Numerous other groups will merge into the new organization, although officials acknowledged there are many legal issues still to be ironed out."

[Full Story]

From *Los Angeles Times*

"For some of us that have been involved in mobile standards in the past few years, we haven't done a very good job," said Jerry Upton, Motorola's Vice-President for standards and strategy and Chairman of the WAP Forum's board of directors.

Upton said that the new group would succeed where prior endeavours came up short by **avoiding the tangle over choosing one operating system or another as a universal platform**. Instead, the goal will be to develop an open standard for the software code used to create different platforms, including those designed for special purposes and private networks used by businesses."

From *News.com*

"Before Wednesday's announcement, Microsoft had joined only one of the dozens of wireless industry groups. Its absence created a "**perceived fragmentation**" between the worlds of personal computers, which Microsoft represents, and **cell phones**, said Mike Wehrs, Director of technology and standards for Microsoft’s mobility group That wedge can't exist, Wehrs said, because mobile data travels not just through the air, but also along the same routes as information sent over the landline Internet."

[Full Story]

From *Wireless NewsFactor*

"The initial membership of OMA is a veritable **Who's Who in the wireless industry**, including Nokia, Motorola, Ericsson, Vodafone, Verizon Wireless, Microsoft, IBM, NTT DoCoMo, Qualcomm, Sony and Sun,
as well as a long list of other operators, device and network suppliers, information technology companies and content providers.

(....)

'If this alliance helps the industry use its resources more efficiently and leverage its capabilities, then it is a good idea,' Yankee Group senior analyst Linda Barrabee told Wireless NewsFactor. The fact that 200 companies have signed on, including many with competing interests, indicates that there is considerable interest in making this initiative work, she said.

(....)

'The motives of this group are justifiable; the industry needs to bridge the gaps among all the players. But the proof is in the pudding, and we will have to wait and see what comes out of this,' said Barrabee."

[Full Story]

**Commentary by...**

Brian Subirana, IESE professor

**OMA: the difficulties to settle an standard**

The industry needs new standards on which to build profitable businesses. Icons such as TCP/IP or GSM strongly boost this point of view. However, in order to be effective, consensus has to be worked on to the full. Meaning well is not enough. The road towards a revulsive standard is not trivial. The latest efforts to reach a standard in the wireless market show the kind of difficulties that the Open Mobile Alliance (OMA) will find. Far from being consolidated successes, many of these initiatives have disappeared or shelved, victims of endless discussions in which compatibility among the different players was the least of the issues.

In the case of OMA we cannot rule out the possibility that some companies will try to create new proprietary "standards". In particular, Microsoft or another of the big players, could develop its own technology without the pressure of consensus and let the market impose its solution on the rest of the competitors.

**EBCENTER ARTICLE**

**Protection of data, a new goldmine for consultancy firms**

Roberto Garcia Castro, Ebcenter Assistant and doctoral of IESE

New technology has cast doubt on the security of companies' data bases, so much so that they have turned to consultancy firms to receive advice on how to protect this information. [Full Story]

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**REPORTS**

**81% of Fortune 500 companies are posting job positions on the corporate Careers Web site**

**Title:** Where the Jobs Are  
**Source:** iLogos Research  
**Date:** June 2002

**Abstract:** iLogos Research surveyed job postings on Fortune 500 companies' corporate Careers Web sites and on the three major job boards to find out "Where the Jobs Are".

The survey found a total of almost 75,000 individual job positions were listed on the Careers sites of the Fortune 500 companies. Fortune 500 companies publicize more open job positions on corporate Careers Web sites, by a factor of nearly three to one over the largest job board sites of Monster, CareerBuilder, and HotJobs.

81% of Fortune 500 companies are posting on the corporate Careers Web site, compared with 51% for Monster, 43% for HotJobs and 22% for CareerBuilder. iLogos Research predicts that to list all available

http://www.ebcenter.org/newsletter/newsletters/EnglishNewsletter/EnglishNewsletter_17_06_02.htm (3 of 5) [28/10/2003 16:41:59]
positions not only to the corporate Careers Web site, but also to the company intranet will become a common corporate practice. [Full Story]

Why are changes in supply chain responsibility occurring?

**Title:** Major Changes in Supply Chain Responsibilities  
**Source:** Caps Research  
**Date:** 2002  
**Abstract:** More than 200 such changes, comprising 158 additions and 44 deletions, are documented in this report. The findings are based on 10 case studies in large multi-business unit companies, seven headquartered in the United States and three in Europe, representing a variety of industries. The 10 companies participating in this research were Cable & Wireless, John Deere Company, Nortel Networks, Praxair, Qualcomm, Texas Instruments, Thomson multimedia, Unisys, Wellman, Inc., and World Transport. There are three prime drivers to explain why changes are occurring in supply chain responsibility. The prime reason for 167 of the 202 documented changes was alignment with total corporate change. As the structure for the supply organization changed, its responsibilities also changed. A second type of change driver, identified in 14 of the 202 cases, was a major change in corporate vision, strategy, or mergers or acquisitions resulted in supply chain responsibility change. A third and different type of driver also emerged in 21 of the 202 cases. A variety of specific explanations were given for this type which could be originated anywhere in the organization at any time. By the way, the CPO was not excited and resisted originally, but relented later. This type of driver was labeled "Other". [Full Story]

51.1 million Europeans are potential e-commerce buyers

**Title:** Gfk-Webgauge. Wave 2  
**Source:** Gfk  
**Date:** 4th Quarterly, 2001  
**Abstract:** The potential daily market of 51.1 million users in the main European countries is highly attractive. That is the opinion of the German market research firm Gfk. According to the Gfk experts, books remain far and away the best selling product on the Web. This success is mainly due to the fact that books were one of the first products that could be easily ordered. While most Germans have bought books on the Web 2 or 3 times, 38% of French purchasers bought 4 times or more. In Germany, the average frequency of purchases stands at 3.9, just ahead of the U.K. with 3.8. In Spain and France, the average is 3.3 and 3.2 respectively, while in NL/Belgium it is only 2.4. Like books, music CDs are a product which can be sent by post at little expense. Whereas 52% of music CD purchasers indicate that they download files, only 15% of downloaders say they buy music CDs on the WWW. This reveals the existence of two different markets. The downloaders tend to be younger than the CD buyers and have less money. Computer products hold a place in the top five. [Full Story]

COMPANIES

Wanadoo to buy eresMas  
France Telecom's Wanadoo subsidiary has confirmed it is in negotiations to purchase eresMas. Auna's internet portal has also acknowledged negotiations with Wanadoo, although doors are open to other potential buyers, with Tiscali having been the frontrunner in recent months. From Europemedia.net. [Full Story]

Isabel Tocino, chairperson of Siebel Spain and Portugal  
Siebel Systems, a provider of eBusiness and eGovernment applications software, has announced that Isabel Tocino, a former Spanish Government Minister, has been appointed Chairperson of Siebel Spain and Portugal. She will also serve on Siebel Systems' European Board of Directors, that includes Giuliano Amato,
former Italian Prime Minister; Jacques Attali, Special Advisor to former French President Francois Mitterrand; John Major, former British Prime Minister; and Dr. Horst M. Teltschik, former Advisor to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. From Business Wire. [Full Story]

**Terra Lycos offers a music service**

Terra Lycos has jumped into the subscription music business, offering the Rhapsody online music service from Listen.com. Rhapsody is a combination of genre-based radio and personalized Internet jukebox. The service responds to the subscription services offered by Yahoo and MSN. From LA Times. [Full Story]

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### WE RECOMMEND

**Marketing, the new function of CIO**

In a fundamental way, marketing is simply the dialogue between producer and customer. But information technology has dramatically changed the nature of that dialogue. For instance, CRM, online self-service, real-time segmentation, and Web services are indispensable to get customer satisfaction, value, and long-term interactive relationships.

In this context, IT professionals must begin to think like marketers, according to Regis McKenna, a strategy guru. The marketing department has to understand that, to the consumer, brand isn't a name on a store or product; it's an experience gained through the use of a distinctive product or service. However, few companies translate those concepts into practice and insist on separating marketing and IT. Just an example: Corporate America will spend more than $250 billion this year on traditional, one-way broadcast advertising. As against the expected spending of $15 billion on CRM.

Moreover, the new medium is dominated by marketing concepts of 50 years ago and the Web has been taken by blasts of annoying pop-upcommercial messages that lie in ambush, without bearing in mind that the new techniques of buzz and viral marketing are more customer-friendly. From Optimize. [Full Story]

**What are eBay users looking for?**

Everything. From a Ferrari to ceiling lamps, including a size 12 wedding dress, all is capable of being auctioned in eBay. Not in vain, eBay users exchanged some $9.3 billion worth of goods in 18,000 categories. Admittedly, this was only about 4% of Wal-Mart's $220 billion in sales last year-but Wal-Mart deploys a worldwide network of warehouses, more than 3,000 stores and 1.3 million workers. EBay got by with no stores and fewer than 3,000 employees. EBay concentrates on the two tails of the retail bell curve: unique or hard-to-find items, and used or outdated or overstocked merchandise that can be discounted. Indeed, it began, legendarily, as a place for Omidyar's girlfriend to trade with fellow collectors of Pez dispensers. With such a birth, it seems almost reasonable to find, among the countless goods available at the site, Furbies; one pair of used ballet shoes; 90 hours of "Knight Rider" videotapes, with David Hasselhoff; a kitchen sink; and a Daguerreotype of young Abraham Lincoln. From MSNBC. [Full Story]

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