

This Week's Stories

Cisco Exiting WiMAX Market

March 4, 2010

Cisco has confirmed that it will stop designing and building new WiMAX base stations, preferring to focus on the packet core since it acquired Starent Networks for \$2.9 billion

Cisco entered the WiMAX RAN market in 2007 through the acquisition of Navini Networks for \$330 million in 2007, viewing the acquisition as a way to extend its WiFi and WiFi-mesh portfolios and tackle emerging markets for broadband quicker, but contracts were few. However, as operators began to focus on the packet core network, Cisco, through its Starent acquisition, has now racked up some big contracts on the LTE and WiMAX side with the likes of Verizon and Clearwire. Other major customers include Sprint Nextel, Vodafone and Cox Communications.

"After careful review, our mobility strategy is to focus on providing a radio-agnostic IP end-to-end mobile multimedia services network," said Cisco spokeswoman Jennifer Buchhalter in an email to *FierceBroadbandWireless*. "Cisco will continue to focus on the packet core and to also focus on investment in radio technologies such as femtocells and WiFi. As part of this decision, we have decided to discontinue designing and building new WiMAX base stations. We believe the best way for Cisco to serve our customers is by delivering value at the edge and the core of our customers' networks."

Navini had brought to the table its smart beamforming technology combined with MIMO, which saved on the number of cell sites. It had also racked up a number of contracts in emerging markets as well as a contract with Xanadoo in the U.S.

<http://www.fiercebroadbandwireless.com>

Product & Service News

AT&T's Backflip Fires Google Search, Hires Yahoo!

March 3, 2010

Since its inception, Google has touted Android's flexibility and potential for personalization. However, one wonders whether AT&T's decision to strip its first Android phone, the Motorola Backflip, of Google search in favor of Yahoo! search was really what Google had in mind.

That's exactly what AT&T is doing, as it prepares for the launch of the already unconventional Backflip. Jenny Bridges, a spokeswoman for the carrier, confirmed the change, adding that the Backflip will still come with other integrated Google services.

"It is true that Yahoo is the default search engine on the BACKFLIP. However, you are of course free to access and use Google search if that is what you prefer. Google doesn't currently make available a widget or app that would let you do Google search directly from your phone's home screen. It is also worth noting that the BACKFLIP comes preloaded with such Google apps as Gmail, Google Maps, Google Talk, Android Market and YouTube," Bridges said.

Nevertheless, it's search that Google holds dearest. In fact, some in the industry suggest that the whole purpose behind Google's development of its own mobile platform was to act as a driver for mobile search revenues. New York-based financial analyst firm Jefferies and Company predicts that Android will boost Google's mobile search revenue above \$500 million in 2011, up from roughly \$180 million in 2009.

The Backflip will be available online and in stores on Sunday. The phone will go for \$99.99 after mail-in rebate and a two-year commitment.

<http://www.wirelessweek.com>

Report: Sony Cooking Up New Smartphone to Challenge Apple

March 4, 2010

Sony is developing a new smartphone with Sony Ericsson that will be capable of playing PlayStation games, according to a report in the *Wall Street Journal*. The report, citing unnamed sources familiar with the matter, said Sony is taking a more active role in crafting handsets in its joint venture with Ericsson, signifying how important mobile phones are becoming to Sony.

The report also said Sony is working on a device that "blurs distinctions among a netbook, an ereader and a PlayStation Portable, or PSP," and is meant to challenge Apple's iPad. Both devices are expected to be launched this year and will have access to Sony's online media service, which is being billed as challenger to Apple's iTunes store. A Sony spokeswoman declined to comment to the *WSJ* on the topic.

A Sony Ericsson spokesman told *FierceWireless* that Sony Ericsson is "continuously evolving the collaboration" with both Sony and Ericsson "with a clear strategy to work even closer going forward."

"This includes evaluating exciting new propositions for the end consumer," the spokesman said. "However, it is not our strategy to discuss future products before we make a formal press announcement. Any media report that suggests details regarding future collaboration between us and our parent companies, as well as future products, is based on speculation."

Sony Ericsson had a dismal 2009, with handset sales falling by 41 percent. The company posted its sixth straight quarterly loss in January. The firm has been banking its return to profitability on its new lineup of phones based on Google's Android platform. The company will release the flagship product of the new family of devices, the Xperia X10, in April.

<http://www.fiercewireless.com>

Microsoft to Sell Phone on Verizon by Summer-Source

March 4, 2010

Microsoft Corp is aiming to launch two phones that will be sold by top U.S. mobile operator Verizon Wireless in late spring or early summer, a person briefed on the matter said on Thursday.

The phones would be targeted at heavy users of social network sites, according to the person who asked not to be identified as the devices have not yet been announced.

The phones are being developed by Microsoft under the code name Project Pink, the person said. Representatives for Microsoft and Verizon Wireless declined comment.

Microsoft primarily competes in the wireless industry by selling its Windows mobile software to multiple handset makers, but it has been losing market share to Apple Inc, Google Inc and others.

The software company also sells the Sidekick phone, which is manufactured by Sharp Corp. The Sidekick came from its acquisition of start-up Danger Inc.

Microsoft has long denied rumors that it is developing new cellphones beyond the Sidekick, but talk about Project Pink has persisted.

Technology blog Gizmodo on Thursday posted photographs of a black phone with rounded edges that slides open and includes a mini-keyboard. (link.reuters.com/pes33j)

Gizmodo said the photographs, which show Microsoft branding and the Verizon Wireless logo, were part of marketing materials that a tipster had sent to the blog.

<http://www.reuters.com>

AT&T Launching USB Modem With GPS

March 4, 2010

AT&T Mobility is launching two new USB modems, including its first with built in aGPS, promising users easier access to location-based applications.



The LG modem, left, and the Option modem are bound for AT&T.

The carrier said the Velocity USB modem, built by Option, can be paired with a GPS application available for download from Option that will access sites like Bing and Yahoo! Maps for directions and points of interest searches. AT&T

also said enterprise customers can use the device for tracking and mapping purposes.

Separately, AT&T announced the Turbo, made by LG, that can access AT&T's faster HSPA 7.2 network. The operator is in the process of turning on its HSPA upgrade in different markets across the country.

Both devices will be available March 7. The Turbo will be available for free after a \$100 mail-in rebate and with a two-year data plan contract of at least \$35 a month. The Velocity will be available for \$29.99 after a \$100 mail-in rebate and with a two-year data plan of at least \$35 a month.

Carriers have been pushing laptop sticks with more advanced features as they seek to entice users to sign up for data plans. T-Mobile USA is poised to release its webConnect Rocket Laptop Stick this month, which will be able to access its HSPA+ network. Last summer, Verizon Wireless launched a USB modem that supports CDMA networks in North America and GSM networks abroad.

<http://www.fiercewireless.com>

Mergers/Acquisitions/Partnerships

Leap Wireless, MetroPCS Delay Merger Until 2011

March 5, 2010

San Diego-based Leap Wireless International probably won't combine with rival MetroPCS Communications until the second half of 2011, an Oppenheimer & Co. analyst said yesterday.

The companies are contending with a weaker market for their pay-as-you-go wireless services, and MetroPCS doesn't have much competition for buying Leap, analyst

Tim Horan said in a note to investors. Horan had estimated the two would merge by the second half of this year.

The companies also are pursuing growth plans independently, Horan said. Dallas-based MetroPCS is building out a network for high-speed wireless Internet. Leap announced a joint venture with Pocket Communications, a smaller mobile-phone company.

Leap and MetroPCS abandoned earlier talks in November 2007 after the two couldn't agree on a price. MetroPCS has hired financial advisers to examine a potential acquisition, two people familiar with the situation said last month.

<http://www.signonsandiego.com>

T-Mobile USA Lands Exclusive Deal for Nokia 5230

March 3, 2010

Nokia isn't known for its relationships with U.S. carriers, but T-Mobile USA managed to land an exclusive deal to carry Nokia's new 5230 Nuron. The 5230 Nuron is the first Nokia smartphone to come pre-loaded with the Ovi Store and has free turn-by-turn navigation through Ovi Maps.

Nokia and T-Mobile are keeping mum on availability, saying only that the device will be available nationwide "in the coming weeks." The device will be available for \$69.99 with a two year service agreement, voice and data plan and \$50 rebate.

"Many of our customers are looking for smartphones that deliver a great mobile Web experience with access to games and applications, all at an affordable price," T-Mobile USA Product Marketing Director Travis Warren said in a statement. "We are excited to partner with Nokia to offer our customers the Nokia 5230 Nuron, a 3G smartphone for the masses that delivers features like a full touch screen, free turn-by-turn navigation and a premium storefront for applications."

The 3G device features a 3.2-inch touch screen and a full HTML browser but lacks Wi-Fi connectivity. The device comes with carrier billing for those customers who prefer not to pay with a credit card.

<http://www.wirelessweek.com>

Industry Reports

Browser-Based Mobile Social Grows

March 4, 2010

comScore, a measurement firm that focuses on all things digital, released a study that shows 30.8 percent of smartphone users accessed social networking sites via their mobile browser in January, up 8.3 percent from 22.5 percent one year ago.

According to the report, access to Facebook via mobile browser grew 112 percent in the past year, while Twitter experienced a 347 percent jump.

"Social networking remains one of the most popular and fastest-growing behaviors on both the PC-based Internet and the mobile Web," said Mark Donovan, comScore senior vice president of mobile, in a statement. "Social media is a natural sweet spot for mobile since mobile devices are at the center of how people communicate with their circle of friends, whether by phone, text, e-mail, or, increasingly, accessing social networking sites via a mobile browser."

At 30.8 percent adoption by smartphone users, the higher end devices proved to be the real drivers for mobile social networking. By comparison, just 6.8 percent of feature phone users accessed social networking sites on their mobile phones.

<http://www.wirelessweek.com/>



120 Madison St. 15th Floor
Syracuse, New York 13202
(315) 470-1350
1-888-8KSRINC