

PUBLISHING

China shows WAP potential

WAP-based communities in China are generating up to US\$4 million in revenues a month, says Giles Corbett, co-CEO of France-based mobile games publisher In-Fusio. In-Fusio is investigating WAP market opportunities in China, with a view to building online gaming communities and migrating them to mobile. Java has failed to take off, however, and Corbett says China Mobile is struggling to work out how to kick-start the market. Meanwhile, about 3 million players use In-Fusio's ExEn gaming service, which has been live with China Mobile since 2002, according to Corbett. Last year, In-Fusio consolidated its operations in Asia with the backing of China-headquartered venture-capital outfit Morningside, which has invested US\$4 million in the company.

Jamdat goes retail

U.S. games publisher Jamdat Mobile has signed a deal to distribute its mobile games and content through U.S. retail chain RadioShack. Jamdat plans to use its proprietary wireless-content-distribution system to sell games in-store, with the content then being downloaded over-the-air to the customer's mobile handset. The publisher's games are slated to be available from RadioShack by end-2H05. Meanwhile, Jamdat has extended until 2008 a licensing agreement to use Atari's Hasbro properties. The deal means Jamdat will publish titles based on Hasbro board-game brands such as *Scrabble*, *Yahtzee* and *Boggle*.

GAMES

Adult should be separate

The soft-core adult games operators are providing on their content portals should be separated from other games in the celcos' listings of new games on offer and top 10 downloads, says an industry source. Most mobile gamers tend to come from younger age groups, so the inclusion of adult games in such promotional listings is inappropriate, the source says.

DEVICES

Vodafone in motion

Cellco Vodafone Japan is offering the first such motion-sensing handset in Japan, Sharp's V603SH. The device, which includes a one-chip motion sensor jointly developed by Vodafone and Aichi Steel, enables users to perform menu operations and access shortcuts by waving the handset in certain patterns. Vodafone says the technology could also be used to aim a gun by moving the handset while playing shooting games or to swing a golf club in golf games.

N-Gage sales hit 1.3 mil.

Nokia had sold 1.3 million N-Gage units by the end of 4Q04, according to the company's latest financial results. Several key games for the device were released in the quarter, including network-multiplayer titles *Pathway To Glory* and *Pocket Kingdom*, while the N-Gage device itself also went on sale in China. Nokia has kicked off 2005 with the release of *Snakes*, an updated 3D version of

Nokia's classic mobile game. The 3D version is free for N-Gage users to download from the N-Gage Arena web site. Upcoming releases for the device include *Worms World Party*, *X-Men Legends* and *Glimmerati*.

MULTIPLAYER

Samsung launches contest

South Korean handset vendor Samsung is sponsoring a pan-European mobile gaming championship, offering €10,000 (US\$13,000) in total prize money to players from the UK, Germany, Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands. Participants must download the *Babe Rally* racing game from Samsung's Fun Club web site to take part, submitting their high scores via SMS to an online leaderboard. The top 20 players from each country will then compete at the World Cyber Games 2005 event in March.

FINANCE

Gameloft revenues rise

France-based mobile games publisher Gameloft has announced revenues of €23.2 million (US\$30.28 million) for 2004, a rise of 128% on the previous year. The company enjoyed a strong 4Q04, with revenues of €9.1 million from games such as *Prince Of Persia: Warrior Within*, *Asphalt: Urban GT* and *Vans Skate and Slam*. Gameloft is not scheduled to publish its full 2004 financial results until March but estimates that its full-year operating margin for 2004 will be close to 10%. The company also predicts that it will achieve a revenue increase of more than 50% in 2005.

Newsbytes

M-gambling SPs must attend to social responsibility

The mobile gambling industry will face restrictive regulation unless it makes clear moves to deal with underage and problem gambling, warns the Gambling Consultancy CEO Steve Donoughue, who spoke at mforum's Mobile Gambling Summit in London recently.

"The government has already made it extremely complex to get a casino license in the UK," Donoughue said. "They will do the same for mobile gambling if providers don't stress social responsibility."

Michael Smeaton, remote-gambling specialist at gambling-addiction charity Gamcare, echoed Donoughue's sentiments. Although Smeaton welcomed age-verification schemes run by celcos in the UK, he expressed concern about the growth of "play for fun" mobile gambling games.

"Legally, they're not gambling," Smeaton said. "But when they're connected to a gambling operator, should we be doing that? It's not a model used in the real-world casino industry."

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15/16 June 2005, Earls Court, London. www.mem05.com

>> Drive Mobile Data Profits at Global Messaging <<

15/16 June 2005, Earls Court, London. www.globalmessagingcongress.com