

## Telekom Austria Group: High quality networks with high bandwidth are the foundation for services of the future

During the Telekom Austria Group press dinner at the Mobile World Congress, Alex Sinclair, CTO GSMA, and Hannes Ametsreiter, CEO Telekom Austria Group and GSMA Board Member, discussed the potential future for the mobile communications industry. They agreed: Efficient networks are the foundation for further development.

"Intelligent strategies are needed to cope with the rapid increase of data traffic on mobile phone networks - mobilkom austria's data volume has doubled year on year and the number of 3G subscribers grew by 30%. Implementing these strategies will give the customers the bandwidths they need to use new services," said Ametsreiter. "Convergence is an important approach. This means that aside from already very successful bundled products which offer Austrian customers mobile and fixed line telephony from one source, it is also necessary to connect the mobile transmitters to the highly efficient fiber-optic network. By 2013 more than 4,000 base stations in our Austrian network will be connected via fiber-technology."

Another aspect of convergence will be that traffic of mobile devices will be offloaded to the fixed network wherever possible. This leaves more network capacity for mobile usage. Convergence is also gaining ever more importance on the services level: Media usage is shifting incrementally towards the internet and customers use their smartphones to access media content and their social networks. Explaining the GSMA's strategy, Sinclair said, "Mobile communication operators have an array of basic services such as simple billing functions or location information which give the use of a mobile phone an added value. We are intensely working on improving the interfaces between mobile communications and the internet."

### Mobile communication still plays a central role within the overall ecosystem

During last weekend's Board meetings the GSMA agreed on the development of a cross-operator application store. "The current industry trend is towards smart phones and applications. Mobile operators can offer a clear value add in this regard. Therefore, I support the GSMA's initiative aimed at considerably simplifying access to applications, as open access to knowledge and services goes far beyond a mere data connection," said Ametsreiter explaining its commitment within the GSMA.

### mobilkom austria group: More than 1.1 million new customers in 2009

Despite a difficult business environment mobilkom austria group achieved numerous successes in 2009: The total number of customers increased by 6.5% to 18.9 million. mobilkom austria alone has increased its number of customers by 330,000 and now has 540,000 mobile broadband customers. At its 10 year anniversary in 2009, velcom has reached 4.1 million subscribers which is an increase of more than 400,000 customers in comparison with 2008. Mobiltel in Bulgaria was able to increase the number of its mobile broadband customers by 150%. Vipnet in Croatia is the wireless broadband market leader with almost 60 percent market share. The newest members to the group also developed very well: Vip mobile in Serbia reached 1,153,900 customers and Vip operator in Macedonia was able to increase its market share to 15.9%.

### Network quality as the firm foundation

The mobilkom austria network was the overall winner for the best network in the Germany-Austria-Switzerland region in an independent study conducted by the specialist magazine connect in 2009. The other group members' networks also offer convincingly high quality networks.

"We can really utilize the advantages we have as a group to the fullest when optimizing our networks. Our expert technicians are in constant communication with each other," said Ametsreiter.

An especially interesting example is METAWIN, a research project initiated by mobilkom austria: During the project, network activities were analyzed in detail and then used for optimization measures. The project was then developed into a specific product called DataXtender, which is now distributed to other mobile phone operators via mobilkom austria's partner Kapsch CarrierCom.

### Innovation and social commitment in all markets

There have been network innovations such as the first commercial launch of HSPA+ by mobilkom austria followed by more

HSPA+ launches in Bulgaria and Croatia and some very interesting product innovations in 2009: The A1 credit card in Austria, which is a credit card linked to mobile phone services; Mobiltel marketed a high quality digital TV called "QUARTO"; and, Vip operator and Vip mobile offer their customers Facebook@SMS and SMS2Facebook™ services. Innovation always goes hand in hand with social commitment at Telekom Austria Group. For example, Vipnet donated 8 million Kuna for clearing landmines in Croatia over the last 10 years and Si.mobil gained a lot of recognition with the its Re.misli program and with the establishment of an independent foundation for clean water protection. mobilkom austria collected 70,000 Euro via an SMS donation service for the victims of the earthquake in Haiti.

**Interview with Hannes Ametsreiter at the GSMA**

Hannes Ametsreiter, CEO of Telekom Austria Group, spoke to CNBC about the future of the industry

 [CNBC Interview](#)

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