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South African Boost for Global Mobile TV

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### South African boost for global mobile TV

**Kamil Grajski, president of the FLO Forum, speaks here on how football is helping the mobile TV cause.**

Analysts and writers alike love to hang their predictions on tangible hooks, and the hooks of choice for mobile TV market watchers tend to revolve around major sporting events. This year, South Africa is hosting the FIFA World Cup, which will likely be a major source of revenue generation for broadcasters covering the event. In addition to traditional broadcast, mobile solutions are naturally being touted as offering a key supplemental channel for delivering content to the football hungry masses.



FLO Forum Kamil Grajski

### New devices

Finnish handset giant Nokia is a case in point. Following a November 2009 announcement, its 5330 Mobile TV Edition phone has now been available in South Africa since Q1 2010. The news follows an announcement by the country's regulator, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa, that temporary licences could be issued to ensure that DVB-H is available during the World Cup.

The key to success for mobile TV providers rests on their ability to deliver in some cases multi-modal mobile and satellite TV at an affordable price while facilitating access to handsets at price points suitable for consumers in Africa.

South Africa is hosting what will likely be the highest grossing sporting event of 2010 in terms of broadcast rights, sponsorship deals and advertising, and the region's mobile TV suppliers should also benefit from participation. Invariably, in South Africa, the vast majority of people will watch the games on regular broadcast television. However, we expect the internet and mobile internet will also prove to be popular platforms for catching up on the games.

Europe, for the most part, falls within the same time zone as South Africa. So while it is likely that evening games will be viewed on televisions in homes and bars across the

continent, afternoon games could well pose a challenge for those who cannot access a television during the day. Mobile TV provider, QuickPlay Media, carried out a survey earlier this year, and found that 27% of UK consumers would sign up to mobile TV if the World Cup is made available.

The opening match of the tournament, between South Africa and Mexico in Johannesburg, was played at 2pm GMT on a Friday afternoon, so UK businesses can expect more of the same, with the occurrence of long lunches and mobile TV usage to spike.

#### Challenge for carriers

The variety of the individual World Cup groups provides interesting challenges for carriers that offer mobile TV services within the 13 qualifying European countries. As a result, the World Cup will most likely not be an entire month and a half of near-constant mobile TV usage. Instead it will be an event represented by peak usage seen in localised areas of interest.

The World Cup presents a valuable opportunity to test under real world conditions how 3G networks response to high demand for live streaming video and mobile TV for large numbers of simultaneous users.

For North, Central and South Americans, the majority of games will be played during the working day. FLO TV service subscribers in the U.S. (AT&T, Verizon Wireless and FLO TV direct consumers) who are keen to catch the US play will enjoy high levels of services.

#### Next stop Olympics

High profile sporting events can capture the imagination of viewers worldwide, and as a result make great watersheds for technology innovations. The 2010 World Cup is now upon us, but this epic event merely signals the kick off for mobile TV. There is still quite a bit of action to be played out before the final whistle blows.

If the mass market potential of mobile TV kicks off, the next milestone naturally points towards the 2012 London Olympics as the time when mobile TV will come of age. In preparation for the London Olympics, mobile network operators must seek ways to drive mobile TV services, and realize the true revenue generating potential of integrated mobile media.

FLO technology is a new air interface with multicasting capabilities designed to increase capacity and reduce content delivery costs to mobile handsets. The FLO Forum was established to join business leaders involved in developing FLO-based networks, products and services for the wireless industry.



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