

FOCUS GROUP SHOWS USERS BAFFLED BY SMARTPHONES

Submitted by: Pleon

Wednesday, 31 March 2004

~ Device flaws and poor customer service highlight testing and support needs ~

Wednesday 31st March, 2004: Intuwave, the mobile software specialist, has conducted focus groups of business Smartphone users that highlighted concern with Smartphone quality and customer service. These findings follow quantitative research published by Intuwave in February, 2004 that showed that only 40% of IT managers had confidence in Smartphones as a business tool. Results point to core 'hygiene' factors not being addressed by device manufacturers and mobile network operators which are hitting the industry's bottom line through increased product returns, lower service adoption and increased support costs.

Andrew Wyatt, vice president of strategic marketing at Intuwave, said, "These are not just 'nice to haves': inadequately tested devices lead to product returns or - worst case scenario - product recalls that are costly and embarrassing while poorly set up phones are a key reason why operator support costs are set to escalate. Smartphones are growing in complexity and taking on many of the functions traditionally associated with the PC, so the industry needs a way of applying mature, automated testing procedures and the remote 'diagnose and fix' tools associated with the PC world to mobile devices. If this isn't achieved, then the entire industry will simply haemorrhage money as Smartphones are adopted in greater numbers."

Key problems encountered by members of the focus group included core data services - such as MMS - not working properly, the complexity of setting up services and poor quality of support. One HR manager commented, "Feedback has been mixed; as a tool Smartphones are very useful but the set up has caused more than a few headaches." This is not the response that the industry needs if its plans to increase business usage of the advanced data service functionality offered by Smartphones are to be realised.

Wyatt continued, "Business users are a mobile operators' most profitable and least price-sensitive market segment and a logical consumer of the advanced data services that are now available. However, if services don't work out of the box as they should then people simply won't use them. Addressing testing and customer and service issues will therefore not only cut costs but increase revenues."

~ Ends ~

Notes To Editor

Profile one: Suzy, 25, PR manager in the IT industry; Smartphone - Nokia 6600: "When I got my new Smartphone I wanted to use MMS immediately, but it required four calls to my operator to set up GPRS properly. Even then, whilst I could send MMS messages, my handset couldn't receive them. After several calls to my operator, and a visit to the local retail store, I gave up and exchanged my device for a new one only to find the MMS functionality still wasn't working properly! In the end, someone from my operator's customer support centre had to contact the device manufacturer and track my messages through the network. Then one day, with no explanation, I got 17 MMS messages in one go - all the pictures my friends and colleagues had been trying to send me over the past few weeks. MMS works fine now, but at one

point I nearly threw my phone out of the window in frustration - I don't even want to begin to get email working on my phone if I have to go through all that again!"

Profile two: Andrew, 45, marketing director in the IT industry; Smartphone - Orange SPV200: "Following the ban on using a mobile when driving, I actually bought a Smartphone as a consequence of upgrading to a Bluetooth phone that would let me use a Bluetooth headset. Overall my expectations have been exceeded primarily because it's great to be able to connect to the Internet whenever I want through the browser on my phone. I make frequent use of online train time tables when travelling as well as showing my friends in the pub where I'd been on holiday by going to a webcam of the area! However, it has not been so straightforward - it took the customer services nearly a month to diagnose a problem I had with my original phone's contact function, and in the end I just got another handset and £10 refund. My feeling is that it is first and foremost still a telephone, and needs to be as reliable as a phone. While I can imagine living without a PDA, I certainly can't live without a phone!"

Profile three: Liz, 42, HR manager in the IT industry: "With the increasing need for employees to work from home and whilst on the move providing my staff with mobile devices is a must. We have already deployed devices throughout the company but Smartphones are definitely beginning to creep in - having text, voice, email and internet access all on one device is much easier to handle for all parties involved. A few employees are using the Nokia 6600 as a test and there have been a few problems. Quite rightly, the operators won't give them the right to deploy MMS etc without the company's consent but I have wasted time as a go-between. Feedback has been mixed; as a tool Smartphones are very useful but the set up has caused more than a few headaches."

About Intuwave – Making Smartphones Make Sense

Intuwave is a software specialist with a single vision – to help both organisations and individuals realise the potential of Smartphones.

We provide customers - handset manufacturers, mobile network operators, enterprises, system integrators, enterprise application developers and independent software vendors – with a series of innovative products that fully leverage the mobile data value chain.

Our products and services, built on the m-Network® platform, are specifically designed for the wireless Smartphone environment. They deliver rapid return on investment through enabling increased market share, margin and operational savings. www.intuwave.com

Contact Information

Vicki Cook

Brodeur Worldwide

Telephone: +44(0)20 7298 7113

Email: vcook@uk.brodeur.com

Adrian Brophy

Brodeur Worldwide

Telephone: +44(0)20 7298 7138

Email: abrophy@uk.brodeur.com