

Siemens targets second place



ALL STORIES BY RAVIND RAMESH

SIEMENS has set its sights on moving up to assume the No 2 position in wireless networks worldwide. A spot now occupied by rival Nokia.

"We are well on our way to achieving this goal," said Christoph Caselitz, president of Siemens Communications' mobile networks division.

The No 1 seat is occupied by Ericsson.

According to the company, over the course of the past five years, the mobile networks division at Siemens has advanced from sixth to third place worldwide.

The key market for achieving this target is Asia, Caselitz said during a press conference at the recent 3G World Congress and Exhibition in Hong Kong.

"We view Asia as a key market as it is becoming the world's largest wireless market," said Caselitz.

According to market analysts, the number of mobile subscribers in Asia is expected to grow from the current 820 million to 1.2 billion within the next five years.

Siemens succeeded in boosting its sales regionally by 20% in the last fiscal year and it feels that the development potential for Asia is large.

Market researchers said that by 2010, 37% of all 3G (third-generation mobile networks) or WCDMA



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(Wideband Code Division Multiple Access) subscribers will come from Asia.

The Germany-based company is also planning to inject funds into R&D regionally.

"This fiscal year alone, we will be investing triple-digit millions of euros in Asia, including funding for R&D in the field of mobile network technology," said Caselitz.

This is expected to further spur advancements in technologies like HSPA (High Speed Packet Access) and WiMAX (Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access) said Siemens Communications' mobile network division senior vice-president Dr Klaus-Dieter Kohrt.

"High Speed Packet Access is evolving very quickly and Siemens is at the cutting edge of that technology," Kohrt said. "Siemens has already demonstrated 4G technology with 1Gbps transmission over-the-air."

He said 3G will evolve with HSPA to 3.5G and networks will eventually migrate to 3G Long Term Evolution.

"Together with WiMAX, we believe that such broadband wireless access technologies will provide a complementary service evolution to subscribers," said Kohrt.

Shipping soon

According to Kohrt, WiMAX devices will begin to ship by year end.

He said that the technology will eventually find itself on computer chips much like Intel's Centrino technology for built-in WiFi (Wireless Fidelity) connectivity.

And with the backing of companies like Intel as well as Siemens, Kohrt expects WiMAX to eventually be a truly portable wireless connectivity solution in less than three years.

"WiMAX will be the future and it will be portable by late 2007 or

early 2008," he said.

He added that WiMAX would primarily feature more for data applications and run on PC Cards as well as data modems rather than mobile devices at first.

WiMAX can theoretically service distances of up to 50km with a capacity of up to 70Mbps data throughput.

Kohrt rebuffed suggestions that WiMAX would eliminate WiFi and insisted that the two technologies in fact complement and add value to each other.

Kohrt also said that Siemens sees a growing demand for devices that offer more integration between the various mobile telecommunications technologies as the market matures.

These multimode terminals can be expected to allow connectivity from technologies like WCDMA, HSPA and WiMAX.

"Multimodal devices will be the future for all these technologies," he said.

HSPA

For now, though, the mobile broadband drive is settling on HSDPA (High Speed Downlink Packet Access) as the next incremental step in the race for higher bandwidth while on the move.

Next year, he said, the technology to look out for in the market will be HSUPA (High Speed Uplink Packet Access) he added.

HSUPA, which is already an existing technology as demonstrated by Siemens during the 3G World Congress and Exhibition, is a packet-based data service in the WCDMA uplink.

Both HSDPA and HSUPA offer breakthrough data speeds, theoretically ranging up to 14.4Mbps in the downlink and 5.8Mbps in the uplink as a whole.

More realistically, each user

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More than a slight EDGE

SIEMENS Communications, the telecommunications infrastructure provider arm of the Siemens AG unveiled its new nanoEDGE base station at the recent 3G World Congress and Exhibition in Hong Kong.

The device provides full wireless EDGE (Enhanced Data rate for GSM Evolution) coverage and is touted to be the smallest of its kind in the world, measuring about the size of an A4 sheet of paper.

EDGE technology offers mobile device users high data rates of up to 384Kbps over GSM (Global System for Mobile communications) networks.

"EDGE enables our customers to further broaden their data-intensive services and generate new revenues through higher data traffic," said Christoph Caselitz, president of the mobile networks division at Siemens Communications.

The demand is strong, the company claimed.

According to Siemens, there are already more than 150 end-user devices for EDGE on the market today.

According to Siemens, the nanoEDGE base station is aimed mainly at operators looking to enhance indoor cover-



NICE FIT: Siemens' new nanoEDGE base station is about the size of an A4 sheet.

age of their GPRS (General Packet Radio Service) or EDGE network.

The company also expects it to be used by telcos to target enterprises with mobile data solutions.

It can co-exist with local area network (LAN) technology and provide connectivity for lower bandwidth applications like the Blackberry e-mail service and logistics applications.

The base station also offers instant coverage in vessels such as ships or airplanes and, according to Siemens, the company will be working with aircraft maker Airbus to provide GSM and broadband capabilities on flights in the future.

Siemens promises that the device would be easy to install and can be configured, operated, maintained and powered over a basic Internet Protocol net-

work connection.

Siemens also demonstrated its live multichannel mobile TV streaming technology at the event. This offering allows users to change streaming-video channels on their mobile devices with the press of a button, similar to how it's done with a regular TV remote controller.

It said the size of the files needed for this application is small, using the 3gp format, and the files are condensed on-the-fly to allow almost real-time TV viewing.

The Siemens mobile TV streaming solution works on any Symbian Series-60 or Windows Pocket PC device with the appropriate connectivity technology. For more information on these technologies and more, go to www.siemens.com.