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Virgin Mobile USA changes tune on Helio

After batting away all reports of even discussing working with Helio, Virgin has now confirmed that they are in talks with Helio. The details of what they are discussing have been kept private leaving the market to speculate – this ranges from a merger through to a strategic marketing agreement which would look to exploit the strengths of each party.



Meijer launches prepaid wireless offering, Meijer Mobile

Supercenter retailer Meijer has partnered with Fusion Mobile, an Austin, Texas-based wireless provider, to unveil Meijer's own brand of prepaid wireless phones and phone cards. The announcement was made today by Rob Shadowens, electronics merchandising manager for Meijer.



"Cell phones are a daily part of today's busy lifestyle," said Shadowens. "The goal of Meijer Mobile is to give those families some very easy options when it comes to cell phones. Essentially, every checkout lane at Meijer could be viewed as a wireless phone store without the long waits for service."



Telecom Italia has deployed Orga Systems MVNO software

Orga Systems has supplied Telecom Italia with its fully convergent real-time billing platform OPSC Gold to power MVNOs and enable multi service provider support. All processes are managed within this one system - whether wholesale or retail billing; billing of prepaid, postpaid or convergent subscribers.



Embarq withdrawing from wireless alone, but looks to fixed-mobile

2 years into its MVNO service, Embarq's CEO and CFO have confirmed that they are slowing things down. After examining their Q1 performance and results to date regarding their wireless operations the company has decided that they are simply not profiting enough from the exercise due to a lack of subscribers. Those subscribers already signed up however will be kept and the thrust will be towards fixed-mobile services, rather than stand alone operations.



Embarq CEO, Tom Gerke : "The decision to wind down the MVNO was essentially driven by the economics of the business model. Strategically, we continue to believe in the value of integrating wireline and wireless service. In fact, we already have two integrated calling features available to consumers today that work with any carrier wireless service."



Importantly, this is not a withdrawal, it is a wind down. Embarq are not yet clear what they will do once their agreement with Sprint terminates.

Belgium MVNO Telenet looking to become a licenced MNO

According to regional newspaper De Standaard, Telenet is considering moving away from its MVNO agreement with Mobistar and to instead set up in competition with them by becoming Belgium's fourth licenced mobile network operator.



At this time there is no fourth licence and these reports have not been confirmed.

Sagem Orga working with Spain's new MVNO, MÀSmovil

Sagem Orga has equipped MÀSmovil with SIM cards and is supporting the company in its launch with a creative marketing campaign. A die-cut token is offered with the SIM Card to increase brand awareness and to reinforce customer loyalty.



Jean-Christophe Tisseuil, Head of Marketing Telecommunications at Sagem Orga. "In a very short time, we have been creative enough to define and implement this brand new market approach with a product tailored to the Spanish market targeting mainly young target group and that have a high recognition effect."



MÀSmovil was founded by Meinrad Spenger (formerly of McKinsey) and Christian Nyborg (formerly of Ericsson).

Lycatel looking to make Lycamobile UK

After launching successful operations on the European continent, Lycatel are looking to bring their MVNO brand to the UK. Too date no network deal has been signed, but expectations are that T-Mobile is the most likely host due to existing relationships with other Lycatel operations.



Milind Kangle, CEO Lycatel, said: "We are very close to launch. It will be the biggest launch the UK has seen in this sector. It is near and dear to our hearts. It is our home market." Referring to the UK's estimates 10m ethnic inhabitant. Kangle added: "There's room for one big player in this market, with 60 or 70 per cent market share. The rest will be marginal players. Whoever wants to play in it has to be serious about the funding."