



InfoGin Sees 20%+ More Mobile Internet Usage Across Customer Carriers, Telefonica Mobile Announces InfoGin Deployment

Author: Peggy Anne Salz



As regular readers might recall, bnetTV and MSearchGroove joined up during CTIA to produce a hard-hitting series of interviews focusing on the mobile trends and mobile companies that matter. To provide you the proper context in which to understand and appreciate these companies and their impact on the mobile space, I have also signed on with bnetTV to publish a weekly column looking at my pick of the movers and shakers. In my first column, I chose to focus on InfoGin, a provider of content

adaptation solutions with an impressive track record among mobile operators (35+ to date) and mobile search companies. (You can view the entire video interview by clicking on the image. It's one of 25+ I conducted during CTIA, so I hope you will explore the others as well. My analysis will be posted here and features in bnetTV's weekly newsletter.)

So talk about timing! I finish the column and then Eran Wyler, InfoGin CEO, pre-briefs me on the news that Telefonica in Spain, a mobile operator with around 20 million subscribers, has officially deployed InfoGin's solution.

In fact, Telefonica deployed the solution few months ago and already shows a significant increase in mobile data services. According to a press statement, the solution fits with the operator's overall strategy to facilitate access to mobile content and deliver services to its subscribers "giving an optimized access to Web sites that aren't mobile compliant." By way of background, the prime contractor in the deal, ATOS Origin - an international IT services company - was responsible for overall integration of InfoGin's Intelligent Mobile Platform, a patented approach that lets users access any Internet website from their mobile, independent of the device capabilities. It's a feature Eran tells me has allowed InfoGin's mobile operator customers to chalk up "20 percent [growth in mobile data usage] every month, and sometimes much more than that."



Another stat that speaks volumes refers to what users are accessing.

Absolutely - made-for-mobile websites have their place in the scheme of things. However, Eran reports that a whopping 70 percent of requests his system sees (across the Far East, The U.S., and Europe) is for Internet sites. "There is huge demand for Internet content and less demand for mobile content. However, the most important thing is to enable the user unlimited choice and that means access to both."

Here is an excerpt of the interview:

MOBILE SEARCH: It was during CTIA that InfoGin announced a strategic agreement with Microsoft to adapt Web sites for Microsoft's Live Search Mobile service. InfoGin offers similar services - through similar deals - to companies including AOL and Motricity, a company that offers federated mobile search as a managed service. (And let's not forget the ties between Yahoo and its partner Novarra.) So why the increased interest by mobile search companies in content adaptation? As Eran sees it, it's the logical next step. Devices such as the iPhone and smartphones turn the pressure up on the industry to deliver a better user experience, and mobile search companies are no exception. They must be able to display results from the Internet that work on mobile, Eran says. "When Microsoft presents the results from the Web and the user clicks on the link, they will be directed to the real Internet site from [their] mobile device."

iPHONE & GOOGLE: Neither negates the need for content adaptation solutions. In the case of the iPhone, issues with Flash and Javascript create even more of a demand for InfoGin. "Surfing the Internet on the iPhone today is not without its shortcomings....And it's not only with the iPhone. New devices from Samsung and LG [for example] are also facing the same issues." At the other end of the spectrum, Eran says Google's Android creates more challenges for everyone - and more opportunities for InfoGin. "The market becomes much more complex with the new players entering the market....So it's surely to become more fragmented."

MOBILE ADVERTISING: This is the one to watch over the next weeks (and I will). Eran would not disclose details at this time, but he did hint at plans to integrate mobile advertising into the equation by providing content companies ("like AOL, MapQuest and others") tools to build campaigns for mobile. "We are also talking to the advertisers to show them that they can reach any mobile device with the mobile campaigns, and build campaigns for mobile easy and fast."

My take: InfoGin has been high on my radar for several years now. However, the advance of the mobile Web - catapulted onto center stage by the iPhone and other schemes that encourage users to explore

Internet websites and apps on their mobile devices - plays overwhelmingly in the company's favor. Consider the recent news that InfoGin has raised more than \$10 million in a third round of funding from Minneapolis, Minnesota-based Coral Capital Management.

Connect the dots and it's clear a comprehensive mobile service must present results and destinations that have been optimized for viewing on a mobile device. Squeezing a Web page on to a mobile phone display or retro-fitting content (such as a banner ad from the fixed Internet), are flawed approaches that can alienate users and ultimately reduce content purchases. Smartphones and the iPhone raise the bar - and they do not remove the requirement for content adaptation solutions. To the contrary, these devices have whet users' appetites for a real Internet browsing experience on mobile - and they will likely vote with their feet if they are offered anything less.