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Mobile Data Charges and 3g Video Calling

As a company specialising in mobile erotica, Cherrysauce, like the rest of the mobile entertainment business, is seeing an ever increasing buzz around the business model for 3g video calling. As you can imagine, we also receive numerous and regular enquires about offering this particular solution for our 'saucy' portfolio.

Adult entertainment, essentially, is all about business models with immediate ROI and ensuring that users can easily and quickly access the content they want to buy. Having looked into this particular business model in a bit more depth, I can instantly see numerous benefits for both the mobile erotic companies as well as the other more general content companies.

One of the benefits immediately springing to mind is the provision of an alternative solution to the emerging commercial issues around data charges, especially in an off-portal environment, which ironically holds so many other benefits for content and media owners. Premium content within 3g video calling technology could in fact benefit both content provider and consumer by effectively side-stepping this whole commercial bottleneck.

I was recently asked what the solution would be for off-portal content providers like ourselves and not knowing enough about the subject matter at the time, eluded to the fact that adult entertainment normally spear-headed new media channels in finding ways round little commercial 'annoyances' like these. I can now see this is actually the case and I have a strong suspicion that it will once again be the mobile adult services who pioneer the early days for this technology in order to reach the mass market (over 18 mass market of course!) and they will once again benchmark the commercial models for other content areas.

There also appears to be a broad enough 'design scope' in video calling to allow IVR functionality, allowing the integration of menu options within the video experience. This immediately highlights numerous commercial opportunities for adult entertainment (the simplest of which would be: press 1 for boobs, 2 for brunettes, 3 for blondes). Moreover, the sheer ease of use with video calling will allow content providers to run compelling call-to-action promotions, easy entry (as we say in my industry) and instant gratification, all promoted and presented as a seamless user experience. I really believe that instant gratification is now a pre-requisite for our consumer generation, but to date not effectively achieved within the mobile space due to many of the technical restrictions we have faced.

I have seen that both drop charges and per-minute tariffs can be applied to this model. This effectively means that I can get my Cherrysauce customers to browse my rich, fast 3g erotic WAP portal, point them to a library of content and create a per-access model to access those particular galleries. Effectively no different from the 'price per download' billing model we have now. A per-minute tariff will face certain issues, such as being too expensive or giving 'bill shock' for customers. It must therefore be managed carefully by the industry and the content providers themselves in terms of providing pricing transparency upfront of the purchase. This could greatly be helped by content providers actually changing the way they organise, pack-up and sell their content in order to effectively help customers 'budget' their spending. However, that said, the live video chat Cherrysauce offers in partnership with CC media is already charged

on a per-minute basis and we are not seeing any negative feedback from our customers. In fact, CC media boast a 90% customer satisfaction rating with average annual, per-user spending of over 500€!

Lastly, if properly executed, 3g video calling can deliver premium content and services in a rich environment (i.e. video), but is capable of omitting complicated and time-consuming java application downloads and installations. There are some wonderful and truly viable opportunities here for P2P services, user-generated content and dating services, which will really come alive in this type of environment.

In all honesty, when technology companies were approaching us to do '3g video calling' for our products and services, they were obviously pitching it to us as selling our movie catalogue via this service and at the time I believed it to be the extent of what it could offer.

However, I can already, without even trying too hard, see a huge range of opportunities for erotic and adult entertainment to take this new technological environment by the 'horns' (that's plural guys!) and fully utilise it to create compelling and immersive erotic experiences, whilst at the same time side-stepping and/or jointly solving some of the technical and billing issues which might be poised to have a negative impact on our daily bottom line.

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