

# Smarter Partners with IBM to Create Vodafone EmailAnywhere

*If you are looking to offer value-adding services to small- and medium-size business customers in the highly competitive mobile-communications market, what do you do? For managers at Vodafone Ireland, the answer was to adapt EmailAnywhere from Smarter Information Systems Ltd. to its network and ensure strong local support by partnering with IBM.*

**WHEN TELECOM PROVIDER VODAFONE IRELAND** sought content for its GPRS network, the company quickly focused on e-mail, extended with calendar and personal information management. Vodafone viewed it as a horizontal application that could be provided to a large number of users. To supply the application, Vodafone turned to Smarter Information Systems Ltd., a software developer in Helsinki, Finland, that specializes in precisely that service. Working with partners Forum Nokia and IBM, Smarter developed and installed the software, and Vodafone

Ireland then announced the availability of its new service, Vodafone EmailAnywhere, in November 2002. While it is still too early for the companies to quantify the service's success, early indications are that Vodafone EmailAnywhere is a hit with small- and medium-size businesses. In large part, this is because the service requires no up-front investment in hardware, software, or anything else. Subscribers pay on a per-user/per-month basis, allowing a business to test the service with a small number of users, and then add as many users as it wants later on.

## Keys to Success

APPLICATIONS	Vodafone EmailAnywhere, based on Smarter Office Extender
DEVELOPERS	For Smarter Information Systems: Jaakko Ahtela, project manager and technical consultant; Antti Holappa, software architect
PRIMARY REVENUE SOURCE	User subscription fees for operator-based mobile e-mail and calendar service
NOKIA TOOLS USED	Nokia Mobile Internet Toolkit was used to develop and verify compliance with Nokia handsets; actual Nokia handsets were used, too
NOKIA SUPPORT	Provided early access to future handsets; helped solve compliance issues during development
NOKIA OK TESTING	Yes. All Smarter software was tested using both Mobile Internet Toolkit and actual Nokia handsets
NOKIA SALES CHANNELS USED	Nokia Tradepoint
MOBILE TECHNOLOGIES	Browser-based online access to groupware (MS Exchange, Lotus Domino) and e-mail (POP/IMAP) servers in the enterprise network. As representation, it is based on WAP, HTML, and SMS. Optimized to use GSM Data, GPRS, or WCDMA as a bearer, but works over any mobile or fixed network
DEVICE PLATFORMS	All major devices available in Irish market, including Nokia, Sony Ericsson, Motorola, and Siemens handsets; Palm and Compaq iPaq PDAs

## Keys to Success

DEVELOPMENT ENVIRONMENT	Java™
PARTICIPATING OPERATOR	Vodafone Ireland
HOSTING COMPANY	Vodafone Ireland

## Business Discussion

Vodafone, established in 1984, operated Ireland's first mobile-phone service, and today has a nearly 60% share of Ireland's mobile-phone market. The company has over 1,500 employees, and more than 1.7 million customers combining to make 8.5 million voice calls a day.

The market for the Smartner and Vodafone services looks promising. For one, the percentage of enterprise users with mobile e-mail and PIM applications will grow from just 1% in 2002 to at least 10% by the end of 2007, predicts Gartner Group. Gartner also predicts that hosted applications such as Smartner's will be the "predominant approach" for small- and medium-sized businesses that wish to mobilize their applications through at least 2006. Finally, the overall market for mobile enterprise applications (of which mobile e-mail is a subset) seems poised for tremendous growth. Market watcher IDC predicts that the European market for wireless enterprise communications will nearly triple over the next four years, rocketing from roughly \$32 billion in 2002 to nearly \$93 billion in 2006. This growth, adds IDC, will be propelled by new, always-on technologies that include GPRS and 3G, as well as new devices and business applications.

What captured Vodafone's interest in Smartner was Smartner's primary software service, Office Extender. It is an operator-based service that allows an enterprise to give its mobile device users remote access to their enterprise-based e-mail and calendaring systems, including Lotus Notes, MS Outlook, and other systems. Smartner resells the service through mobile operators, which host the Smartner software and customize it with their brand interface. The service was already being offered by several European mobile operators, including Swisscom Mobile in Switzerland, Radiolinja in Finland, and BLU Telecomunicazione in Italy.

The Smartner software has another feature that Vodafone sensed would appeal to its small- and medium-size business clients: It is cheap to use. Companies license the service on a per-user, per-month basis (generally for €10 to €20 per user per month or \$10.75 to \$2 US), and can start with small groups to test, and then add more users as their comfort level grows. The Smartner service does not require the end user to make investments in additional hardware or software. Smartner estimates the total cost of ownership (TCO) for its service is €36 (about \$39) per user per month, compared to €68 (about \$73) per user per month for the rival Blackberry service. "We have focused on how to make it as easy as possible for the enterprise to acquire our service and start using it," says Ari Backholm, Smartner's vice president for business development. "It is easy for customers to start using it without investment, and this has proven to be key."



Ari Backholm, Smartner

Getting started was a bit more difficult for Smartner, however. Vodafone ultimately identified nine potential providers for the mobile software through a request for proposal (RFP) process. That meant Smartner had to create a detailed bid and compete head-to-head with the other eight providers. In the end, Smartner won the contract, with low cost to end users being a leading factor.

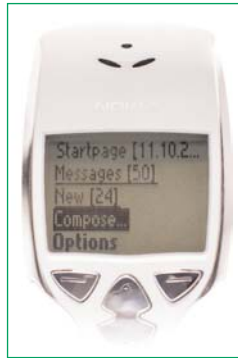
Along the way, Forum Nokia provided Smartner's development team with both its Mobile Internet Toolkit as well as some handsets that had not yet been introduced to the buying public. This allowed the Smartner team to ensure that its software worked not only on current Nokia handsets, but also on selected forthcoming models.

Smartner's second partner was IBM Global Services, which played a two-fold role. First, since the Vodafone EmailAnywhere runs on IBM's WebSphere application server and Web server, IBM Finland worked with Smartner to ensure that the small Finnish supplier's software ran smoothly on its systems.

Second, IBM's Global Services group in Ireland is playing a local support role. "Vodafone realized that Smartner had a very compelling offering, but [it is] a smallish company and far away from Ireland," explains Pekka Leppanen, director of IBM's Solution Partnership Center in Helsinki. "Vodafone's need for a strong local systems integrator and strong local support surfaced. So it was decided that IBM and Smartner would address the opportunity together."

Forum Nokia also participated in the development work. A Nokia WAP Phone Characteristics document, prepared by Forum Nokia, was used by the Smartner developers as they developed and optimized their application's interface for various handsets. This document provided technical details such as which WAP browsers are supported and the memory size of various models. Nokia also provided Smartner with prototypes of several handsets—specifically, Nokia 6610, 7210, and 7650—so Smartner developers could test their browser interfaces on forthcoming handsets. This sped the development process, which was particularly important as Nokia 7650 was to be visibly prominent in Vodafone's ad campaign for the EmailAnywhere service.

Just as the development work was shared, so is revenue. Enterprise customers pay Vodafone a service fee of €10 to €15 per user per month (about \$11 to \$16), and either air-time (GSM) or data-transmission (GPRS) fees. Vodafone, in turn, pays to Smartner an upfront license fee based on the number of users, additional license batches on an as-you-grow basis, service fees for the delivery project, and a maintenance fee equivalent to 20% of the annual licenses.



When the user sends messages or creates appointments, the actions are relayed immediately to the groupware server. They are then sent immediately forward to the chosen recipients. This real-time access methodology offers several benefits; for one, a user can employ entries in the Global Address List as shortcuts when sending messages or adding participants to appointment invitations.

## Application Detail

From the user's perspective, the Vodafone EmailAnywhere service starts on a subscriber's mobile handset or wireless PDA. Since the service is hosted on Vodafone servers, the enterprise customer need add no hardware or software; already existing handsets and PDAs are ready to go. Similarly, the solution is not downloaded to the handset; instead, the handset is used for browsing the Smartner application, which is hosted by Vodafone Ireland. When mobile users activate the service, they have remote access to their e-mail, calendar, contacts, and tasks in their groupware or e-mail application back at the office.

The service has WAP and HTML interfaces as well as SMS notification of new e-mails. On a WAP handset, users are identified by their phone number, and they can log in without entering a user name, enhancing ease of use. With the Web interface, the service is branded identically to all other Vodafone Web pages.

## Conclusion/Lessons Learned

The project has confirmed Smartner's belief in focusing on the user's experience and TCO. Smartner will now push to support Vodafone's sales effort, using lessons it has learned by working with other mobile operators. "The more users Vodafone Ireland gets for licenses, the more licenses we are selling to them," says Smartner's Backholm. "So it's a long-term partnership."

## Resources

### Vodafone Ireland

[www.vodafone.ie](http://www.vodafone.ie), tel. +353 (0)42 9331999

### Nokia Tradepoint

[www.tradepoint.nokia.com/NokiaTP/S\\_Login.jsp](http://www.tradepoint.nokia.com/NokiaTP/S_Login.jsp)

### Forum Nokia

[www.forum.nokia.com/business](http://www.forum.nokia.com/business)

### Smartner

[www.smartner.com](http://www.smartner.com),

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### IBM Global Solutions

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