

# Mobile Internet 2.0

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## What happens when Web 2.0 goes mobile?

In January 2007 there were an estimated 2.7 billion mobile handsets in use around the world, of which 1 billion were sold during 2006. This is more than three times the number of PCs, and roughly double the number of fixed landlines in use. And most of these handsets have the processing power of yesteryear's PCs.

The wireless sector can no longer be discharged as merely a sub-segment of telecom or a niche-channel to reach young geeks. It is a market all in its own, both in size and value, and any service, product, company, brand or entity needs a strategy for its digital, mobile phone-based presence. Being absent from the mobile internet should be a conscientious choice, not one made by neglect, as it might mean giving your competitors the most direct and personal access to your customers, irregardless of who they are. The connected handset will become a natural and convenient internet terminal in any situation, including at home. In addition, while the PC has become an evermore generic appliance sold in supermarkets, the mobile phone is an expression of one's personality, a fashion statement, always connected and particularly addictive, and it is in the pocket of basically every young, urban person around the world.

Berg Insight believes that as technical limitations on mobile terminals and networks dissipate, user behaviours and business models will in all essential follow the same evolution path for the mobile internet as they have in the fixed world. The Western mobile Internet user is also a heavy user of the fixed Internet, shaping behaviour and expectations on services and interfaces. However, mobile surfing is not a replacement activity for fixed access, but rather a complementary channel with a different user experience and context.

When the dust settles after the current battle for small screen presence, the users will ultimately care less whether their host is an internet brand player, a mobile operator or a media company, as long as the service offers more. Berg Insight believes that the winners on the mobile web arena will be the players that give the users what they have come to expect from the Internet, i.e. browsing, e-mail, IM, media and networking, but in addition manage to exploit ►

► the inherent differentiators of surfing-on-the-go – such as instantaneity, personalisation, location, efficiency in presentation – into added service value, context sensitivity and a superior user experience. Network operators still have the advantage of owning the relationship to the subscriber and usually have their name on the first screen image the user sees when turning on the phone, but internet players with strong brands and communities to back them up are moving in on consumers who are used to paying for access and services on different bills. The operators will have to work hard and exploit their strengths cleverly to remain relevant and not become faceless access providers with price as main differentiator.

Although Berg Insight believes that any operator trying to keep the mobile user from free access to his or her favourite sites and applications will loose in the long run, portals will continue to be relevant as aggregators of contents and services. Berg Insight also predicts that as in the fixed domain, popular portals, search engines, browsers and communities will fuse to leave a few mass-market launch pads for the mobile Internet. To the Web 2.0 generation, the business customers of tomorrow, mobile Internet is not a conceptual and futuristic abstraction but an expected staple tool in the infrastructure of their lives. These days, to not know and keep up with what happens on the mobile scene is an oversight that no-one, basically irregardless of business, can afford.

*Worldwide Internet usage statistics (June 2007)*

<b>E-mail accounts</b>	1,500,000,000
<b>Social networking site accounts</b>	800,000,000
<b>IM accounts</b>	500,000,000
<b>Web sites</b>	120,000,000
<b>Blogs</b>	60,000,000
<b>Online gaming accounts</b>	20,000,000

### This report answers the following questions:

- What are the latest trends in mobile Internet usage in Europe, North America and the Far east?
- How is the experience of browsing, Internet search and content discovery best transferred to mobile handsets?
- How can social networking communities be brought to the mobile environment?
- Why has not mobile e-mail usage taken off among Western consumers?
- How should mobile operators position themselves in the IM value chain?
- What strategies for mobilizing the Internet are currently employed by leading network operators and Internet industry players?
- What will be the key success factors for the leading players on the mobile Internet of tomorrow?

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## About the Author



**Sabine Ehlers** is a Senior Analyst and Consultant with a Masters degree from Chalmers University of Technology. She has more than 15 years experience from working in the international IT and Telecom industry. Sabine has a regular column in Sweden's largest computer magazine and is a frequent speaker at conferences.

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