

# HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

That was the year that saw LTE continue its slow creep, operators stare down some grim financial barrels, data usage continue its growth, but also show signs of levelling off, WiFi riding to the rescue, and operator-led services such as messaging feel the squeeze. How did Mobile Europe see things at the time? Here's a representative sample of the key themes of the year.

## JANUARY

### O2's free public WiFi

Kicking off a WiFi theme for the year, O2 launched its free nationwide Wi-Fi broadband network, pitting the UK's largest mobile operator head-to-head with rivals including BT, Virgin and The Cloud.

The operator said it would open up free Wi-Fi access to all internet users, including those who are not O2 subscribers, through partnerships with restaurants, shops, and high street retailers across the UK.

O2 said it would double the number of premium public internet hotspots – meaning all publicly accessible hotspots not including non-BT Fon hotspots – currently offered by rivals by 2013.

### Mobile video optimisation

A new year, a familiar message from Bytemobile, who forecasted that mobile video would account for more than 60% of total mobile network traffic in 2011. Mobixell said that number could reach 70%. Both numbers show growth in mobile video. An Allott Mobile Trends report in September 2010 said that mobile video accounted for 35% of all mobile data bandwidth at that time. And Bytemobile said that video accounted for 48% of total network traffic as at the end of 2010.

### DNA LTE in 2011

The first off the LTE blocks in 2011 was Finnish network operator DNA, who said that it would launch a commercial LTE network in 2011, following the signing of a three year network upgrade deal with Ericsson.

A DNA press statement said that Ericsson would take DNA's HSPA+ service nationwide, with LTE being rolled out in the "major cities". The deal will run over three years and includes GSM/HSPA/LTE radio access, Evolved Packet Core (EPC), IP-based mobile backhaul solutions as well as network management solutions. Services to DNA will cover support, network rollout, systems integration as well as consultancy and educational services

### Orange NFC commitment

Orange's Mung Ki Woo spoke to Mobile Europe on Orange's payments plans, but wouldn't comment on rumours that he's joining Mastercard

Woo told Mobile Europe that the operator's commitments to NFC are intended to "get the industry out of the the chicken and egg question which has been



**Vendors scrambled to show off their new radio offerings before, during and after MWC. Here's a stack of Al-Lu's lightRadio Cubes.**

hampering NFC for the last few years."

The operator, which had already targeted a national deployment in France in 2011, expanded its NFC ambitions to all its territories in Europe. It said that it would systematically place NFC-enabled SIMs into the market starting from the second half of this year. It has also committed to having half of the smartphones it sells be NFC enabled.

## FEBRUARY

### Tellabs predicts end of profit on data traffic by 2015 for Western European operators

Data profit crunch? Tellabs released a report, compiled with Analysys Mason (AM), purporting to show that operators have about three to four years of profitability left, before they start slumping into operating losses on their data traffic.

As of the end of 2010, the Tellabs report found, operators were still turning a profit on their data traffic. But increasing demands on bandwidth driven by OTT services being accessed on flat rate tariffs, mean that the cost of delivering that same bit will outweigh revenue by mid 2015, in Western European markets.

In Western Europe, AM and Tellabs predicted a revenue per Gb decline of 80% between 2010 and 2015. The report describes this an "astonishingly high" number.

### Network vendors at MWC – who announced what Ericsson:

As part of its drive for more flexible networks, Ericsson announced an antenna integrated radio unit: AIR. This integrates the antenna into the radio unit, is intended to