



## EXPERT OPINION:

## Every subscriber is an individual, treat their data privacy the same way

More than ever, tomorrow's telecommunication market requires differentiation. For operators to be able to deliver the innovative services that are now in the pipeline they need to deploy advanced systems for managing subscriber data. This personal data presents enormous opportunities but also challenges in meeting users' privacy demands. Andreas Freund looks at the ways in which operators are walking this tightrope, and the successes they can achieve in increased revenues and customer loyalty when they walk the walk cleverly.

"Blaming each other is not going to rebuild customer confidence ... nor increase customer loyalty."

Making customers always feel well-informed

Operators need to have an effective communication channel through which they can reach the subscriber, in order to keep hold of their market share. And they need to offer personalised services to ensure long term revenue.

A system offering a central hub, matching subscriber-related events and parameters to notification messages, enables operators to interact with their subscribers efficiently. Subscribers have to be given relevant



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account information in real time, thus giving them full control and making them always feel well-informed.

Doing so establishes a closer and deeper relationship with the customer – real-time interaction is the key. Indicating a reached credit limit, new product offers and valuable account information – along with personalised services for the individual subscriber – bind the subscriber to the operator.

Personalised messages boost the success of marketing activities and create instant revenue opportunities. They are a powerful medium for marketing campaigns and highly personalised one-to-one promotions; for example personalised happy hour promotions, individual anniversary campaigns, special roaming offerings and location-based promotions.

These service offerings encourage spontaneous impulse buying and foster cross- and up-selling opportunities. Customers are most receptive: just at the moment when they are 'online' and when targeted offerings match their individual usage behaviour. Therefore, the operators can take advantage of real-time functionalities that fuel direct customer engagement.

### Simplify complexity to achieve valuable personalised offerings

Real-time customer information and notification, dynamic transmission sequences with an automatic selection of alternative delivery channels and individualised or group-specific messages promoting personalised services, all of these can boost operators' revenues enormously. Communication service providers need to have the means to distribute messages and simple notifications to offer new products or services. Filter mechanisms will help to ensure the highest level of customer satisfaction.

Next generation (NG) mobile data services are the future source of revenue. Fighting for new subscribers, NG services need to be launched faster and in a more personalised way than ever. Operators have to apply complex subscriber profiles to enable these personalised NG services.

When launching these bandwidth-demanding applications, network capacity and profitability are key issues for operators. To stay competitive, operators need to maximise their mobile broadband and data revenue streams. Real-time charging for all services fights revenue leakage, limits network investments and drives the uptake of new services.

### Real-time charging capabilities drive growth and profitability

Mobile operators are increasingly looking at advanced real-time charging capabilities as a way of rolling out new data applications while at the same time securing existing revenue sources. Customers want instant access to data and messaging services, which means mobile operators must seek ways of enabling instant authorisation and accounting processes to prevent revenue leakage.

Communication service providers are increasingly focused on the delivery of profitable new data services, including a growing portion of partner offerings. In order to successfully tap partner-enabled revenue streams both sides – operator and partner alike – must have a common understanding that the customer will not accept billing errors. Both the CSP and the content partner must be committed to delivering bill clarity and accuracy.

In those cases where billing errors do occur, blaming each other is not going to rebuild customer confidence in the new, value-added services world, nor will it increase customer loyalty in the long run. In this context the introduction and joint monitoring of third party, content-related billing KPIs is a promising approach to reduce incorrect bills. This involves effective controls, testing and monitoring tools across partner- and network-facing systems as well as customer billing systems.

While offering new services themselves or offering third party services, operators must never forget to ensure that subscriber data is handled carefully to avoid errors and, first of all, to guard subscribers' privacy. Dedicated rules and real-time control are what operators need to handle both these issues efficiently.

## VanillaPlus Jargon Buster

**KPI:** Key Performance Indicator

**NG:** Next Generation