

## LOCAL NEWS

### **Aussie Software Tames Africa's Mobile Surge**

Southern Africa's burgeoning mobile phone market is paying dividends for a Sydney software company which reduced churn for one of the continent's largest carriers, Vodacom.

Developed in-house, Emagine International's marketing software helps mobile operators run campaigns based on customer behaviour, like call and message numbers.

Emagine CEO David Peters said the African market is an interesting one that is growing rapidly, with Vodacom adding 1.2 million customers in December last year alone.

"The mobile phone is really changing people's lives in Africa," he said, adding simple calls and messages help people keep in touch over large distances.

Vodacom and Emagine began a pilot of the software in October 2006 and completed it in January.

"Vodacom has done a lot of things to keep its churn rate under control, but because most subscribers are prepaid it had 42 percent churn per annum," Peters said. "That was too high for them [and] with 22 million they wanted to automate marketing to customers to retain revenue."

At the end of the pilot both parties claimed an ROI of under three months.

Peters describes Emagine's software as a comprehensive telecommunications campaign management system with a focus on "trigger marketing", which is all about analyzing large amounts of data and when a customer does something they are targeted.

Examples of trigger marketing are sending offers for SMS bundles to frequent SMS senders and notifications to low-value custom-

ers to recharge accounts.

"We're unique in the telco space. There are other competitors in the US with generic campaign software, like the Siebels of the world, but they take a long time to implement and are expensive."

Emagine adds Vodacom to its line-up of carrier customers including AAPT, Hong Kong CSL, Bouygues Telecom in France, and Telstra, which completed an installation early in 2006.

The software is written in Java with an Oracle back end and can process 40 million records per day with a road map of 200 million per day in the next release.

For integration, Emagine has a set of standard supplier interfaces and is going "very much" down the SOA route with an eye to using Web services to interface with other enterprise applications.

"All development is done locally," Peters said. "The cost, overhead, and risk on quality control is too high for the possible gain on salary savings. We have a rapid development capability, so you really need to manage it closely."

With Vodacom on the books, Emagine is now looking to expand its African presence to Mozambique, Tanzania and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

— Rodney Gedda

### **Oz Mobile Company Wins UK Horse Racing Contract**

Australian mobile gaming company Media and Gaming has secured a contract with the UK's most popular horse racing channel At The Races (ATR), to implement its iReact mobile interactive and community gaming platform.

The service, launched last week, allows ATR's 1.4 million monthly viewers and its online community to interact with programming and presenters within a real-time format across SMS, WAP and the Internet. ➤