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an AKJ newsletter

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Transatel appoints AKJ as its MVNO Billing Partner

Transatel, the Mobile Virtual Network Enabler (MVNE) has appointed AKJ as its preferred billing partner for its UK post paid MVNO services.

Transatel's MVNE turnkey solution enables businesses to provide their own brand mobile telephony services to their SME and/or Residential customers at a fraction of the cost of establishing a traditional MVNO operation. The key to Transatel's services is their MVNE platform which is fully integrated into the Orange network, offering resellers the opportunity to rapidly establish their own mobile services.

Whilst some businesses may have their own billing and customer care systems; many of Transatel's customers either do not have this capability or their existing systems cannot be easily adapted to support a full mobile offering. Transatel researched the market to identify a suitable partner to help their customers address the complex challenges of mobile billing and following a period of appraisal, Transatel has appointed AKJ as their preferred billing partner.

Under the appointment AKJ will support the development of a scalable billing and customer care platform which is integrated into Transatel's systems. The new platform is due to be launched in 2010 and in parallel; AKJ will also be launching a new Transatel module which will be available to its existing customer base.

Jacques Bonifay, CEO of Transatel, commented "We have seen an enormous interest from resellers in the UK market who are keen to establish their own mobile services. Competition from the major networks for both fixed and mobile services is creating real issues for many resellers and having their own brand mobile offering, allows the reseller to create much stronger and more profitable relationships with their customers whilst also differentiating their services from the competition. The billing of mobile services can however be complex to manage and by removing this billing barrier Transatel aims to help a much greater number of resellers to launch their own mobile services."

Commenting on the appointment, Matt Atkinson, MD of AKJ, said "We are very pleased to be working with Transatel on this exciting new project and delighted to have been selected as their preferred billing partner. Convergence is driving the need for resellers to be able to offer a full range of fixed, mobile and IP based services and being able to offer these services under a single bill is an essential element in retaining customers in the long term. We think the Transatel offering can really help resellers to achieve this and updating our platform to support the Transatel service is another step in demonstrating AKJ's ongoing commitment to ensure that our platform is constantly evolving to help our customers benefit from new market opportunities."

If you would like further information on how you can incorporate your own branded mobile offering into your portfolio, please call us on 01634 673 800.

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The last winter has been recorded in Met Office history as the harshest winter in 31 years. However BT Wholesale beat the big freeze and its continued impact on the UK's infrastructures, by keeping the stats warm. In February 2010 BT Wholesale's Service team reported hitting a figure of 99.8% for on-time deliveries of private circuits and 93.8% for on-time repairs. Both look good compared to the target of 90% set 24 months ago.

And with the possibility that this is the type of winter we should start to expect, the BT Wholesale team has pledged to not only work harder to maintain and improve on these numbers, they will also be focusing on a drastic reduction in the number of fault reports.

Malcolm Butler, BT Wholesale's General Manager for Service Assurance, outlines some of the initiatives in the multi-pronged approach the team is taking. He says: "We've analysed that 35% of the fault reports we get from customers result from a problem in their own network rather than in BT's. So we're developing better ways to support them in identifying these."

"We're also launching a new communications channel" adds Malcolm. "This will give customers access by instant messaging to a team of technicians so they can get early advice on technical problems without having to report a fault.

And a third project is looking at core network faults, such as ones caused by cut cable accidents or floods. Currently we re-route circuits manually to by-pass problem areas. But we're now planning an automated re-routing system. That will potentially mean a faster restoration of services."

BT Wholesale

to reduce fault numbers

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introduction

of new Openreach

escalation process

After feedback from CP's, Openreach has released a new escalation process for when dealing with faults and order issues for SMC's. The new process came into effect on the 8th February this year.

Their aim is to have a clear and consistent process in place to manage escalations, with clear ownership and provide a level of service that they feel CPs can confidently rely upon safe in the knowledge that the Openreach Escalation Team will manage their escalations effectively.

General issues and enquiries should continue to be directed to the main Service Management Centres with issues meeting the criteria described below being directed to the Escalations Team.

When escalations are to be made via a phone call, a new specific 0800 number direct to the respective Escalations Teams will be available for each of Provision and Repair (existing email channels will continue to be available where currently utilised). Due to their different requirements there will be some differences between the Provision and Repair structures as outlined below.

Provision

Where Openreach has failed in its contractual obligations and the alternative is unsatisfactory, the Escalations Team can be contacted on 0800 030 4453 option 1.

The Escalation Team will validate the enquiry and provide a reference. They will arrange immediate investigation and will respond within 4 SMC working hours with details of what action is being taken to progress /resolve the problem. If the escalation does not fulfil the criteria the team will discuss alternatives with the CP.

Repair

The Escalation Team is built of product experts who have the sufficient skills to manage escalations. Within the new process the CP will have the confidence that if they call with an escalation that complies with the criteria below, ownership will be taken straightaway.

The Escalations Team can be contacted on 0800 030 4453 option 2.

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Criteria to contact Openreach for an escalation:

Fault Out of SLA – No Update Received or Require Urgent Fault Resolution

Where a fault is out of SLA, and there is no update on the Fault tracker, the CP can contact the Openreach SMC for an update. The CP also has the opportunity to call the Escalation Team and they will either provide an update or chase for an update from the dealing team about the progress and/or estimated resolution date.

Openreach Missed a Booked Appointment With the End User and the Next Appointment is Not Acceptable

Where Openreach has missed an appointment, the CP will be required to book another appointment. If the earliest appointment is not by the end of the next working day (excluding public holidays), the CP can call the escalation team to have this escalated. The escalation team will try and ensure an engineer is assigned to visit the end user by the end of the next working day (excluding public holidays). This is only applicable where MBORC does not apply.

Protracted Repair or Multiple Repeat Fault Scenarios

Where a fault has been reported a multiple of times or has been outstanding for a long period of time but remains unresolved, the CP can contact the Escalation Team who will then take personal ownership. The team will proactively engage with the CP and engineer ensuring that the fault is not closed until a satisfactory outcome is reached, i.e. after a co-op with the CP, if the CP confirms that the service is working

Service Affecting/Hazard

If in the view of a CP an Openreach engineer has carried out work at the end users property and has left it in an unsatisfactory condition or in a state of hazard, if the fault report is still open the CP can contact the Escalation Team, and the Escalation Team will take ownership by ensuring that an engineer visits the end user's property to resolve the issue.

For WLR3, Escalations meeting these criteria can be raised either via the B2B gateway or by calling the Team.

For WLR2, escalations must be raised via eCo Repair. Once accepted, the CP will be provided with an update about the progress of the fault. The CP can also then call the Escalation Team, if necessary, who will provide the CP with a reference number and the Escalation Team will manage the escalation until the fault is satisfactorily closed.

For LLU, escalations can be raised either by calling the new Escalation Team or by sending an email to:

llua.level.1.escalation@openreach.co.uk



Fines Implemented for Mis-selling

As of the 18th March 2010, telecoms companies in the UK now have to adhere to strict new Ofcom rules to stop the mis-selling and slamming of landline services or face fines of up to 10 per cent of their turnover.

Ofcom state that the new rules are designed to strengthen protection for consumers and enable Ofcom to take swift and more effective action against telecoms providers that break them.

The full release can be found [here](#).



Super Fast Broadband Britain

Ofcom have published two consultations which set out proposals to promote competition and investment in current and super fast broadband services.

The Wholesale Local Access (WLA) consultation proposes new requirements on how BT should give other communications providers access to its network, to help encourage competition, whilst at the same time supporting investment and innovation by:

**Providing competing services over BT's fibre lines; and
Giving access to ducts and telegraph poles.**

The WLA consultation can be found [here](#).

The Wholesale Broadband Access consultation proposes promoting further competition in current generation broadband and can be found [here](#).

Ofcom has also published a variation to BT's Undertakings relating to super-fast broadband using Fibre to the Premises technology. This statement can be found [here](#).



Proposals for New EU 116 Initiative

Ofcom have published a consultation on reserving two new 116 numbers:

**116 006 for a helpline for victims of crime
116 117 for a non-emergency medical on-call service**

116 numbers are a European Commission initiative and Ofcom's proposals consider how to make these numbers available for use in the UK including the appropriate charging arrangement for calling these numbers.

The consultation can be found [here](#).

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O2 Chooses 21CN Convergence With BT Wholesale

After a five year managed services agreement was signed last month, BT Wholesale will be consolidating O2 UK's mobile and fixed core networks into one using BT's 21st Century Network (21CN) platform.

This new approach means that O2 UK will potentially be able to cut their costs with a range of more reliable next generation communications.

Analysts CCS Insight forecast that Europe's mobile broadband users will grow from 22 million to 43 million by 2011 and with O2 having a high capacity and resilient core network in place, this will be essential for maintaining a high level of service to customers as data traffic rockets.

Ofcom Release New Mobile Consumer Help Guide

Ofcom have published a new guide called Consumer Focus and the Communications Consumer Panel which has been designed to help consumers get the most out of their mobile deal and to save money.

The guide provides helpful tips on what information you should know from a provider before buying, such as whether there are any additional costs, the length of contract, details on upgrades and network coverage.

The full guide can be found [here](#).

BT Pressurise Ofcom for Access to Virgin's Network

BT has demanded that Virgin Media opens its network of underground pipes to rivals. The giant telecoms group wants to use Virgin's network in its plans to upgrade its infrastructure known as 21CN and will put pressure on Ofcom to allow it access if needs be.

BT intends to connect five million people to its superfast broadband network by spring next year. BT is investing £1.5 billion in the first phase of the upgrade to the country's telecoms infrastructure, under which ten million homes will be connected to superfast broadband services by 2012.

Neil Berkett, Virgin Media's chief executive, has stated that Virgin have spent billions of pounds investing in its network and reiterated that Ofcom has previously said that there is no mandate for Virgin to open its ducts. Virgin are hoping to test a 100Mbps service by the end of the year.



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