Ericsson shows first live GPRS phone in first end-to-end live GPRS network demo

In an industry first, Ericsson demonstrates a live end-to-end live GPRS network, complete with WAP applications over GPRS and a first prototype GPRS phone.

The Ericsson GPRS (General Packet Radio Service) phone used for the demonstrations at the GSM World Congress in Cannes, is the first fully working prototype in the industry to be shown in a live end-to-end GPRS network.

GPRS is a common step for GSM and TDMA to handle higher data speeds and to transition to 3G. It makes very efficient use of available radio spectrum, and users can get access to more bandwidth. GPRS opens the door to completely new applications in a mobile environment. The Ericsson demonstration now takes the Ericsson GPRS technology a step further to show how these services can benefit users.

The GPRS phone used for the demonstrations is a fully working prototype, its exterior design being based on the Ericsson R320 GSM WAP-phone. Inside the prototype phone, there is breakthrough technology, which handles both GPRS and GSM. Ericsson will launch pre-commercial GPRS phones toward the end of this year and expects commercial volumes during first quarter 2001.

Commercial products will not look like the prototype and will incorporate a range of sophisticated technologies, which together with GPRS will enable a broad spectrum of both communication and information functionalities.

Ericsson is demonstrating WAP over GPRS using its MC218 WAP-compatible terminal, which is connected to the GPRS prototype phone. The applications are running on a portable PC. The PC is connected to the Ericsson GPRS prototype phone via an infrared connection. The live end-to-end GPRS network includes radio network and infrastructure, user interfaces, billing systems and network management.

GPRS is an ideal bearer for WAP as it is dedicated to and especially designed for data communications. The introduction of WAP over GPRS is a significant development towards the true mobile Internet.

Two of the applications on show are Microsoft Chat and a Lotto System. Chat allows participants using a GPRS mobile phone to converse using text, or cartoon characters representing themselves. Lotto enables users to select lottery numbers using a graphical interface on the Ericsson GPRS prototype phone, and submit them to a Lotto server. Other applications being demonstrated over the live Ericsson GPRS network include Web browsing, e-mail and FTP file transfer.

Ericsson has already taken a leadership role with its open, multi-vendor GPRS system, holding some 50 percent of the GPRS market, as measured by operator's subscriber base. Ericsson is already delivering GPRS systems to 45 leading operators, spanning three continents.

Ericsson is the leading provider in the new telecoms world, with communications solutions that combine telecom and datacom technologies with freedom of mobility for the user. With more than 100,000 employees in 140 countries, Ericsson simplifies communications for its customers – network operators, service providers, enterprises and consumers – the world over.

Please visit Ericsson's Press Room at: http://www.ericsson.se/pressroom

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

Johan Wiklund, Ericsson Corporate Communications
Phone: +46 70 560 0134; E-mail: johan.wiklund@lme.ericsson.se

Per Nordlöf, Vice President GSM Systems, Packet Switching Systems
Phone: + 46 70 555 7735; E-mail: per.nordlöf@era.ericsson.se

Jan Ahrenbring, Vice President Marketing and Communications
Ericsson Mobile Communications AB
Phone: +46 70 590 9900

Bo Albertson, PR & Information Manager
Ericsson Mobile Communications AB
Phone: + 46 8 764 1388 or +46 70 510 0992

Additional information
Ericsson's GPRS system will enable operators to offer mobile Internet and other IP-based applications at speeds ten times as fast as current mobile networks that are optimized for voice applications.

Ericsson combines its core strengths in datacom and mobility in its open GPRS systems. The company's GPRS system is an open standard solution, enabling multi-operator and vendor interoperability.

As well as total GPRS solutions for network infrastructure, Ericsson also provides operators with service solutions that cover every aspect of GPRS, from strategic consultancy and scenario planing to application development.

GPRS is an enhancement of core networks that introduces packet data. GPRS and EDGE (Enhanced Data rates for Global Evolution) is a common step for TDMA and GSM operators to handle higher data speeds and offer 3G packet capabilities.

Ericsson was also the first vendor to announce an agreement with a TDMA operator, Rogers Cantel, to provide a platform enabling GPRS.

In an industry initiative to help accelerate commercial availability of GPRS applications, Ericsson has founded the GPRS Applications Alliance (GAA), a partnership initiative that provides the GPRS applications industry access to a wide number of GPRS application development tools and GPRS expertise. More than 100 companies are today members of the GAA.