

# IT WEEK

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## Gates imparts wisdom

Microsoft founder Bill Gates was in London this month to give business leaders the benefit of his experience of handling rapid change **25**

## Google's Android basks in MWC spotlight

DAVID NEAL AND DANIEL ROBINSON

Technology that could power tomorrow's handsets was on show at last week's Mobile World Congress (MWC) in Barcelona, including Google's Android platform, and a programmable radio that can be configured for different network standards.

Chip makers including ARM and Texas Instruments showed off prototype hardware running Google's Android phone platform, which is based on Linux and provides email and other applications. LG Electronics also reiterated its plans to release an Android-based device as early as this year.

Google last week released an update of the Android SDK, promising a simpler user interface and improved location-based tools. Bloggers said the additions took the technology much closer to production quality.

However, BKI Media mobile search analyst Benn Roberts was scathing about the prospect of Android devices.

"Android lets Google get onto mobiles via developers and widgets, and use third-party services to trigger deals, but this is not the best approach for mobile

or advertising," Roberts said. "Yahoo has focused on mobile search and advertising and done it right. Google got over confident in mobile too quickly and it will feel the pinch."

While Nokia announced at the show that it would integrate Google search within its own mobile search platform, T-Mobile revealed it was dropping Google in favour of Yahoo. T-Mobile and Yahoo will optimise and further develop mobile services including instant messaging and email.

"Nokia's own attempts to do search have failed and it is checking out the competitors," Roberts explained. "T-Mobile is saying that the mobile internet should be considered in its own right and Yahoo is the best at providing it."

Elsewhere, the GSM Association announced that in future it will welcome operators of Long-term Evolution (LTE) networks into the association. LTE is an upgrade path for the GSM/UMTS technology that underpins GSM and 3G



Nokia and T-Mobile both announced new mobile search partnerships in Barcelona

networks, and is due to launch commercially in 2009. It holds out the promise of download speeds up to 100Mbit/s and upload speeds up to 50Mbit/s.

BitWave Semiconductor launched the world's first programmable transceiver for handsets. The BW1102 Software-reconfigurable chip is software-configurable across all channels in the frequency bands between 700MHz and 3.8GHz, the firm said, enabling it to operate multiple wireless protocols such as GSM, GPRS, HSDPA, 802.11b/g, and LTE in future.

"Handset designers can now provide one model that works on any network, at any frequency, using any protocol, anywhere," said BitWave chief Michael Farese. Vendors can future-proof designs by upgrading them in the field to support additional standards, he added.

Linux was the focus of many other announcements at the event. Trolltech released version 4.3 of its Qtopia Phone Edition platform for Linux-based phones, which adds support for touch-based user interfaces and a new Qtopia Sync Agent that can synchronise with Microsoft Outlook.

DataViz also unveiled a Linux version of its Documents To Go software that enables users to open and view Word, Excel and PowerPoint email attachments on handsets. The tool is shipping with MontaVista's Mobilinux 5.0 phone platform.

Sony Ericsson used the MWC show to unveil its first phone running Microsoft's Windows Mobile software. The Xperia X1 has a 3in VGA display that slides to one side to reveal a full qwerty keyboard and supports HSDPA and Wi-Fi communications.

## Mobile WiMax services edge closer

Mobile broadband could gain new options later this year, as the Mobile WiMax Acceleration Group (M-Wag) last week unveiled a pilot rollout in Maidstone, Kent, while Intel announced investment in WiMax pioneer Freedom4.

M-Wag, a group of communications and media vendors, said its mobile WiMax trial will go live in April. The Maidstone pilot will cover about 7.5sq km, and will use three base stations operating in the 2.5GHz radio band.

The aim is to deliver data uplink speeds of

2Mbit/s and downlink data transfer speeds of 10Mbit/s, with greater reach than offered by other wireless systems.

Also last week, Intel announced a "substantial investment" in WiMax pioneer Freedom4. The chip giant's UK managing director, Graham Palmer, said Intel's mobile WiMax system is due this summer, but will be primarily focused on the US.

"We see this as an add-in capability that will come into the UK market as radio spectrum becomes available," Palmer added.

WiMax cannot be rolled out across the UK until a spectrum band has been allocated. Ofcom last week confirmed that the auction for mobile WiMax spectrum will take place this summer.

→ Mobile data reality check, Leader, p5



Palmer: Intel is making an UK spectrum availability

## THIS WEEK

### NEWS

Instant messaging provider Process One will today launch two packages designed to enable greater collaboration among employees and offer companies new ways of engaging with customers **5**

### CLIENT

If past Microsoft OS launches are anything to go by, the release of Windows Vista SP1 should lead to a significant upswing in adoption. But many experts believe this time history is unlikely to repeat itself **21**



### MANAGEMENT

Spurred on by recent UK data losses at public sector agencies, bodies representing UK and Indian software and services companies are calling for outsourcing providers to improve their security measures **25**

### ONLINE

Novell has acquired open-source collaboration specialist SiteScape, in a bid to improve its document management and Web 2.0 capabilities → [www.theweek.co.uk/2219645](http://www.theweek.co.uk/2219645)

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