

Mobile Commerce: Core Business Technology and Intelligent Support

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Mobile commerce is an emerging field in its early stages, but there are a number of ideas of what is going to constitute the key success factors for the actors in the global m-commerce arena. This arena is already growing diversified with a number of application areas, which are growing in different directions and at different paces. We understand already that B2B, B2E, B2C and P2P will produce rather different types of applications, because the propositions for value-added products and services are quite different. This is probably one of the reasons why the hunt for the “mobile commerce killer applications” has been in vain so far.

The applications in B2B and B2E share some value propositions. The key motivation for inter-business applications is to improve the effectiveness and the productivity of the interaction between corporations, companies, business units, etc. and through this interaction process to find new forms of joint/shared products and services, and to find new technological solutions for the corresponding production processes with the mobile technologies. In the B2E applications effectiveness and productivity are worked on for both groups/teams and individuals and mobile systems solutions are focused on (i) boosting mobile worker productivity, (ii) simplifying administrative processes, and (iii) building competitive advantage through simpler and more effective team-work. It is expected that the support technology for these applications will be built around intelligent or smart technologies.

The B2C applications, which appear to have been the basis for much of the growth forecasts and the mobile hype, have quite different value propositions. For consumers/ end-users the value created with mobile technology is focused on permanently changing the routines of everyday life through personalisation, localisation, timeliness, smart user support for tedious, advanced or complex tasks, which are part of everyday life. The mobile technology enhances these value propositions by providing an adaptive and smart support environment, which “knows” where the end-users are, where the products & services are, where the support functions are in relation to both end-users and products & services, and which offer person and location sensitive, adaptive user interfaces. The P2P applications are harder to categorize as they will probably be extensions and enhancements of B2C applications, which are created through mobile tribe behaviour,

i.e. groups of end-users get together to create applications deemed to lack relevance by traditional producers of mobile products & services.

There are a number of general features, which quite probably will be visible as drivers of the use of mobile technologies, i.e. they will be necessary but not sufficient driving forces for the mobile breakthrough (which now is visible in Europe). The work force is becoming increasingly mobile and distributed, and the mobile support technology makes sense. Speed is becoming more and more essential as the markets show increasing dynamics, which makes routines requiring access to static information systems during office hours increasingly obsolete. A mobile work force requires smart support functions to keep them updated and to guide problem-solving and decision-making – the alternative is to have them guessing and trying to remember facts and problem solving methods.

As this discussion shows, the issues at the core of the m-commerce are to develop value-added content, business models and technologies, which can create key mobile features and serve as drivers of the growing market demand. The papers accepted to the mini-track are:

1. Dealing with Uncertainties in Building Scenarios for the Development of Mobile Services by Elisabeth van der Kar and Patrick van der Duin
2. The Future of Mobile Technology: Findings from a European Delphi Study by Hans Lehmann, Jurgen Kuhn and Franz Lehner
3. Wireless Communications and the Development of Enterprise Mobility: A Framework and Examples by Stuart J. Barnes
4. Building a Portfolio of Location-Based Services for Mobile Network Operators by David Tilson, Ryan Baxter and Kalle Lyytinen
5. Assessing the Business Impact of Location Based Services by Bharat Rao and Louis Minakakis
6. Mobile Shopping Site Selection: The Consumers' Viewpoint by Jen-Her Wu, Yu-Min Wang, Jau-Wen Wang and Wei-Chun Tai