



Orange Accelerates the Roll-out of Mobile HD Voice in Europe

BARCELONA, February 14 /PRNewswire/ --

- Following the World's First Commercial Launch by Orange of a Mobile High-definition (HD) Voice Service in Moldova in Sept 2009, Orange Will Also Launch Mobile HD Voice in France, Luxembourg and Spain in Addition to the UK and Belgium in 2010
- The Service Will Deliver a Significantly Improved Quality of Voice and Sound That Will Enable Orange to Transform the Mobile Experience for its Customers
- Three Month Customer Trial to Run from Spring in the UK

Orange is today ramping up its planned roll-out of mobile HD voice services in Europe with the addition of France, Spain and Luxembourg to its 2010 roadmap. Mobile HD voice is the second critical strand in Orange's HD voice strategy, building on from the highly successful delivery of HD voice services for VOIP in 2006. Following technological developments, Orange has confirmed that its UK customer trial of mobile HD voice will start from Spring and run for three months.

In September 2009, Orange became the world's first operator to commercially launch a mobile HD voice service in Moldova, announcing plans to bring mobile HD voice to the UK and Belgium in 2010. In addition to mobile HD voice, Orange was also the first operator to launch HD over VOIP, first in France and shortly to be rolled out to Poland and Spain.

Olaf Swantee, senior executive vice president for Orange's global mobile business, said: "As far as Orange is concerned, voice is not just a commodity. With mobile HD voice, we are delivering true customer innovation - one that will genuinely enrich and transform our customers' lives. By being the first to innovate and deliver a new mobile voice experience, we provide a compelling and differentiated proposition which sets Orange apart. High-definition voice is the future standard for mobile communication."

Customers using mobile HD voice services will benefit from the best possible sound quality, including a much richer and natural sound that is capable of conveying emotion significantly better than an ordinary handset. It helps people hear better in noisy environments, providing clearer voice conversations and creating a much closer feeling of proximity between both parties, almost as if callers are actually in the same room.

Orange plans to rapidly extend the range of HD voice-compatible mobile handsets across Europe. Pricing and handsets will be announced at the time of launch locally.

HD Voice uses the AMR-WB (Adaptive Multi-Rate Wideband) speech codec. This provides excellent audio quality due to a wider speech bandwidth of 50-7000 Hz compared to the current narrowband speech codec of 300-3400 Hz. The AMR-WB delivers significantly enhanced sound quality whilst utilising the same network resources.

Voice services are expected to continue to be the largest revenue generator worldwide, accounting for 69% revenues on a global basis and for no less than 60% in any region in 2014 (Ovum).

For more information: <http://www.orange.com>, <http://www.francetelecom.com>, <http://www.orange-business.com>

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