

# ENABLING SMARTER

Anu Shah



## Keith Dyer:

Anu, many readers might not be aware of IMI Mobile's capabilities, as you have not been visibly active in the European market for all that long. Yet you have been helping operators across the world build and expand their service offerings for years. How would you position the company within the European market?

## Anu Shah:

We are Service Creation partners for mobile operators, to help them create, launch and then grow the penetration, usage and scale of their service portfolio. We have a modular series of services, from music and messaging to advertising and social media, all built within our open-API approach. This means we can we can integrate our own, commercial services to interoperate with each other, and with third party service environments. Added to that is the important fact that we can offer these either as an

**AN OPEN, FLEXIBLE SERVICE ENVIRONMENT WILL HELP OPERATORS CREATE AND PROVIDE BETTER CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES, ANU SHAH, HEAD OF IMI MOBILE EUROPE, TELLS KEITH DYER.**

in-house trusted partner, or on a managed service basis.

Our view is that as operators face up to the challenges of creativity, innovation, and maintaining high quality customer experiences, they need to be able to create combinations of services across their portfolio. At the moment, very often they can't do that. Or they can only do it with a great deal of integration expenditure and resource. This then means that the resulting service cannot afford to fail, as it has had too much invested in it. Our vision is that operators need to be able to move flexibly and quickly to create new combinations of services. They may choose to launch a music service, integrate this with social media and then add advertising and be able to test these propositions with consumers quickly.

## Keith Dyer:

It's certainly a view that operators have heard before. Of course, we have seen investment in service delivery platforms, in opening up OSS architectures in a number of different ways, and the move to cloud-based applications. All of

these have been intended to enable operators to act more creatively and be more agile. Why do you think IMI Mobile's approach meets the demands you have outlined?

## Anu Shah:

In a sense we have been lucky because we originally set out with that flexibility in our approach – and we have been able to evolve with that. It's really something that is in our technical and cultural DNA.

In terms of technology our products have all been built with an open architecture, but really we are trying to sell a solution or a service, rather than focus on technology. Operators come aboard with us because they see how we make a great effort to integrate with their existing services and billing systems and help them build new services.

We also make it simple for them to achieve a cross-service view of their subscriber and network data.

Operators are faced with a world where they are accused of being dumb pipes. Actually I think that's an unfair accusation and very far from the truth. But it is difficult for them to collect and analyse their data in one place. So that's where our subscriber modules, combined with our open API approach, helps, because it can collect data centrally from all services.

This approach, opening up and integrating core elements to a central subscriber

module, means that

operators can

move faster

and

innovate

in time

with

their

customer

demands,

rather

than always

be reacting.

They can move

from being

network-centric entities

to customer-centric businesses.



# SERVICE CREATION

## Keith Dyer:

And it's an approach you have demonstrated real-world success with, rather than just as a vision?

## Anu Shah

We have. Although Europe is a new opportunity for us, we are now proceeding to grow organically and inorganically in this market, and have a strong pedigree globally.

We have put together a proposition that's proven to be scalable and innovative in India, Latin America and through Asia. Last year, for example, we signed with the MTN Group for 21 territories, providing their entire CMS infrastructure and we went from scratch to a live service in South Africa in just a few months, driven by the immovable deadline of the Football World Cup!

That's the reason why Sequoia Capital, a recent major investor in our business, sees us as one of a few companies with the proven global deployments and core technology backbone that prove we are able to work as a service creation partner for Tier One operators.

## Keith Dyer:

And in line with this theme of enabling operator innovation, you have recently launched another service module to your portfolio.

## Anu Shah:

We have recently launched our DaVinci Social service. DaVinci

Social helps operators to build an enhanced phone book for their users, bringing together contacts, events, social interactions and updates all within a rich phone book environment.

The aim is to enable operators to offer a competitive social service without the associated high operational costs of designing a service from the ground up. Of course, it will also bring integration with our other services such as music and advertising, and offer extensions into other third party elements to ensure the service can keep evolving at



DaVinci Social is the latest addition to IMImobile's modular service portfolio.



Operators face the challenge of creating new combinations of services in an innovative fashion.

pace.

## Keith Dyer:

And you see the phone book as being a critical point of contact, and differentiation, for operators?

## Anu Shah:

I think it really is the spring board not just to the communications experience, such as messaging and voice, but to other services that we and others bring, such as music, entertainment, and advertising.

Operators have found it challenging to make their services hold together in an

integrated fashion from an end user point of view. With V360, Vodafone is one that has made the right move in saying, "We want to use this connected address book as the hub for all our other activities." It means you can always be embedded in the daily activity of a consumer. That lends itself to developing an advertising proposition around certain events, say. It means operators can start offering a service beyond just mobile services to become a full digital service provider.

I am positive about this opportunity for operators because they have three or four key assets they need to fully exploit – phone book, consumer data, billing relationships and their brand. So far they have struggled to do this from a consumer perspective but providing a good service around the phonebook could enable them to utilise all of their assets. There are of course question marks over whether Vodafone have executed their strategy correctly but the objective is clear. With solutions like ours that are designed to create a more connected user experience, collecting and analysing consumer data becomes an integral part of designing, testing and launching new services quickly. Historically this data while available, has been difficult to discover and even more difficult to use for service creation.

**A provider like us - that has experience growing up in aggressive markets, that has a business model that is based on sharing the upside and growth as a partner, and has the technical flexibility to power a range of services - is ideally placed to help operators meet that challenge.**

Really, the connected address book should just be part of a service provider's core offer. It's still early days but these are important first steps into the market.

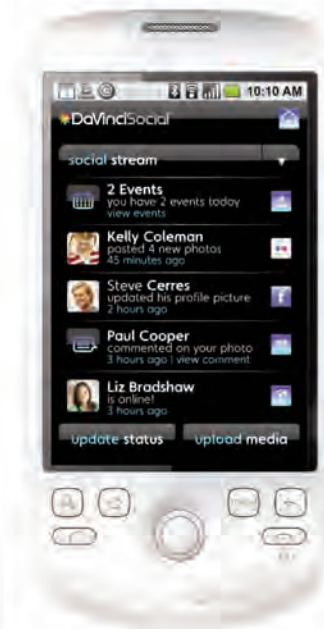
### Keith Dyer:

So far from providing point solutions - "here's a music platform, here's an ad server" - you're talking about helping operators utilise their core assets more effectively based on actual subscriber usage data from the services you and others provide.

### Anu Shah:

Yes. Our objective is to provide specific solutions that are flexible enough to be part of any existing or evolving service environment. Operators have to be thinking about innovation and how they can build that into their business processes. Our solution is stronger than any point solution.

As I said, the advantage is we can integrate easily, providing a high level of technology re-use. Even within just one service, say music, an operator may have a provider for his real tones service, one for ring back tones, and a full track download service as well. Yet it's all music- and there's a high chance that a user would respond well to a combined offer, or be prompted to use one service whilst engaging with another. We offer all of these services or provide just one of them as part of a solution to weave together all



The connected address book can act as a "springboard" to other services.

of the components and data so that an operator can add real value to the consumer experience.

Our whole aim is to increase revenues and consumer uptake of existing and new services. Even a slight tweak to the CRM around a service may lift that service penetration from 2 to 2.2%. But that's a 10% rise in itself. That's what I meant when I talked about us regarding ourselves as an in-sourced partner focused on revenue generation, rather than just an outsourced services provider. It's also an advantage we have gained from working in some of the world's most competitive markets such as

India. Sometimes working in that environment drives operators to achieve higher levels of innovation and marketing skills.

### Keith Dyer:

So you think that operators do have the tools they need to fight back against the loyalty consumers may feel to other providers.

### Anu Shah:

Yes. Sure, they need to be innovative, focus quickly, and provide a great customer experience. And let's be honest, how many operator services can you hold up and say that it's a fantastic customer experience? But if the customer experience is great then customers will follow that. And operators have the added advantage of being trusted far more with customers' data than many other providers. So that is where partners like us come into play.

For example, one area where we can help with this focus on innovation is that we are working with operators, developers and other third parties to create a fully managed environment in which

new services can be developed and tested at speed and rolled out across networks.

### Keith Dyer:

As we can see from the focus on application stores and social mobile platforms, such as V360, it seems operators are aware that they don't have long to put all this together.

### Anu Shah:

Certainly they don't have that much time. They have to make their choice today. It could be that in five years' time there may only be one or two operators per territory that own their own network: everyone else is on a shared network and focusing on delivering consumer services. In which case they need to be quick about leveraging the non-network centric assets that they do have.

A provider like us - that has experience growing up in aggressive markets, that has a business model that is based on sharing the upside and growth as a partner, and has the technical flexibility to power a range of services- is ideally placed to help operators meet that challenge.

## IMMOBILE: SERVICE CREATION PARTNERS

- Over 40 operator partners
- Over 50 VAS service platforms worldwide
- Over 350 content provider partnerships
- Over 450 employees globally
- Global offices and datacentres