



Customer Success Story:

Telefónica Ecuador

RealNetworks' expertise opens up the world of mobile services

In a difficult economic climate, mobile operators around the world are being forced to make the most of their legacy infrastructure investments to remain competitive. By continuing to roll out 3G networks, innovative players are finding a way to differentiate themselves through broadband based services that offer a range of entertainment choice whenever and wherever consumers want it.

Telefónica Ecuador chose digital entertainment services company RealNetworks as its key technology partner, implementing RealNetworks' Helix Mobile Internet Gateway, to expand the range of services available to its mobile subscribers.

Customer Objective

To maximize service quality and diversity across its business, Telefónica Ecuador needed to match the capabilities of its new 3G network with those of the new wave of handsets on the market. In order to meet the demands of today's mobile user, Telefónica Ecuador recognized the critical importance of being able to provide mobile Web access to its subscribers, allowing them to take full advantage of their devices and making a wealth of audio and video content available to them for the first time.

The experience of Telefónica Ecuador's BlackBerry® smartphone users provided the initial window into the rapidly growing demand for Web access and provided the impetus for Telefónica Ecuador to find a solution that could scale sufficiently to the demand from all its subscribers for a wider range of services.

Looking to move away from the WAP experience that Telefónica Ecuador had offered traditionally, it was also important to minimize the costs associated with this transition. As such, Telefónica Ecuador's secondary objective was to scale the current platform and to integrate the required functionality into the network without removing or replacing legacy technology.

Safe in the knowledge that RealNetworks could offer the support and scalability required, Telefónica Ecuador saw a clear way forward to achieve its next generation mobile objectives.

Real's Helix Solution

Knowing that the implementation of its 3G network would lead to a natural demand for internet and web based content such as mobile TV, Telefónica Ecuador wanted to be confident in the robustness of the solution that it selected. Importantly, the operator also wanted a certain guarantee of trust with its chosen technology partner, fulfilled by its long-standing relationship with Exomi (a RealNetworks company) for traditional WAP service delivery.

Real's Helix Mobile Internet Gateway allowed Telefónica Ecuador to approach the provision of Web and mobile TV access in a modular fashion avoiding the need for the operator to acquire a complete platform at considerable cost. Using Helix, Telefónica Ecuador was instead able to build onto its existing platform to deliver the increased scalability it required.

Customer profile:

Telefónica operates in 25 countries and has a global customer base of 260 million. Telefónica's growth strategy is focused on the markets in which it has a strong foothold: Spain, Europe and Latin America.

In Latin America, Telefonica provides communication services to more than 153 million subscribers. Telefónica Ecuador operates across continental Ecuador and the Galapagos Islands. Its customers are both pre-paid and on contract.



Taking the old platform as a starting point, the WAP capabilities of the network have been transformed making Web access and the delivery of other streamed services possible. The Helix Mobile Internet Gateway provided a future-proof solution for mobile internet traffic, allowing users to browse and grab content from the network and the Web. The solution designed for Telefónica Ecuador included Helix Proxy which lays the foundation for the delivery of streamed audio and video content direct to the handset.

Being able to use its existing platform, Telefónica Ecuador was also able to use its current licenses to open up the mobile internet to subscribers, leading to recognizable savings on project costs. Telefónica Ecuador is still able to use its WAP licenses, acquired some years ago, for its Web and streaming projects meaning that the evolution of the platform remains as smooth and uncomplicated as possible.

Telefónica Ecuador is also in the process of evaluating some other streaming options from Real to map onto consumer trends in mobile internet and video as they unfold.

Benefits

- Ability to offer next-generation services
- Strong platform for growth
- Increased customer satisfaction and loyalty

By adding the ability to stream a variety of content, Telefónica Ecuador has opened up the next generation of mobile services to its subscribers and has paved the way for increased demand for mobile TV and video. Users can access the mobile internet wherever they are and can consume audio and video content in a variety of ways such as from online social media sites such as YouTube.

“The need to meet rapidly changing consumer expectations and to simultaneously derive maximum value from our 3G network investment is crucial to our bottom line. We believe that we have selected the best technology partner to achieve both of these goals and to grow our business in the longer term through a range of next-generation mobile services.”

Carlos Vasconez, Planning Engineer,
Telefónica Ecuador.

This deployment has given Telefónica Ecuador a strong foundation for future revenue-generating services. With the Helix Platform, the foundation for a range of future services including live streamed TV has been laid. Operators worldwide are realizing that mobile TV can offer ROI, not least because it represents significant cost savings over broadcast technology. Today Real is already delivering concurrent live video streams, including live sporting events, to thousands of viewers with excellent results.

As live TV events become more popular, Telefónica Ecuador now has a built-in capacity to place additional services such as mobile video and TV at the forefront of a combined service strategy. Using elements of the Helix Platform Telefónica Ecuador could exercise complete control over content delivery, reporting and billing for its own mobile TV service.

Moving from a WAP-driven experience to the full functionality of the mobile internet, Telefónica Ecuador’s subscribers will feel tangible benefits from the decision to implement Helix technology. Telefónica Ecuador expects that the quality and breadth of services that it can now offer will play a significant part in sustaining and growing the business into the future.

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