



Nokia Snaps Up Novarra; oneweb To Rule Them All?

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When I connected with **Randy Cavaiani, Novarra Vice President, Marketing**, last week at CTIA I had a hunch that something big was in the pipeline. For one, he was in a great mood. Second, he used the opportunity to walk me through Novarra's big-picture vision of the mobile Internet, a topic we have discussed several times and at key milestones in the company's evolution.

I've followed Novarra from the start and watched it cleverly and quietly align its server/micro-browser capabilities to focus on a much broader agenda. It's all about providing operators, handset makers and Internet brands the technology and know-how to create new services and revenue streams (with the help of in-network intelligence, mobile Internet click-stream analytics and context information from Novarra).

So, how does this fit in with Nokia?

We know from the release that Nokia has acquired Novarra because it plans to use the company's mobile browser and services platform "to deliver enhanced Internet experiences on Nokia mobile devices." Specifically, Novarra's Internet services technology delivered on the Nokia Series 40. By way of background, last year Nokia shipped several hundred million Series 40 devices worldwide.

Nokia clearly has its eye on the prize: **bringing a rich mobile Web experience to mass-market phones everywhere on the planet**, particularly in those markets (Asia, India and Africa) where smartphones are not the norm and Apple & Co are not synonymous with cool. Translated: It's only the developed markets that have been hitting too hard on the Apple kool-aid...

As Niklas Savander, Executive Vice President, Services, Nokia, pointed out in a press statement: "Connecting the next billion consumers to the Internet will happen primarily on mobile devices and delivering an optimized Internet experience on our devices is core to our mission."

FRAGMENTATION AND OPTIMIZATION

Reams have been written about the impact of the Apple iPhone and other such devices on content production and content creation. Yes, we should be excited about the avalanche of apps and content, but we must also cope with the hard reality that **one Web presence may not be enough.**

In fact, it may be that we are witnessing **the emergence of a new Internet** – one focused on delivering us an awesome experience across a plethora of touchscreen devices from dozens of handset makers.

Indeed, the outcome of recent platform and device innovation is what Forrester's **Josh Bernoff** calls the "Splinternet." As Bernoff [points out in his blog](#): "The whole framework of the Web (and Web marketing) is based around the idea that everything is in a compatible format. Any browser, any computer, any connection, you see is pretty much the same thing. Now with iPhones, Androids, Kindles, Tablets, and TVs connecting to the Web, that's not true."

In my view, **Christian Lindholm, Managing Partner, Fjord**, was spot-on with his observation during [our panel at M-Days](#) in Munich that "**the age of divergence**" is upon us. Sure, the Internet used to be the one place that connected everything and where all things digital were findable, consumable and accessible. Not anymore.

Now we have fixed, mobile and touchscreen Internets – to name a few. (At this juncture, I should mention that I am [collaborating with Taptu](#) to connect with executives and influencers to map out the real impact of touchscreen devices on mobile advertising, mobile commerce, mobile content (publishing and access), user experience – the works! As close friend and colleague **Tomi Ahonen** pointed out on his [must-read blog](#) (February 3, 2010): "[Taptu] understands that a **touchscreen enabled mobile Web experience will be distinct and different from ...metaphors common to the 6th mass media Web.**" More about this when we formally release the results.)

NOVARRA'S ONEWEB CONCEPT

How can we cope with a multitude of "Webs", platforms, devices and content types?

The jury is out on that one, but Novarra recently launched **a solution that potentially delivers a rich and unified Internet experience to users on their mobile phones – feature phones and smartphones – everywhere on the planet.**

This is the aim of Novarra's oneweb service, a service designed from the ground up to provide a personalized web experience with thousands of apps. As Randy put it in a [recent interview with bnetTV](#), the vision of oneweb is to remove fragmentation hurdles facing the mobile ecosystem by **seamlessly enabling web, apps and widgets across a broad range of handset platforms.**



Put simply, oneweb draws on Novarra’s corporate DNA (a wide array of tools, technologies and know-how to make **content and services accessible on ALL mobile devices**) to unify the Web on our phones. In practice oneweb provides fast, always-on access to daily-use favorite activities (and apps), including social networking, streaming video, webmail, news and information via a single unified dashboard. The user experience: access to apps, widgets and services (dynamically updated, by the way).

But it’s not just about convenient one-click access to our favorite apps and stuff. Operators, service providers and OEMs also have a seat at the table since they can brand/customize the apps on the dashboard. In addition, the cloud-based solution reduces network congestion significantly, providing faster browsing speeds and – ultimately – a better user experience. **What’s more, Novarra is committed to expanding oneweb as a similar platform-agnostic solution to meet the needs of the mobile developer community.**

MY TAKEAWAY:

Nokia has snapped up **much more than Novarra**. It has bought into the concept behind oneweb, an ambitious blueprint that potentially lays the groundwork for an important **business ecosystem**. It’s not only about gaining an edge in mobile Web browsers and/or playing catch-up with Apple and other smartphone makers in the developed markets (U.S. & Europe, for example). Nope. This is about collecting the capabilities to offer an alternative. Nokia’s strategy is sharply focused on covering ALL the bases (**services aggregation, streaming video, widgets and relevant mobile advertising schemes – all provided by Novarra**) to deliver (literally) ONE WEB to the billions with mass-market phones in emerging markets for whom the mobile screen is the ONLY screen.