

Video Termination Services

ABSTRACT

This document will explain new services around 3G Video calling. The document is written for people in marketing, customer support, management and information technology. It covers services that will improve user experience and are aimed at increasing revenues for mobile operators.

3G VIDEO CALLING

Over the past years the number of 3G phones and 3G subscribers has increases rapidly. In many mobile networks the number of 3G users is still growing, typically upgrading 2G only subscribers. Many 3G users enjoy the high speed internet connection provided by the UMTS / HSPA networks. The growth of usage of this over the last year has been enormous.

One of the 3G services is video calling, and this has been part of the 3G/UMTS standard from the start. The great advantage of this standard is that it is supported by all 3G handsets across the world. This gives very few problems with video calling on different brands of mobile phones. Video calling services like voting, gaming, entertainment and mobile marketing are now becoming more common and are starting the widespread usage of 3G video calling.



CALLING SOMEONE

For a successful video call, both parties need 3G service and coverage and 3G phones (most have video calling functionality). Making a video call is relatively easy on most phones, it is just a matter of clicking on a different button when starting the call. Receiving a video call is exactly the same as receiving a voice call. After accepting the call, many phones will ask if it is okay to send video information back.

It is not possible to switch from voice to a video call when the call has been set up. It is also not possible to switch from video to voice after the call is initiated.

When someone makes a video call to another user and the call is not successful, many reasons can be the cause. To name the issues with the receiving party:

1. Not a 3G phone or a 3G phone without video calling services (for example the 3G iPhone)
2. Not a 3G SIM card or a SIM card that is not allowed on 3G (Vodafone allows 2G SIM cards on 3G networks)
3. Not allowed to make video calls (3G Prepaid subscriptions from t-mobile and KPN in the Netherlands do not allow video calls)
4. The phone does not have 3G coverage
5. The phone is turned off

6. The user rejects the incoming call
7. The user is on another call
8. The user does not answer the call

When a video call is made to another user, and one of the reasons above is valid, the call will be disconnected. Normally the phone does not provide a reason for the disconnection, and the network does not provide an alternative.

Video calling is still in its infancy. Some users have tried video calling, but finding another person with the right phone and 3G coverage was not always easy in the past years. And because there is no reason given to the user why his call was not successful and the user was not given an alternative, interest in video calling never reached a certain critical mass yet.

MAKING SUCCESSFUL CALLS

One of the reasons Comsys has identified as not helping the usage of video calling and the very profitable minutes these calls can provide is the lack of call completion services. For voice calls operators have a whole range of call completion services, including information messages, voicemail, SMS notification, etc. Part of the success of mobile telephony is related to the high success rate of reaching the other party, either directly or through voicemail.

The simple idea is to provide similar services to users during video calls. Users should be rewarded for trying video calling instead of seemingly being punished. When trying a video call and the other party cannot be reached, an alternative or at least an information message should be provided. If this is presented by a well known artist or television personality, many people will appreciate this.

Part of the service provided by the operator should also be the possibility to leave a video message. There are always moments when accepting a call is not possible (technically or socially). Retrieving the video at a later moment is guaranteed to be a success!

The possibility of leaving video messages for users is an excellent addition to the marketing tools available to operators. Because video calls are charged, this can also generate additional revenue.

WHAT IS NEEDED?

Video Completion services can be seen as a product as well as a hosted service. During startup or testing of services a hosting solution may be good solution. Later on a dedicated system will generate the highest Return on Investment. Comsys will be happy to discuss the possibilities and present a business case.