

Briefs: Virgin, Zi hail mobile search trial result

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Preliminary results of field trials show an increase in usage on mobile phones equipped with Zi Corporation's new Qix search engine.

Zi and Virgin Mobile reported Tuesday that Virgin's Nokia 6630 equipped with Qix saw an overall increase in usage for a variety of functions, including voice calls, Internet and messaging.

Virgin Mobile's marketing director, Graeme Hutchinson, said Qix made it easier for consumers to use Internet functions that are often daunting with current technology.

"Our customers tell us that Qix means they get much more out of their phone -- no more delving through menus -- they can easily find what they are looking for on their phone simply and quickly," Hutchinson said.

Qix was described as an "intuitive" fast-search solution that employs an interactive memory to keep frequently used functions within easy reach of consumers, reducing the number of key presses needed and making it easier to use.

The companies plan to extend the trials into a second, larger test in 2006.

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