

Firm offers downloadable mobile upgrades

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Some Vodafone 3G customers in Japan will soon be able to upgrade their phones without setting foot in a service center, thanks to an agreement with Red Bend.

The Framingham, Mass.-based Red Bend Software announced this week that the Sharp Corporation will use its "firmware over the air" software to download upgrades to the Vodafone 904SH handset offered by Vodafone K.K. in Japan, according to a Red Bend statement.

"This broad deployment in a major market illustrates the value of Red Bend's (firmware over the air) client technology," said Red Bend Chief Executive Officer Yoram Salinger via the statement.

"Because of its proven speed and reliability, our solution has been selected by most of the world's leading handset manufacturers," Salinger continued.

Red Bend said in the statement that the handset companies can deliver "extremely compact" updates, "allowing them to be delivered and easily integrated onto the handset more rapidly and cost-effectively with 100 percent accuracy."

Red Bend's other clients include Sony Ericsson and LG.

In addition to the Massachusetts headquarters, the company has offices in Israel, China, Japan and the United Kingdom. Investors include Carmel Ventures, Greylock Partners, Pitango Venture Capital, Poalim

Ventures and Infinity, according to a report in the Israeli business newspaper Globes.

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