

Asia telecom majors form roaming alliance

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Seven of Asia's largest wireless providers formed an alliance Monday to provide better roaming services in their respective territories.

The end result should be better international roaming and seamless corporate mobile-phone services, including value-added video and data, for business travelers.

Jan Nilsson, president of Far EasTone Telecommunications (FET) in Taiwan, said business travelers in the Asia-Pacific region are an important customer group and "we would like to make those customers feel at home when they use their mobile services in the alliance partners' networks."

The group calls itself Asia-Pacific Mobile Alliance and along with FET, includes Hutchinson's Hong Kong and India units; South Korea's KT Fretel; NTT DoCoMo of Japan; Starhub of Singapore and PT Indosat in Indonesia.

The alliance is also expected to speed up introduction of third-generation mobile networks and technology in the Asia-Pacific region. It will actively promote roaming efficiencies on its own GSM/GPRS or W-CDMA networks and will launch roaming via HSDPA networks once the market is ready starting in the latter half of 2006.

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