

W. Europe mobile to earn \$249B in 2011

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A technology research firm's new report predicts 6 percent annual growth in the Western European cellular market in the next five years, to \$249 billion.

Since the European market is already close to saturation, the added revenue will come from rich-media services including music and television, according to the report entitled, "The Western European Mobile Market: trends and forecasts 2006-2011," published by Analysys, "the global advisers on telecom, IT and media."

"We are now seeing a rapid acceleration in the number of full-track downloads and in streamed TV usage," the report's author, Windsor Holden, said via an Analysys statement.

"Subscribers are becoming more familiar and comfortable accessing both on- and off-portal content; as mobile broadband becomes more prevalent this growth is likely to continue," Holden continued.

Holden also predicted that 3G adoption would accelerate. "Operators are beginning to take advantage of 3G's greater capacity to offer lower-cost bundles, thereby accelerating fixed-mobile substitution."

The report found that active cellular penetration in Western Europe was 96.2 percent and predicted this figure would grow to 108.8 percent by 2011, the statement said. The jump to more cell phones than people will be "driven by operators' efforts to penetrate under-served customer segments (such as older demographics), as well as by increased

ownership of multiple SIM cards and more machine-to-machine communication," the statement said.

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