

# European cell-phone use seen rising more

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About 6 percent of all mobile phones in six major European countries in 2005 were third-generation handsets, a research group said Monday.

British information-technology researchers Analysys reported that there were 22.4 million subscribers to 3G phones by the end of last year, but the rate is expected to reach 16 percent this year and 29 percent by the end of 2007. The survey reported on markets in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden and Britain.

"We are now seeing a rapid acceleration in the number of full-track downloads and in streamed TV usage," said Windsor Holden.

"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." He added that the longer-term prospects for voice revenues are also encouraging.

Meanwhile, active mobile penetration in Western Europe was 96.2 percent at the end of 2005 and is forecast to grow to 108.8 percent by 2011, with many people owning more than one handset, driven by operators' efforts to penetrate under-served customer segments such as older demographics, as well as by increased ownership of telecommunications cards and more machine-to-machine communication.

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