

Korean U-Cities aiming for the future

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The U-City project from Korea Telecom is set to create five new digitally enhanced urban sites, the Korea Times reports.

The Times said the country's largest telecommunications company plans to begin the project with five new U-cities, each enhanced technologically through a series of sensors connected through an advanced network.

The company is promoting the name "digital homo sapiens" for the new urban center residents, and Korea Telecom has plans to increase the numbers of U-cities after the five are built, the Times said.

The "U" stands for "ubiquitous," the Times said, and residents will be able to use cell phones to control appliances, bridges will have sensors to check their condition and medical patients will have pressure-sensitive floors to detect a fall and electronically call for help.

"U-Cities are kind of a mega-trend in tandem with the ongoing digital revolution. They will accommodate digital literates or 'digital homo sapiens,'" the company's Vice-President Yun Hae-jong said.

"Revolutionizing traffic, healthcare, education and other lifestyles, the U-City project will create huge benefits for both people and related industries in Korea," he added.

The company predicts that when the number of U-cities reaches 12 in 2010, they would generate between \$15 billion to \$22 billion in company

revenues, the Times said.

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