

New US-Spanish firm says targets rich mobile ad market

April 16 2014



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Spanish telecoms firm Telefonica and US investment giant Blackstone launched a mobile telephone advertising venture on Wednesday, challenging internet giants such as Google and Facebook in a multi-billion-dollar market.

Telefonica and Blackstone's GSO Capital Partners division have formed Axonix, a London-based advertising company which will buy and sell "space" for [targeted advertising](#) via mobile phones, the Spanish firm said.

Telefonica said it was the first telecom firm to compete in the lucrative mobile online advertising market dominated by major internet companies such as Google, Facebook and Twitter.

"We expect to become one of the leading global technology platforms in the mobile programmatic advertising industry," said Telefonica digital executive Stephen Shurrock in the statement.

"This is the first mobile advertising exchange platform owned and powered by a mobile operator," the statement added.

It "propels Telefonica into the fast-growing real-time advertising space alongside only a small selection of other major technology companies".

Axonix will focus its activities on the United States, Europe and Latin America.

Its [mobile advertising](#) service is powered by technology from the firm MobClix which GSO Capital Partners bought last year.

The technology enables advertisers to target their advertising more effectively by gathering anonymous consumer profile data about Telefonica's users.

Telefonica cited a study by marketing consultancy ZenithOptimedia which found that spending on advertising via mobile telephones would rise from \$13.4 billion (9.7 billion euros) or 2.7 percent of the global total in 2013 to \$45 billion or 7.6 percent by 2016.

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