

## PRESS RELEASE

### EBITDA margins under pressure in Japan as competition heats up, according to new mobile operator market research report by IEMR

**Vancouver, October 16, 2008 – IE Market Research Corp. (IEMR)**, the Canadian-based provider of market intelligence services, announced today the release of its 4Q08 Japan Mobile Operator Forecast.

“Despite high and growing data ARPU in the Japanese market (now 38.8% of service revenue), service revenue growth in Japan continues to decline,” said Koichi Miyazawa, Principal Research Associate at IEMR. Service revenues have deteriorated to -5.9% YoY in 2Q08, down from -3.3% in 1Q08 and -2% growth in 4Q07. “The decline in service revenue reflects mainly a decline in revenue per minute achieved by Japanese operators. Industry-wide voice revenue per minute declined by -16.8% in 2Q08, double the declines experienced in 1Q08,” said Mr. Miyazawa.

“There are a number of things going well in Japan’s Mobile Operator space. Data ARPU continued to grow strongly in 2Q08, which to us is remarkable, considering that Japan already leads the world on this metric,” said Nizar Assanie, Vice President of Research at IEMR. “Japan also is a country with one of the lowest churn rates in the world, and its operators have shown a remarkable tendency to margin expansion, which in 2Q08 increased by 470 bps industry-wide,” said Mr. Assanie.

IEMR’s Japan Mobile Operator Forecast covers up to 65 financial and operational metrics on five wireless operators. Notable highlights of the 4Q08 Japan Mobile Operator Forecast include:

- Japan remains the country with the lowest churn rate (0.7% in 2Q08), down 40 bps across all operators. DoCoMo is the world leader in terms of its churn rate, which was only 0.5% in 2Q08.
- Japanese operators showed solid margin expansion in 2Q08, averaging 470bps. Both DoCoMo and Softbank saw strong margin gains.
- While ARPU declined across operators, both the ARPU decline and margin expansion reflect the introduction of new billing plans. Mobile operators in Japan have increased handset prices and lowered monthly basic charges on two-year contracts.
- Market shares (by subscribers) of major operators will remain roughly the same over the next several years, although we expect Softbank to pick up some market share losses by NTT DoCoMo. Our model is forecasting that NTT DoCoMo, KDDI (au), Softbank Mobile, and WILLCOM (PHS) will have approximately 48.9%, 28.6%, 18.0% and 4.6% of the subscriber market in Japan, respectively.

- Consumers in Japan will continue to see the highest levels of charges in East Asia. Our model continues to forecast ARPU levels of US\$ 50.05 per user per month in 2010. Within Japan's operator space, KDDI (au) will receive the highest ARPU of US\$ 54.77 in 2010.

- The operator that will enjoy the highest EBITDA margin in 2010 is NTT DoCoMo at 40.6%. On the other hand, KDDI (au) and Softbank Mobile will have much lower EBITDA margins of 27.6% and 28.7% respectively.

IEMR's Global Mobile Operator Forecast covers up to 65 operational metrics of 213 mobile operators in 50+ countries, making up 80% of the world's population. Forecasts are based on our proprietary, country-specific forecasting models. These models deploy multiple regression analysis and cross-impact matrices that estimate relationships between subscriber data, technology use and deployment data, overall economic and demographic changes expected in a particular country; and relate these to company operational and financial metrics.

Companies Covered in this Country Mobile Operator Forecast

NTT DoCoMo

KDDI

Softbank Mobile

Charts 1-68 Results & Forecasts for: CY04-CY10

Chart 1: PREPAID AND POSTPAID SUBSCRIBERS

Chart 2: SUBSCRIBER GROWTH (YoY)

Chart 3: SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR

Chart 4: SUBSCRIBER GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 5: NET SUBSCRIBER ADDS BY OPERATOR

Chart 6: NET SUBSCRIBER ADDS GROWTH BY OPERATOR

Chart 7: MONTHLY CHURN BY OPERATOR

Chart 8: POST-PAID SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR

Chart 9: POST-PAID SUBSCRIBER GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 10: PREPAID/WHOLESALE SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR \*\*

Chart 11: PREPAID/WHOLESALE SUBSCRIBER GROWTH BY OPERATOR \*\*

Chart 12: POST-PAID % OF TOTAL SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR

Chart 13: PREPAID/WHOLESALE % OF TOTAL SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR \*\*

Chart 14: POST-PAID NET ADDS BY OPERATOR

Chart 15: POST-PAID ADDS GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 16: PREPAID/WHOLESALE NET ADDS BY OPERATOR

Chart 17: PREPAID/WHOLESALE ADDS GROWTH BY OPERATOR

Chart 18: GROSS ADDITIONS BY OPERATOR

Chart 19: GROSS ADDITIONS GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 20: MONTHLY ARPU BY OPERATOR

Chart 21: MONTHLY ARPU GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY %)

Chart 22: DATA % OF SERVICE REVENUES BY OPERATOR

- Chart 23: MONTHLY DATA ARPU BY OPERATOR
- Chart 24: DATA ARPU GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)
- Chart 25: MONTHLY VOICE ARPU BY OPERATOR
- Chart 26: VOICE ARPU GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)
- Chart 27: VOICE REVENUE PER MINUTE BY OPERATOR \*\*\*
- Chart 28: VOICE REVENUE PER MINUTE GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY) \*\*\*
- Chart 29: MOU PER SUBSCRIBER BY OPERATOR (MINUTES/MONTH) \*\*\*
- Chart 30: MOU/SUBSCRIBER GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY %) \*\*\*
- Chart 31: AGGREGATE MOU BY OPERATOR \*\*\*
- Chart 32: AGGREGATE MOU GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY %) \*\*\*
- Chart 33: SHARE OF TOTAL SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR
- Chart 34: HHI INDEX BY SUBSCRIBER SHARE
- Chart 35: SHARE OF NET ADDS BY OPERATOR
- Chart 36: SHARE OF POST-PAID NET ADDS BY OPERATOR
- Chart 37: SHARE OF PREPAID/WHOLESALE NET ADDS BY OPERATOR \*\*
- Chart 38: SHARE OF GROSS ADDS BY OPERATOR
- Chart 39: SHARE OF SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 40: HHI INDEX BY SERVICE REVENUE SHARE
- Chart 41: YoY CHANGE IN REVENUE SHARE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 42: REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR (REPORTING CURRENCY)
- Chart 43: SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR (REPORTING CURRENCY)
- Chart 44: EBITDA BY OPERATOR (REPORTING CURRENCY)
- Chart 45: CAPEX BY OPERATOR (REPORTING CURRENCY)
- Chart 46: SERVICE REVENUE GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)
- Chart 47: EBITDA GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)
- Chart 48: EBITDA/REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 49: EBITDA/SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 50: EBITDA/INCREMENTAL SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 51: CAPEX/REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 52: CAPEX/SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 53: (EBITDA-CAPEX)/REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 54: EBITDA MARGIN EXPANSION/CONTRACTION BY OPERATOR
- Chart 55: REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 56: ARPU BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 57: DATA ARPU BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 58: VOICE REV/MINUTE BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 59: SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 60: EBITDA BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 61: CAPEX BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 62: REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR (EUR)
- Chart 63: ARPU BY OPERATOR (EUR)
- Chart 64: DATA ARPU BY OPERATOR (EUR)
- Chart 65: VOICE REVENUE/MINUTE BY OPERATOR (EUR)
- Chart 66: SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR (EUR)

Chart 67: EBITDA BY OPERATOR (EUR)

Chart 68: CAPEX BY OPERATOR (EUR)

Charts 69-136 Quarterly Results for: Jun 05 - Jun 08

Chart 69: PREPAID AND POSTPAID SUBSCRIBERS

Chart 70: SUBSCRIBER GROWTH (YoY)

Chart 71: SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR

Chart 72: SUBSCRIBER GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 73: NET SUBSCRIBER ADDS BY OPERATOR

Chart 74: NET SUBSCRIBER ADDS GROWTH BY OPERATOR

Chart 75: MONTHLY CHURN BY OPERATOR

Chart 76: POST-PAID SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR

Chart 77: POST-PAID SUBSCRIBER GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 78: PREPAID/WHOLESALE SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR

Chart 79: PREPAID/WHOLESALE SUBSCRIBER GROWTH BY OPERATOR

Chart 80: POST-PAID % OF TOTAL SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR

Chart 81: PREPAID/WHOLESALE % OF TOTAL SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR

Chart 82: POST-PAID NET ADDS BY OPERATOR

Chart 83: POST-PAID ADDS GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 84: PREPAID/WHOLESALE NET ADDS BY OPERATOR

Chart 85: PREPAID/WHOLESALE ADDS GROWTH BY OPERATOR

Chart 86: GROSS ADDITIONS BY OPERATOR

Chart 87: GROSS ADDITIONS GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 88: MONTHLY ARPU BY OPERATOR

Chart 89: MONTHLY ARPU GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY %)

Chart 90: DATA % OF SERVICE REVENUES BY OPERATOR

Chart 91: MONTHLY DATA ARPU BY OPERATOR

Chart 92: DATA ARPU GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 93: MONTHLY VOICE ARPU BY OPERATOR

Chart 94: VOICE ARPU GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 95: VOICE REVENUE PER MINUTE BY OPERATOR

Chart 96: VOICE REVENUE PER MINUTE GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)

Chart 97: MOU PER SUBSCRIBER BY OPERATOR (MINUTES/MONTH)

Chart 98: MOU/SUBSCRIBER GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY %)

Chart 99: AGGREGATE MOU BY OPERATOR

Chart 100: AGGREGATE MOU GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY %)

Chart 101: SHARE OF TOTAL SUBSCRIBERS BY OPERATOR

Chart 102: HHI INDEX BY SUBSCRIBER SHARE

Chart 103: SHARE OF NET ADDS BY OPERATOR

Chart 104: SHARE OF POST-PAID NET ADDS BY OPERATOR

Chart 105: SHARE OF PREPAID/WHOLESALE NET ADDS BY OPERATOR \*

Chart 106: SHARE OF GROSS ADDS BY OPERATOR

Chart 107: SHARE SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR

- Chart 108: HHI INDEX BY SERVICE REVENUE SHARE
- Chart 109: YoY CHANGE IN REVENUE SHARE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 110: REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR (REPORTING CURRENCY)
- Chart 111: SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR (REPORTING CURRENCY)
- Chart 112: EBITDA BY OPERATOR (REPORTING CURRENCY)
- Chart 113: CAPEX BY OPERATOR (REPORTING CURRENCY)
- Chart 114: SERVICE REVENUE GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)
- Chart 115: EBITDA GROWTH BY OPERATOR (YoY)
- Chart 116: EBITDA/REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 117: EBITDA/SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 118: EBITDA/INCREMENTAL SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 119: CAPEX/REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 120: CAPEX/SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 121: (EBITDA-CAPEX)/REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR
- Chart 122: EBITDA MARGIN EXPANSION/CONTRACTION BY OPERATOR
- Chart 123: REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 124: ARPU BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 125: DATA ARPU BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 126: VOICE REV/MINUTE BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 127: SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 128: EBITDA BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 129: CAPEX BY OPERATOR (USD)
- Chart 130: REPORTED REVENUE BY OPERATOR (EUR)
- Chart 131: ARPU BY OPERATOR (EUR)
- Chart 132: DATA ARPU BY OPERATOR (EUR)
- Chart 133: VOICE REVENUE/MINUTE BY OPERATOR (EUR)
- Chart 134: SERVICE REVENUE BY OPERATOR (EUR)
- Chart 135: EBITDA BY OPERATOR (EUR)
- Chart 136: CAPEX BY OPERATOR (EUR)

\* Complete data series not available for this country forecast

\*\* Forecast (CY08 – CY10) available only for Softbank Mobile

\*\*\* Available only for NTT DoCoMo and KDDI (au)

For more information, visit our website at:

<http://www.iemarketresearch.com/Members/Reports/ViewReportDetail.aspx?RID=645&flag=1>  
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#### About IE Market Research Corp.:

IE Market Research Corp. ("IEMR") is a market intelligence and business strategy consulting firm. Our goal is to assist our clients build value and compete in international markets. We build value in four sectors: wireless telecommunications, health care, finance, and government. We build value for our clients by undertaking international brand perception surveys, consumer satisfaction surveys, distributor/channel partner selection and due diligence, market size and opportunity assessments, competitor strategy assessments, government regulatory analysis, and public opinion surveys.

We offer a variety of research products including **CONSUMEREADY™** and **EXPORTREADY™**. **CONSUMEREADY™** provides detailed demographic information on brand strengths and marketing strategies that are crucial to know when competing in international markets. **EXPORTREADY™** is based on our on-going business strategy research that allows us to establish strengths and weaknesses of firms in a wide variety of areas, ranging from intellectual property portfolios to strengths of marketing strategies to quality of engineering. These results are highlighted in our **EXPORTREADY™** publications and form a valuable tool for firms wanting to strategize their market entry options in international markets.

Our corporate values are: Top-Quality Service to Clients, Commitment to see the Client Succeed, Excellence and Integrity in Research, Transparency and Respect toward our Employees. These core values drive all of our research and every client engagement.

For more information, visit our web-site: [www.iemarketresearch.com](http://www.iemarketresearch.com)



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