

**Dow Jones Interview: Buongiorno Mobile Ad Network Targets Emerging Mkts**

By Giada Zampano

Italian mobile media and technology company Buongiorno SpA will target emerging markets like South Africa and Russia with its new B!Mobile advertising network, set to be launched Wednesday, as it looks to take advantage of the growth in wireless marketing.

"Using a next-generation technology platform, B!mobile will be able to realize sophisticated, targeted mobile advertising campaigns and will allow publishers a constant control of the real return on the investment made," said Lara Gagliardi, B!Mobile's managing director, in an interview with Dow Jones Newswires Tuesday.

Buongiorno's new advertising network will allow the company to work with both publishers looking to capitalize on their traffic on mobile Internet and applications on devices like Apple Inc.'s iPhone, and advertisers that want to invest in efficient mobile communication campaigns.

Marketers, struggling to capture consumers' attention, are turning to mobile advertising, a growth market that is attracting an increasing share of leading brands' ad spending and estimated to be worth up to EUR12 billion by 2011, according to Buongiorno, and 10 billion users are forecast to have mobile Internet by 2020. B!Mobile serves standard-format advertising banners to mobile phones and advertisers can use its platform to analyze traffic and assess how each campaign is performing, making changes as the need arises. It also provides targeted traffic to customers through opt-in campaigns, and on the iPhone can serve ads to users within applications like games and navigation tools.

"The launch of the iPhone has turned mobile advertising into a new communication tool, a new format that brands are now using to promote their products," Gagliardi said.

Apple upgraded its own mobile advertising platform in its latest iPhone software update, giving application developers the ability to display ads within applications, without users being taken off to a website. Apple serves and sells the ads, and developers receive 60% of the revenue.

That puts B!Mobile in direct competition with Apple's iAd platform, but the Italian company is betting on Buongiorno's expertise in targeting customers and managing campaign performance. B!Mobile makes money by sharing revenue from the advertising platform with the individual publisher and by charging a commission for its services.

Gagliardi said that, as a startup, B!mobile aims for "rapid growth."

"We're betting on specific markets -- like South Africa, Russia and Latin America -- where there is still a high penetration of old-generation phones, while smartphones are prevailing in Europe," Gagliardi said.

She said the new advertising platform will be able to manage both WAP, or Wireless Application Protocol-based traffic on older phones, while it can also work on browsers and applications on smartphones.

Buongiorno, which reported a 4% growth in second-quarter revenue to EUR67.7 million, operates throughout Europe, the U.S., Russia, India, South America, Mexico, the Middle East, Africa, and Australia. Over 90% of its sales come from outside Italy.