TD-SCDMA Will Dominate in China, but Elsewhere Faces Tough Going

TD-SCDMA is expected to be the dominant 3G technology in China, due to the Heavy-weight government support it receives. However there are no indications that 3G licenses will be issued by the end of 2007, and according to ABI Research analyst Hwai Lin Khor, &quotTD-SCDMA is likely to face an uphill battle outside of Mainland China, even in Hong Kong.&quot Chinaâ€™s TD-SCDMA ecosystem is ready. Both Chinese and international industry players are already showing off their multimode handsets with TDSCDMA/GSM/GPRS/EDGE interfaces. The deployed network infrastructure is already upgraded to an HSDPA-enhanced version. TD-SCDMAâ€™s intellectual property rights holder, Datang Mobile, is already working towards an evolution of TD-SCDMA that will eventually incorporate LTE. The evidence suggests that the current 3G delay is due to regulatory complications rather than technical ones.

ABI Research believes that the restructuring of the telecommunications industry will continue through Q1 2008. The first TD-SCDMA license will be issued at the end of the quarter. Initial TD-SCDMA services will be provided in the ten cities where China Mobile, China Telecom and China Netcom have deployed trial networks. The rest of the 3G licenses will be released six to nine months after TD-SCDMA. Hwai Lin Khor notes, &quotIf the price points of handsets and services are attractive, TD-SCDMA may not need to fear WCDMA in the domestic market.&quot

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