



OMNITEL VODAFONE: ROLLOUT OF GPRS FOR CONSUMERS. OMNIPLANET, PROVIDING MULTIMEDIA CONTENT, LAUNCHED.

**Milan July 20, 2001** - Omnitel Vodafone's GPRS for the consumer market is in the process of being launched. The service will be offered free to customers until October 22, thus giving a large number of people the chance to try out the new multimedia services, made available via the internet and in the form of WAP services, whilst on the move and at high speed.

At the same time, Omnitel has launched Omniplanet, the first example of multimedia content for customers on the move.

The new service package offers a foretaste of the new forms of access to content, which will be fully operational with 3G mobile telephony. Developed by Omnitel with the aim of researching the most innovative solutions and products available on the market, Omniplanet covers mobile messages and WAP, useful services and chat lines using text messages, offering a wide range of content capable of meeting the varied needs of Omnitel's over 16 million customers.

The rollout of GPRS for the consumer market is currently backed up by the arrival of new GPRS handsets, such as the Motorola Accompli A008, which are capable of fully exploiting the potential of packet data transmission, available over Omnitel's nation-wide GSM network for some time now. Omnitel's customers can finally enjoy the advantages of GPRS, with new possibilities for data transmission and multimedia services at speeds higher than those provided by GSM. Customers opting for GPRS transmission may also, via the "always on" function that allows permanent connection to a chosen source of information, benefit from lower costs. This is because charges are calculated on the basis of the effective quantity of data downloaded and not on connection time, without losing the concomitant possibility to make and receive calls.

The speed of GPRS transmission, which also depends on the availability of free channels on the network, is a function of the timeslots (transmission channels carrying calls and data) and the capacity of handsets to deal with the service. Each transmission timeslot can cope with around 12 Kbytes a second, allowing customers to reach a speed of approximately 50 Kbytes a second, when the handset uses 4 timeslots at the same time. The Accompli A008 Motorola handset, for example, can deal with 3 incoming timeslots and 1 outgoing.

Omnitplanet's new WAP service offers real-time information on a user's current account, on local restaurants, a list of bars and night-clubs and other useful information, as well as cultural and environmental news, details of exhibitions and summer concerts, and updates regarding sea conditions provided in collaboration with Goletta Verde.

With Omniplanet WAP it is possible to consult the Vizzavi Italia portal where, among other things, users can have access to real-time and delayed stock market services, e-mail, a route-finding service using maps, cinema programmes including details of film plots, interactive games, as well as being able to download logos and jingles and chat.

Omniplanet is not only WAP, however. It also offers a world of text messaging services with news flashes, mPlay for games and mVillage, Omnitel's first mobile community using text messages to chat.

In order to make access easier and more entertaining, Omniplanet WAP has created a Recommended Sites section, providing a list of sites periodically updated and selected by Omnitel. The list may be consulted via WAP or via the Internet from the home page, [www.omnitel.it](http://www.omnitel.it) from which it is possible to send details of a user's chosen sites to their WAP terminal providing ready access from their mobile phone. For those who wish to select links on their own, the Favourite Sites section enables users to organise and memorise their chosen sites according to their needs. In both cases the memorised sites can be called up by simply entering one of the two sections, even if using a different handset. Omniplanet WAP, in effect, memorises the URL, which can then be called up from any mobile phone.