

# Hot times coming for mobiles

Porn moviemakers are poised to cash in on a new wave of entertainment

THE film and porn industries jostled for space at the mobile phone industry's annual gathering in Barcelona last Tuesday, with both counting on the emergence of a new market for handheld video.

The Sundance Film Festival used the 3GSM event to unveil results of a project to showcase short films designed for mobile phones.

The Sundance initiative, launched last year with the backing of Hollywood actor Robert Redford, illustrates the close ties between the telecommunications and entertainment industries.

Mobile phones are seen as a vital new distribution channel for creative material.

"We hope that the Global Short Film project inspires filmmakers and artists to think outside the realm of traditional venues for cinema and experiment with mobile as a new avenue for their work," Sundance Festival programming director John Cooper says.

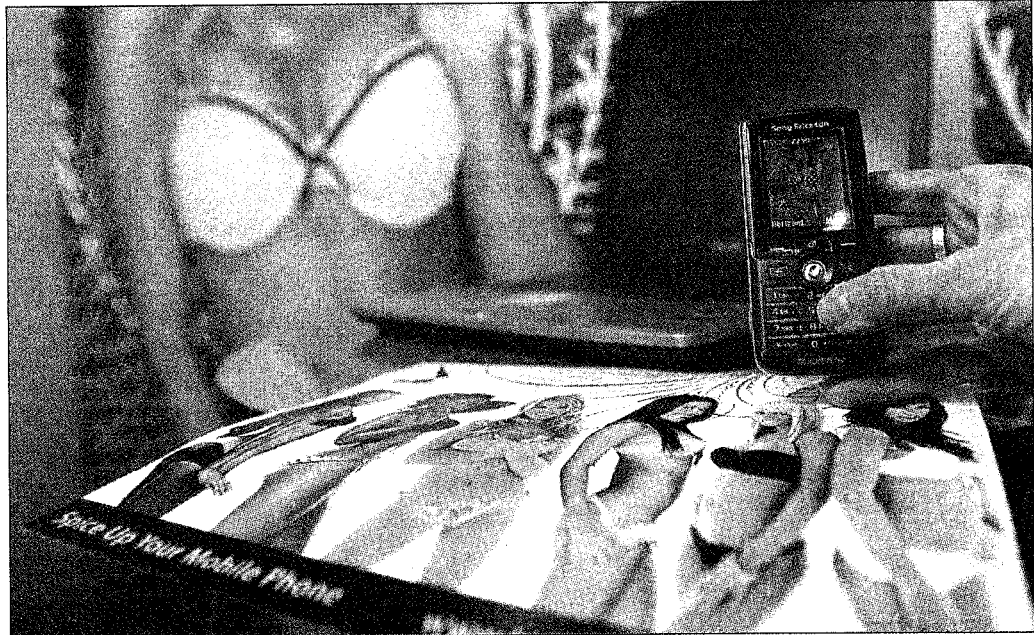
The six participating filmmakers in the Sundance project include the directors of the hit Toni Collette film *Little Miss Sunshine*, who produced a clip about slapstick comedy.

Selected mobile operators were expected to make the movies available from the end of the 3GSM conference last Thursday.

This year's conference, one of the world's biggest events for the wireless industry, has a dedicated exhibition space for entertainment companies for the first time, featuring Yahoo, MTV and Warner Music.

Alongside the established names, new mobile phone porn distributors were present in force, hoping to find new ways to expand their fledgling business to deliver erotic videos and pictures to consumers' handsets.

Adult content, as those in the industry call it, is seen as both a threat and an opportunity for the



**Wireless:** One of the many sex-theme stands at the 3GSM World Congress in Barcelona

Picture: AFP

operators of mobile phone networks.

Companies such as Vodafone of Britain, Verizon Wireless of the US and NTT DoCoMo of Japan want to encourage subscribers to make more than simple phone calls with their mobile phones.

Analysts say future revenue growth depends on phones becoming multifunction devices used for music, film, video games, internet access and watching television.

"The titillating content is definitely a driver," says Clinton Fayling of US porn distributor Brickhouse Mobile. "If the operators can get one more person to think about downloading a video, it helps the whole marketplace."

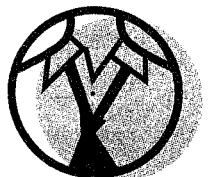
Sex sells, but network operators must also protect their public image. They are under pressure to protect

minors from inappropriate content, and face legal restrictions on pornographic content in many countries, including the US. "It's definitely in its infancy, but we're out of the pre-season and into the real game now," says Adi McAbain of another US distributor, Waat, referring to the adult content industry.

Fayling says bigger screens, larger phone memories and faster download speeds will increase demand for clips of between two and five minutes, which are typically chosen by clients. The danger of explicit content has, however, already put the distributors in the sights of European regulators.

The European Commission is looking at ways of protecting children.

AFP



DOWN  
TIME