# Progress update from the Mobile Codes Consortium

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Pressure Mounts for Industry Standards as Telecom Giants Join

Mobile Codes Consortium

Telecoms industry leaders Nokia, KPN and Telefónica O2 Europe have joined the Mobile Codes Consortium (MC2) – a cross-company group set up to promote unified standards in camera cell-phone barcode reading technology. They join the original founding companies Gavitec, Hewlett-Packard, NeoMedia Technologies and Publicis, to form MC2's steering group, which will be responsible for guiding the new organisation.

MC2's aim is to accelerate the adoption of code-reading technologies that will enable users of modern camera-phones pointed at a printed or displayed 2D barcode, to activate the phone to connect to a particular web-page, download coupons or other digital files, make a phone call or send a text message at the click of a button. Based on the widespread adoption of this technology in Japan and the growing popularity of camera-phones, the MC2 believes that this will have many important applications for both the marketing and public communications industries.
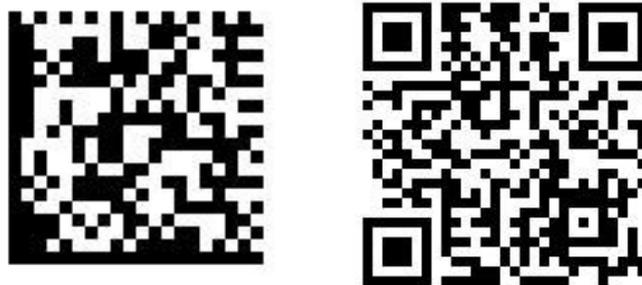
Examples – 2D Barcodes

"KPN is constantly exploring new innovative services for its customers and considers 2D Barcodes to be an important breakthrough development, offering consumers considerable advantages while also generating interesting business opportunities for participating companies", said Marcel Annaka, Business Incubator of KPN.

"This technology could make traditional advertising as interactive as the internet, both in terms of helping customers go straight to offers, and in terms of helping marketing agencies measure which ads are generating what levels of response," said Thomas Curwen, Planning Director at Publicis.

"The standards for wireless technology in Asia far exceed those in Europe and America. A unified consortium is the first step to worldwide advancement and NeoMedia is committed to such a partnership," said Chas Fritz, CEO of NeoMedia Technologies.

And Tim Kindberg, a senior researcher from HP Labs, who has been working with mobile code technologies, said: "MC2 believes that standards or recommendations are necessary to make the technology as popular and useful in the Europe and the US as it already is in Japan and South Korea, where market dominant companies set the standards."

Kindberg added: "If, on the other hand, the new technology is allowed to develop without standards, it will result in gradual fragmentation, with readers and barcodes not working consistently together. This could prevent the widespread adoption of the technology by both the public and the marketing industry and may confuse customers."

The newly created steering group will now focus on the best approach to enable MC2 to press for widely accepted industry standards. In the first instance, this will mean guiding it until it can join an existing mobile industry body, where the group will be better able to meet its objectives of recommending business models, technology standards, and methods of making mobile code technology useful to the public and to the marketing industry.

For more information visit www.mobilecodes.org