

# VAS players make most of iPhone experience

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INDIAN mobile phone application developers are trying to come up with unique applications for the iPhone 3G that was launched in the country on August 22. The likes of Bharti Telesoft, CanvasM, OnMobile, Mauj Mobile and ADAG's JumpGames have initiated work to develop business, entertainment and utility applications for Apple's iconic device.

The Value Added Services (VAS) players plan to bundle and sell these applications through both the operators and Apple's application platform.

The move has been triggered by the fact that iPhone subscribers are usually heavy users of data applications due to the gadget's features like the multi-touch interface, accelerometer, motion sensor and 3-D graphics.

"Since iPhone application development has started recently, there are scarcely any developers available worldwide. We are developing applications that are customised for Indian subscribers and newer ones for enabling financial transactions, mobile entertainment and games," said CanvasM Tech-

nologies CEO Jagdish Mitra.

CanvasM is in talks with major financial institutions from France for replicating the mobile commerce application suite for the iPhone. Applications are also aimed at adding newer functions. "Since iPhone doesn't support MMS, we are going to release a MMS client for the device by December. The operators too are planning to offer unique applications," said Bharti Telesoft CEO Manoranjan Mohapatra.

According to analysts, applications tend to improve the operator's margin and average revenue per user. "However, a lot of these are also available free in the US. Indian developers will have to also create such an eco-system in India," feels IDC Asia Pacific research manager, Aloysius Choong.

The major focus seems to be on games, since iPhone's technology supports them best. Gameloft has launched six iPhone games and plans to add eight more by December. "We will release two to three games for the iPhone. And once 3G arrives in India, the market for iPhone applications is expected to explode," said Jump Games, a Reliance ADAG venture's CEO Salil Bhargava.

Developers plan to monetize their iPhone applications by making them compatible with other phones. "An integral part of creating any mobile application is to render it compatible with most of the handsets," said Mauj Mobile CEO Manoj Dawane.

The companies also plan to sell such iPhone applications across the globe by developing them as per iPhone's developer program. "This will provide access to Apple's own application platform and allow us distribute applications across the world," OnMobile CTO Mouli Raman said.

And why not! "The revenue potential from Apple's application platform is much more. Around 70% share of

the end user price of the applications goes to the developer," said Gameloft's country manager (India) Ravi Kumar.

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