

POSTE ITALIANE AND VODAFONE ITALIA FOR VIRTUAL MOBILE OPERATOR, LAUNCH WITHIN THE YEAR

POSTE ITALIANE WILL OPERATE WITH ITS OWN SERVICES, RATES AND INDEPENDENT CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT. VODAFONE WILL PROVIDE ITS NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE.

GUINDANI: "ITALY ON A PAR WITH EUROPE ALSO ON VIRTUAL MARKET"

SARMI: "A REAL REVOLUTION IN SERVICES FOR CUSTOMERS".

Rome, 5th April 2007 – **Poste Italiane** and **Vodafone Italia** have signed partnership agreement which will open the doors to the launch of the virtual mobile operator on the Italian market. Thanks to the agreement, Vodafone will make its network infrastructure available for Poste Italiane, making the company the first postal group in the world to enter the mobile telephone services industry.

Vodafone Italia will guarantee Poste Italiane access to a complete range of services, from calls to text messaging and from roaming to data transfer. Vodafone has also created a platform which will allow integration between the two company's systems, leaving Poste Italiane full, independent customer management.

The service, which will be operational by the end of the year, will be fully managed by Poste Italiane, who can count on a wide, consolidated portfolio of customers and a widespread national presence of 14,000 post offices, over 40,000 desks and different sales channels, including the internet and call centres, to which mobile phones will be added shortly.

As a new mobile operator, Poste Italiane will use its own brand, will be the exclusive owner of its customer relations, will have its own prefix and will manage all its sales and customer service activities. Poste Italiane will be able to choose the services it offers, making completely independent decisions and with its own totally independent rates.

So, not just calls and text messages, but it will also be possible to pay bills, send telegrams, letters and registered mail, pay for transport services such as taxis,

buses and trains, send real postcards created using mms and find out the delivery status using the correspondence tracing service.

The entry of virtual mobile operators on the Italian market, planned for 2011 when the UMTS frequencies go to auction, will happen sooner, due to the Antitrust Authority intervention and the commitments taken on by Vodafone to open the wholesale market up as soon as possible for access to the mobile networks. The monitoring activities carried out by the Communications Guarantee Authorities on the access market have helped to speed up the opening of the industry.

“For mobile telecommunications, a new season for opening up and competition has begun”, declared the Managing Director of Vodafone Italia, Pietro Guindani, “Poste Italiane, the largest service group in Italy, with a widespread presence throughout the national territory and great innovation skills in services, is an ideal partner for the development of a virtual mobile operator. The Italian mobile telephone services market is already extremely competitive and with the entrance of Poste will be even more so. Our country is now on a par with all the most advanced European markets, also on the virtual markets. This will result in advantages for consumers above all”.

“In its new role as a virtual mobile operator”, added the Managing Director of the Group, Massimo Sarmi, “our company will be able to revolutionise the traditional services by introducing a variety of services with very new content and great convenience, with extreme ease of access and maximum transparency - two values that distinguish Poste Italiane and that the company will use for launching a new cutting edge in communications. For these reasons”, concluded Sarmi, “Poste Italiane has found the right partner in Vodafone, a leading company on the global market and because we share the same stance towards innovation and quality”.

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