Being Critical in Front of a Confident and Innovation-driven Mobile Industry

by Saverio Romeo, Frost & Sullivan

Saverio Romeo, Frost & Sullivan's Senior Industry Analyst, Mobile Communications - Europe, comments after World Mobile Congress in Barcelona…

"After a dreary first couple of days (meteorologically speaking), the sun finally came out on the third day of the Mobile World Congress in Barcelona. The world's mobile industry gathered under the Spanish winter sun and showed its healthy nature. Thoughts of the dark side of the economic crisis, which worried the industry last year, seemed to be disappeared.

The industry is showing a great deal of confidence in transforming our society into a mobile networked society and exploits all the business opportunities that this transformation brings. This optimism lies behind the vast ranges of devices and tablets launched during the Spanish event, the increasing attention on the Internet of Things, the continuous emphasis on applications and the cloud. All the speeches and the general mood of the conference have been a celebration of a new era in mobile communications, the era of the "big data" networked society.

However, allow me, to put a critical eye on all this optimism. Does all this evolution meet the need of people or is the mobile industry creating a world in which the people have to fit in one way or another?

I saw several videos about devices and applications. They all show people focusing their attentions on games, social networking sites, music; while walking into the street, while being in a car with their partners and kids, while being at parties. And the message is that you, the user, take control of your life. You do whatever you want. And the industry can give you more and more. You, the user, will be connected all the time. It does not matter where you are. It does not matter what device you have. You will be networked. Is this what users want? I did not see two individuals talking face to face using their mouths in these videos. Does this revolution meet the need of the social nature of human beings? Or will it alienate human beings?

It appears to me that the revolution envisaged, or at least part of it, could dissolve the social nature of human beings. The mobile industry should reflect on this. The mobile industry should evolve enabling individuals to empower their social nature."

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