

Taiwan consumers put phone navigation above mobile TV and music – Finding car park spaces rated as the most useful location-based service

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Highlights from the Canalys Taiwan consumer survey

At the Canalys Navigation Forum in Taipei this week there will be a lot of discussion by industry experts about the future of Taiwan's role in both the global and Asia-Pacific regional markets for satellite navigation solutions. But Taiwan's local market will also be considered, with the first presentation of results from a new survey of over 1,000 Taiwan consumers, which explores the local opportunity for GPS navigation and location-based services on mobile phones and portable navigation devices (PNDs).

“Taiwan is already at the heart of the worldwide GPS navigation market when it comes to manufacturing devices,” said Rachel Lashford, manager of Canalys APAC, “Understanding the impact that mobile phone solutions will have on the PND market globally is critical to these manufacturers, but understanding the local market is also important. Taiwan was the fourth largest market for GPS navigation solutions in the Asia Pacific region last year, and was the second fastest growing smart phone market in the region in Q1 2008.”

The Canalys survey found very high awareness of satellite navigation among Taiwanese consumers, with more than 80% being familiar with what satellite navigation could do. The idea of searching for directions on the web and printing them out was also well established, with 60% saying this was either the first or second most common method they used to plan a route when travelling to a new place for the first time.

“When asked which services they were interested in having on their mobile phone, whether for free or at a small ongoing cost, maps and navigation came top,” added Canalys analyst Daryl Chiam. “This was much more popular than having television or music on the phone, and these were some way ahead of services that are spreading out from use on the PC, such as web browsing, e-mail and instant messaging. We find that, although consumer mobile application preferences can vary quite a lot by country, having maps, location and navigation information is usually at, or very near, the top of the list.”

80% of the regular road users surveyed said they got stuck in traffic at least once per week, with a third saying it happened every day and a fifth saying it occurred every time they travelled. Despite this, only a quarter of those who got stuck in traffic jams would be prepared to pay a small monthly fee for a service that used traffic information to route them around the congestion.

“Very few say they have ‘no need’ for such a service, but there is also an expectation that, as technology improves, these services should be free,” Chiam continued. “Another service that consumers said they would find useful is having information about the locations of available car park spaces in the vicinity. Where consumers are not prepared to pay for location-based services, the location or advertiser may have to carry some of the cost in expectation of gaining that consumer’s business. Identifying what application functionality should be built in for free and what can command additional revenue will be important for vendors and service providers as location-based services and GPS devices evolve.”

The Canalys Navigation Forum takes place in Taipei on 15 May 2008. To attend, or for more information, please visit <http://taipei.canalysnavigationforum.com>.

About the survey

The Canalys consumer mobility survey for Taiwan was conducted in April 2008, in local language, using an online consumer panel. 1,001 adult mobile phone owners in Taiwan were surveyed. A results presentation will be made available to attendees of the Canalys Navigation Forum in Taipei on 15 May 2008. Results from a similar survey among consumers in India will be shown at the Canalys Navigation Forum in Bangalore on 13 May 2008. Canalys regularly designs, conducts and analyses surveys on consumer mobility in a number of countries.

About Canalys

Canalys specialises in delivering high quality market data, analysis and advice to the world’s leading technology vendors. It is recognised as a key provider of continuous advisory services and confidential custom projects for marketing managers and strategists within blue-chip IT, telecoms, navigation and consumer electronics companies. It has unrivalled expertise in routes to market for all kinds of high technology products and services in the consumer, SMB and large enterprise segments, and provides worldwide market data and trends analysis.

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