

NTT DoCoMo i-channel®

Highly engaged with the Adobe® Flash® mobile experience, Japanese mobile subscribers rapidly adopt innovative i-channel® push data service

NTT DoCoMo

www.nttdocomo.co.jp/english

Headquarters

Tokyo, Japan

Size

- 6,013 employees,
- Over 52 million cellular NTT DoCoMo subscribers
- Over 47 million i-mode® mobile internet customers
- Over 10 million i-channel® mobile internet users

Industry

Technology

Telecommunications

Results

- Delivered carrier-grade, highly scalable client/server solution
- Deployed compelling, easy-to-use, automatically updated data services
- Provided consistent, rich Flash experiences across i-channel® categories
- Yielded three to five times faster mobile authoring environment for content creation

Systems At A Glance

- Adobe FlashCast
- Adobe Flash Lite
- Adobe Flash Professional 8

The company

Japan's premier mobile communications company, NTT DoCoMo, provides 52 million subscribers with wireless voice and data communications. Since DoCoMo's 1999 introduction of the groundbreaking i-mode® service, and its 2003 launch of handsets enabled with Adobe® Flash Lite™, Japan has enjoyed tremendous growth in its mobile ecosystem.

NTT DoCoMo is building on this success with the Flash Platform by offering the i-channel® mobile service, powered by Adobe FlashCast™. The i-channel® service allows mobile subscribers to enjoy up-to-the-minute news, weather reports, sports scores, celebrity tidbits, and horoscopes anytime, anywhere. Subscribers are alerted to channel updates via telop text running across the standby screens of their mobile phones and can choose from a variety of optional channels provided by content providers. The number of subscribers to NTT DoCoMo i-channel® services surpassed 10 million within 18 months of launch—which represents over 20% of all NTT DoCoMo customers.

The challenge

As the world's first mobile operator to successfully introduce data services commercially to a broad customer base, NTT DoCoMo continuously seeks to increase the use of i-mode® and to generate new revenue. However, many mobile customers simply don't want to contend with browsing delays or click through multiple screens to find information. Although an astonishing 47 million people subscribe to i-mode®, a significant percentage of the subscribers are not technically savvy and therefore have not been able to fully engage with the fee-based data services.

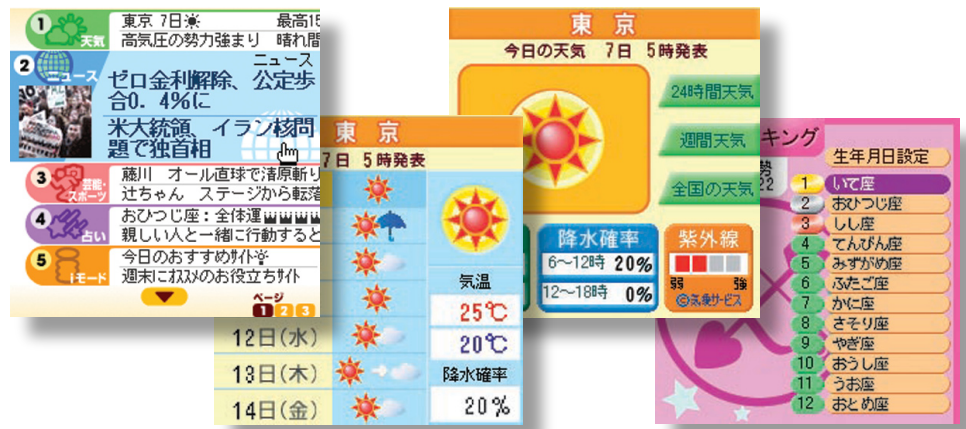
NTT DoCoMo aimed to bring these people onboard by introducing an all new type of data service delivered automatically to subscribers within a seamless, integrated framework for easy discovery and use. The company also wanted to leverage existing mobile content—tapping into thousands of i-mode® sites—as well as its own existing, high-end data network to deliver compelling data services that subscribers will embrace.

The solution

Using the Adobe FlashCast server system as the infrastructure for automatically pushing rich content, NTT DoCoMo eliminated the challenges inherent in using mobile devices to browse for information. By adopting FlashCast technology—the leading offline portal solution that delivers rich data services to mobile devices—as the infrastructure for i-channel®, NTT DoCoMo is combining the powerful Flash experience with the benefits of a push-based solution, and ultimately, delivering a much more user-friendly service than web-based browsing models can support.

Together, FlashCast, Flash Lite, and the Flash authoring tool provide a potent solution for creating and delivering engaging mobile experiences. FlashCast, a white label, client/server solution, automatically pushes content at predetermined intervals to subscribers via an operator-branded channel framework that facilitates finding and navigating mobile data services. Specifically developed

The FlashCast server system helps NTT DoCoMo automatically deliver the latest headlines and engaging content in news, weather, entertainment, sports, and horoscopes to mobile handsets. Together, FlashCast, Flash Lite, and Flash Professional 8 give NTT DoCoMo a potent solution for creating and delivering engaging mobile experiences to i-channel® subscribers.



“Partnering with Adobe, we’ve been able to develop a great service that showcases the creativity of thousands of NTT DoCoMo content developers while leveraging the power of our network infrastructure.”

Takeshi Natsuno
senior vice president,
NTT DoCoMo

Developer Information and Resources

The Adobe Mobile and Devices Developer Center provides comprehensive online resources and information on mobile development using the Flash Professional authoring tool, tips and tricks, and code samples at www.adobe.com/go/mobiledeveloper. Adobe also offers a free Standard-level Mobile Developer Program with access to CDK’s, discussion forums, early access software, and other benefits at www.adobe.com/go/mobileprogram.

For More Information

www.adobe.com/products/flash
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Adobe

Adobe Systems Incorporated
345 Park Avenue
San Jose, CA 95110-2704
USA
www.adobe.com

for mobile phones, Flash Lite enables rendering of rich content and browsing experiences. Adobe Flash Professional is the most advanced authoring environment for creating interactive websites, digital experiences, and mobile content. Now, with the newly released Adobe Creative Suite 3, designers and developers can take advantage of the many integrated mobile and Flash features including Adobe Device Central CS3 which makes it easier to design and develop compelling content for mobile phones in a truly integrated environment. A strong, global community of more than one million Flash developers and designers drive ongoing innovation and evolution.

The results

The i-channel® service has become an instant success for DoCoMo because it deploys information directly to subscribers, delivers a well-designed experience, and is successfully marketed via a subscription model. The service has 5 channels and adds approximately US \$1.31 per month on top of an i-mode® subscription fee. Notably, NTT DoCoMo has converted lower Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) subscribers to i-channel®, convincing them to access content by providing a more engaging experience. These subscribers are now driving an additional US \$3.25 per month to the operator. With i-channel®, NTT DoCoMo has created more engaging mobile experiences for subscribers, resulting in higher interaction and significantly increased ARPU.

In addition to hitting the ten million-subscriber milestone, NTT DoCoMo soon expects to further increase its numbers with the introduction of new FOMA series—DoCoMo’s 3G mobile communications service. To tap into this exciting groundswell, third-party content providers are using DoCoMo’s i-channel® for listing their own information services and product sales information—promoting everything from restaurants to ring tones—and charging subscribers for value-added content.

The explosive growth NTT DoCoMo has realized validates the strong customer demand for engaging mobile experiences. Flash Player compatible technology enables operators, OEMs, consumer handset manufacturers, and content providers to offer customizable user interfaces, while delivering more consistent consumer experiences across devices, operating systems, processors, and screen sizes. By leveraging the Flash ecosystem—which includes the Flash authoring tool, Flash Lite player runtime, and an established community of more than one million designers and developers—Flash Player compatible technology can reduce deployment costs and deliver content and interfaces three to five times faster than competing solutions.

“We have been astonished by the unprecedented success of i-channel®, which proves that consumers embrace data services when they are automatically delivered and presented in a compelling and interactive way,” says Takeshi Natsuno, senior vice president, NTT DoCoMo. “Partnering with Adobe, we’ve been able to develop a great service that showcases the creativity of thousands of NTT DoCoMo content developers while leveraging the power of our network infrastructure.”

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