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New iGR study forecasts 3G/4G mobile data traffic offloaded to WiFi networks to grow 16 times from 2011 to 2016

WiFi Offload will provide needed relief to congested Mobile Data Networks

AUSTIN, Texas, July 18th, 2012 – Once a pariah among wireless data networks, WiFi has emerged as a legitimate “other network” option for mobile operators. Granted, subscribers have to be within about 300 feet of a WiFi hotspot, or within a metro WiFi hotzone, but carriers are looking hard at WiFi Offload as a way to not only provide their customers with high-quality, reliable wireless data, but also to relieve some of the congestion on their 3G mobile data networks.

Today, the predominant form of WiFi Offload is user-driven. That is, an end user chooses a WiFi connection over his/her mobile broadband connection. This might be because of coverage or because they want a faster connection or because they are rationing usage to avoid hitting their monthly mobile data plan allowance.

iGR expects the other type of WiFi Offload – carrier-driven – to take greater hold. Carrier-driven offload involves the mobile operator actively switching 3G/4G traffic to a WiFi network. The main issue here is technology; operators have to have the right equipment both in the network and in handsets. Today, the necessary technology is just starting to emerge. By 2016, *iGR* expects it to be far more prevalent.

iGR's new report forecasts the amount of data traffic offloaded from 3G/4G mobile broadband networks to WiFi in two categories of WiFi usage: WiFi Offload and WiFi Only. WiFi Offload includes traffic that would flow over 3G/4G normally, but instead goes over WiFi by end user and/or carrier selection. *iGR* forecast a 16x growth in WiFi Offload from 2011 to 2016.

WiFi Only includes connections from devices such as tablets, laptops, ereaders, and handheld gaming consoles that do not have a 3G/4G modem and can therefore only connect over WiFi.

"iGR believes that WiFi data usage will grow strongly over the forecast period," said Iain Gillott, president and founder of iGR, a market research consultancy focused on the wireless and mobile industry. "Although WiFi Offload is a relatively small portion of the overall pie right now, it will grow to be about even with WiFi Only by 2016 in terms of gigabytes per month. For the mobile operators, WiFi offload can provide some relief for congested 3G and 4G networks."

iGR's new market research report, *U.S. WiFi Offload Traffic Forecast, 2011 – 2016: Relief for Mobile Data Networks?*, provides details on WiFi and forecasts two types of traffic, WiFi Only and WiFi Offload, through 2016.

The following key questions are addressed in the new research study:

- What is WiFi?
- Where is the WiFi standard headed?
- How is WiFi used?
- What is WiFi offload?
- What is the difference between user-driven WiFi offload and carrier-driven WiFi offload?
- What are some of the key standards efforts associated with WiFi offload?
- What the potential benefits associated with WiFi offload?
- What are the potential issues associated with WiFi offload?
- What is WiFi only? How is it commonly used?
- How much WiFi offload traffic is expected through 2016?
- How much WiFi only traffic is expected through 2016?
- How do the two different types of WiFi data traffic inter---relate?

The information in this report will be valuable for:

- Mobile operators, including those with WiFi networks
- Device OEMs
- Content providers and distributors
- Cable MSOs and those offering WiFi services
- Financial analysts and investors.

The new report can be purchased and downloaded directly from iGR's website at www.iGR-inc.com. Alternatively, contact Iain Gillott at (512) 263-5682 or at Iain@iGR-inc.com for additional details.

About iGR

iGR is a market strategy consultancy focused on the wireless and mobile communications industry. Founded by Iain Gillott, one of the wireless industry's leading analysts, in late 2000 as iGillottResearch, iGR is now entering its twelfth year of operation. iGR continuously researches emerging and existent technologies, technology industries, and consumer markets. We use our detailed research to offer a range of services to help companies improve their position in the marketplace, clearly define their future direction, and ultimately improve their bottom line.

iGR researches a range of wireless and mobile products and technologies, including: smartphones; tablets; mobile applications; bandwidth demand and use; small cell architectures; DAS; LTE; WiMAX; VoLTE; IMS; NFC; GSM/GPRS/UMTS/HSPA; CDMA 1x/EV-DO; iDEN; SIP; macro-, pico- and femtocells; mobile backhaul; WiFi and WiFi offload; and SIM and UICC.

A more complete profile of the company can be found at www.igr-inc.com.