

Commerce in wire-free world

If netwiring was the most happening thing a couple of years back, unwiring seems to be the prevailing trend in the technoworld now. Isn't it strange that even before enterprises could attempt to answer the question are you wired for future, the first wave of a wirefree world is sweeping across the technoscape? Reliable studies done in Europe reveal that the worldwide growth in mobile commerce will grow faster than traditional e-commerce. According to the Arc Group more than 700 million mobile customers will participate in mobile commerce by 2004 and according to Forrester Research, 219 million users by 2004 will access the Internet via mobile phone. Thus, the mobile phone is all set evolve into a medium without barriers for e-business.

The use of mobile phones for the implementation of electronic business transactions is getting a boost with new technologies such as WAP, Bluetooth and many other new technologies announced daily. This development also facilitates completely new and innovative applications in the mobile e-business sector. As technology fulfils the crucial 'anywhere' requirement for e-commerce through mobile devices, the associated security issues poses a big question mark on the acceptance of this technology. While the demand for complex e-business applications integrating mobile devices is continuously increasing, factors like inadequate infrastructure, quality and security are severely hampering the mobile commerce growth. The establishment of a mobile electronic signature consortium (MESOC) comes as a progressive step in resolving the current infrastructure problems and generating a standard to integrate mobile digital signatures into e-business applications. The mobile electronic signature consortium is an association of companies and organizations from the mobile phone and Internet sectors. The specific know-how consolidated in the consortium by its members (Mobile Operators, Internet, Smart Cards, PKI, etc.) forms the basis for the development of a secure, cross-application infrastructure for the use of the mobile digital signature.

The use of the mobile digital signature with a mobile device is expected to maximize the security of transactions. It is possible to have advanced security in a mobile world by introducing smart cards and careful implementation of suitable algorithms even in restricted environments. That can truly bring about the resurgence of the nomadic culture in a civilized society staying always connected while being unattached.