SIMalliance Announces 2010 SIM Card Review: Global Card Sales up 25%

SIMposium 2011, Berlin, Germany, 28th June 2011. Fuelled by mobile telecommunications growth within developing markets and North America's migration to a SIM-based network, SIMalliance today announced a 25% year on year increase in the number of SIM cards shipped. Released at its SIMposium event in Berlin, the annual report into the health of the SIM card sector in 2010 showed 3.9 billion cards were shipped in the last year by SIMalliance members.

SIM Growth Driven by Developing Markets

The developing markets showed the highest growth: Middle East and Africa (+37%), Asia Pacific (+39%), and India (+40%). Shipments to South America increased by 22% from 2009 levels. In the more established markets, Western European shipments grew by 6% to 374 million units, while North America's increasing adoption of SIM cards delivered a 24% growth rate.

New Form Factors Emerge

The review highlights the growth in popularity of alternative form factors. The increasing ubiquity of smartphones in the more advanced markets, coupled with the burgeoning demand for tablet devices sees the 3FF micro-SIM form factor represent 20% of shipments in North America, 20% in Japan and Korea, and 18% in Western Europe.

Similarly, cards authenticating and securing access in the Machine to Machine (M2M) world have, for the first time, begun to gain traction with SMD (Surface Mounted Device) cards representing 1,2 million cards sold in 2010.

The standard (2FF) SIM card continues to dominate, with the form factor representing 97,5% of all cards sold globally during the period.

Commenting on the figures, Frédéric Vasnier, Chairman of the Board, SIMalliance said: "The volume card sales index provides an important barometer of the health and the increasing areas of focus of the mobile sector. In the dynamic and high-churn emerging markets growth is being driven by the need to equip, connect and authenticate millions of nomadic subscribers with long tail applications. In the more established markets, the focus has expanded to the increasing commercial adoption of NFC contactless payment which is driving the adoption of a fully Secure Element to secure identity while continuing to assure delivery, management and remote customization of mass market applications."

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* Notes for editors.

The Secure Element is an embedded or removable token of security within the mobile device built in clean room environments and featuring a unique combination of hardware and software to create the most secure environment in which to deliver mobile services. The SIM is the most widely distributed platform in the world containing a Secure Element, with over 18bn units shipped since its inception.

2FF and 3FF (Micro SIM) Form Factors:

3FF stands for 3rd Form Factor.

3FF is a physically smaller SIM card. The electric contacts and circuitry of a Micro-SIM are identical to that of a larger SIM card, the plastic card is simply smaller.

Because size is the only difference, it is possible to make a multi-size SIM card that can be used either as a larger SIM, or as a micro-SIM after breaking away a plastic ring.

The SMD (Surface Mounted Device) form factor is a microprocessor used in an embedded system. Typically these processors are smaller, consume less power, and utilize a surface mount form factor, as opposed to more standard consumer processors. Embedded processors are only sold to consumers pre-built into embedded systems, not separately.

About SIMalliance:

SIMalliance is (the non-profit trade association) dedicated to supporting the creation, deployment and management of secure mobile services and applications across the globe. Working in partnership with members, strategic partners and the wider mobile community SIMalliance anticipates and addresses the security, identity and mobility challenges of an increasingly converged internet. Through its working groups the alliance seeks to offer the blueprint to create a secure, open and interoperable environment where mobile services thrive. Headquartered in London, its membership is responsible for delivering the most widely distributed secure application delivery platform in the world (SIM/USIM).

For more information visit www.simalliance.org

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