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O₂ expands M2M business with great success

MUNICH. Telefónica O₂ Germany is venturing into new markets. Over the last few weeks the integrated telecommunications provider has launched several large-scale projects for automatic machine-to-machine communication (M2M). In this way O₂ is positioning itself in one of the most important growth areas of mobile communication. Market observers are already predicting that in fewer than ten years there will be more than 50 billion machines connected to one another via mobile M2M systems.

The nationwide facility services provider Zabel Group uses the M2M technology from O₂ to read energy consumption figures remotely, for example – and as another example, S+M Schaltgeräteservice in Erkelenz uses the technology to remotely monitor how full vending machines are. Using O₂'s mobile communication network, all data concerning the operating status and level of sales can be transmitted to the SAP system of the operating company in real time.

Location-independent time recording is also possible with M2M. Wismar-based company Softclean offers the TimeScan solution with which cleaners simply need to swipe their chip cards on a small scanning device connected by O₂'s mobile communication network to a server – and their precise working hours are reported to the payroll department, down to the last minute and with no risk of manipulation. This data can also serve to provide working time sheets to the customers of the cleaning companies.

Safe data transmission was also the main requirement of Lyra Network, an internationally active provider of electronic payment systems with its European headquarter in Frankfurt / Main. The new framework agreement with O₂ covers the regular delivery of tens of thousands of SIM cards for M2M over several years. "Lyra Network is another milestone in our M2M business," says Johannes Pruchnow, Managing Director Business at Telefónica O₂ Germany. "We were able to convince the company with our M2M expertise and provide a completely automated data transmission that guarantees frictionless operations."

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Automated data communication between machines is developing into an essential component of telecommunication – the market is growing by approximately 20 percent every year. Especially the logistics industry and electricity suppliers use M2M communication for fleet management or for “smart metering”. But also the automobile industry is showing an interest in the new technology, which makes it possible to make a remote diagnosis in case of breakdown or to automatically update navigation systems.

Using M2M, insurance companies could for example offer “pay-as-you-drive” tariffs, which take into account the miles covered by the customer plus their way of driving. “New transmission techniques such as the LTE mobile communication standard will make even more business models possible,” Johannes Pruchnow goes on to explain. “The challenge here is always to best support the customers’ individual business models with their specific needs.”

O₂’s parent company is therefore strengthening its M2M business worldwide and has set up a special unit to support international customers. The Telefónica M2M Global Unit consists of an international, interdisciplinary team of 100 employees who take care of globally active companies and roll out M2M services in all Telefónica countries. Its members include technicians, product developers and marketing specialists. An in-house innovation unit is constantly developing new applications and devices for the M2M area.

You can find further information about O₂’s M2M services at <http://www.o2online.de/nw/business/mobil/daten/m2m/machine-to-machine.html>

Details on O₂’s project with the Zabel Group are available at http://www.de.o2.com/ext/o2/wizard/index?page_id=16969

Telefónica O₂ Germany GmbH & Co. OHG belongs to Telefónica Europe and is part of the Spanish telecommunication group Telefónica S.A. The Company offers its German private and business customers postpaid and prepaid mobile telecom products as well as innovative mobile data services based on the GPRS and UMTS technologies. In addition, the integrated communications provider also offers DSL fixed network telephony and high-speed internet. Telefónica Europe has more than 56 million mobile and fixed network customers in Great Britain, Ireland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Germany.

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