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China Mobile Hong Kong launches carrier-independent mobile TV network

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 [Hong Kong](#)

China Mobile Hong Kong has launched mobile television broadcasting services under the ‘UTV’ brand, based on the China Mobile Multimedia Broadcasting (CMMB) technology platform, accessible to all Hong Kong cellular users regardless of their mobile network provider. The celco is offering eight TV channels initially, two of which are free to view, with monthly packages costing HKD58 (USD7.50) per month. Smartphone and tablet users can access UTV via a dongle, which can also be used to watch the channels at home on a HDMI TV set, while the service attracts no data usage charges from the user’s mobile network operator. Alternatively, UTV content can be streamed over the internet via an application downloadable for Android-based phone and tablet owners, with a similar application to be made available for iPhones next year, the company revealed.

‘Hong Kong provides us a special testing ground to develop new services. We have spent about two years preparing for today’s launch,’ said China Mobile Hong Kong chief executive Sean Lee Fan-fung, quoted by local newspaper The Standard. Lee added, ‘We can see there is room for mobile and multimedia platforms to emerge,’ and said owners of portable media players using CMMB software can also access the TV service. He said of CMMB, which was launched three years ago: ‘It occupies 25MHz bandwidth within which it provides 25 video and 30 radio channels in the mainland... I have confidence it will become a new trend for local mobile users as it won’t use data from their mobile carriers.’

According to TeleGeography’s GlobalComms Database, in April 2009 Hong Kong’s telecoms regulator OFTA (now OFCA) allocated the 678MHz–686MHz band for licensed broadcast mobile TV, shortly after a second-phase trial of the CMMB mobile TV standard had begun the previous month in the territory (in a project attributed to Television Broadcasts Limited). In June 2010 China Mobile Hong Kong beat two rivals – City Telecom (HKBN) and PCCW (HKT) – to win a 15-year mobile TV broadcasting licence including the 678MHz–686MHz frequencies, at a one-off cost of USD22.5 million. The licensee is required to use at least 75% of the transmission capacity to deliver mobile TV content, while it was stipulated that it must provide service coverage to at least 50% of the population within 18 months of being granted the concession, a condition China Mobile is thought to have belatedly met.

Hong Kong, [China Mobile Hong Kong \(formerly Peoples\)](#), Wireless