

Perspectives on the emerging wireless market

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Analyst:

**Karen Brown**

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## 2009: The year of data

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**Issue:** The fourth quarter 2009 capped a year in which data has become the engine for revenue and customer growth among the top three carriers.

**Background:** Up to now, voice service quality has been the driving factor in the competition among the major wireless carriers. But an examination of the fourth quarter metrics now indicates that a carrier's competitive fate depends more on its data offerings, and less on voice.

**Implications:** To succeed, wireless providers must focus on data service and handsets, with voice becoming a waning factor in overall strategy. With the looming introduction of wireless VoIP, some time in the future, data service may be the core offering, with cellular voice as an optional add-on.

## ABOUT THE ANALYST



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Karen Brown has been tracking broadband communications technologies since 1999, when she joined *Cable World* magazine as associate technology editor. She has since monitored and reported on emerging technologies in the cable, Internet and wireless communications sectors for leading business publications including *Multichannel News*, *Wireless Week* and *CED Magazine*. She joined One Touch Intelligence in 2006.