

# Report from Consumer Electronics Show

## 4G powers a mobility revolution

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CES 2011 has become the new Cape Canaveral when it comes to launching new consumer products and reporting on the emerging trends. On the launch pad this year is cellular communications, smart phones, tablet computers, smart phone APPS, and how APPS are revolutionizing the consumer space and redefining the internet. One of the most profound consequences of this revolution is how the user profile of the consumer is exponentially changing.

Fueling this change is 4G, the next generation of cellular network communications. 4G provides significantly improved bandwidth speed and data features such as two-way video calls. Video streaming (live T.V.) and downloading movies are also benefits of the 4G network. You could say that 4G is bandwidth on steroids. Sprint has a 4G network in place (though it's not everywhere), and AT&T, T-mobile, and Verizon all have 4G rollouts in process. It is expected that the nation will be covered entirely by 4G enabled cellular networks by the end of 2014, if not sooner.

New smart super phones are entering the market that will fully exploit the benefits of the 4G network. Original equipment manufacturers (HTC, LG, Apple, and Motorola) have all launched new 4G product lines that are lighting fast and feature rich. For example, a picture using the phone camera feature that usually takes 15 to 30 seconds to load on a 3G network requires only a blink and it's gone.

The Google Android operating system is not only popular with smart phone buyers. Tablet computer manufacturers are launching products with Android such as the Motorola XOOM tablet. This one move has changed the dimensional possibilities of tablet computing and fills a size gap for users that find the smart phone too small and the net book or laptop too clunky!

Finally, bring in the APPS—the small programs designed to perform a specific function. Apps are cheap and there are thousands of them available. A few of the more notable new ones include: a special GPS feature with 3-D maps; syncing all your contacts; cloud computing; starting your car from the airplane while it's still pulling up to the ramp on a cold day; or even multi-tasking your video by watching the football game and flipping over to see what your new baby is doing in their crib, all from the train as you commute home from work. Not to mention games, filing personal income taxes, voice recognition, directories and more.

Consumers love this technology and are using the smart phone, super phone, and tablet as their primary computing and communication device—all in one! Apps are another dimension that consumers can access. These specialized and single purpose programs add to their personal lifestyle toolbox, and they can be brought to the market very quickly.

Consumers are king and they define the market place. Each financial institution should begin immediately to develop a strategy that fully exploits the benefits of smart phones and tablet computers by providing customer-relevant apps that reach out and connect with the lifestyle of today's consumer. Suggestions include a video brochure on your institution, products, and locations. Two-way video calls for call center services and private line video calls for private banking customers. Why video? 50% of the traffic on the internet today is video and almost three quarters of the 18-24

age group obtains 70% of their content watching video. Looking to the future means a video strategy will soon trump your internet banking platform and smart phones. 4G is new information super highway!

Mobility is technology that absolutely delivers what the consumer expects anytime, anywhere.

## The Wombat

### About the Author

Dan Fisher is president and CEO of The Copper River Group, a consulting firm headquartered in Fargo, N. D., that focuses on technology and payment systems research and consulting for community financial institutions. For nearly 30 years, Fisher has worked in the financial industry using technology to improve the bottom line. He was CIO of Community First Bankshares (now part of BancWest), has served as a director of the Federal Reserve Board of Minneapolis, the chairman of the American Bankers Association Payment Systems Committee, and was a member of the Independent Community Bankers of America Payments Committee. Fisher has written numerous articles on banking technology and the payments system. He has authored or co-authored six books and recently published a book titled, "Capturing Your Customer! The New Technology of Remote Deposit." You can contact Fisher at [dan@copperwombat.com](mailto:dan@copperwombat.com).

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