

“**Amp'd phones will download content almost as quickly as a computer.**”

# Smooth Operator

Amp'd Mobile CEO Peter Adderton wants to turn your cell phone into a roam entertainment center

Peter Adderton is careful to distinguish himself from other cell phone executives. “The guys bringing you service today wear khaki pants and blue blazers and basically put up telephone poles for a living,” says the 38-year-old founder of Amp'd Mobile, a carrier launching this November. He, on the other hand, is more likely to be wearing board shorts or a wet suit and putting up moves on the breaks near his Newport Coast, California, home. Amp'd isn't meant to be just another standard wireless company, either. Rather than focusing on voice and text delivery, Adderton (above) plans to create “the first mobile entertainment company” by offering programming for cell phones including MP3s, full-motion video of news, sports, and concerts, and even adult material. “We're going to bring you a huge leap in mobile media content,” he says.



Amp'd is the first of an expected rush of boutique carriers—called mobile virtual network operators, or MVNOs—that are taking advantage of third-generation (3G) broadband technology. Users will be able to download and stream content to their Amp'd phone nearly as quickly as they can on their DSL- or cable-connected computer. Like all MVNOs, Amp'd leases network space from a larger company, in this case Verizon Wireless. But because it's free from the responsibility of serving millions of customers, Amp'd can target a group—say, 18- to 35-year-old guys—with programming the bigger companies won't touch, including the adult videos it's reportedly licensing from *Hustler*, and extensive MP3 libraries.

To access it all, customers go to [www.ampdmobile.com](http://www.ampdmobile.com), where, in addition to signing up for the usual cell phone service plan, they can subscribe to Amp'd Live. (It's necessary to purchase one of the two available media-playing phones; see "Party Lines," right) The extra \$10 to \$35 a month, depending on the subscription, gives you as many as 150 media channels featuring content from dozens of Amp'd partners—EA Games, *Sports Illustrated*, Universal Music Group, and some extreme-sports magazines, among others. The planned Eminem channel, for example, will let customers download Slim Shady MP3s, ring tones, videos, and wallpaper from a single menu.

**“It's content the bigger guys won't touch, like adult videos and extensive MP3 libraries.”**

All of it—the games, the videos, the music—can be navigated using the phone's simple, intuitive menu screens. Industry analyst Roger Entner, of the Boston-based Ovum group, says, "Most wireless phones are set up the way a tech-head thinks. But Peter Adderton thinks outside the box, and his phones have the human in mind."

Indeed, Adderton, who started the MVNO Boost Mobile in the U.S. in 2002 and sold it a year later to Nextel for an "undisclosed sum," says that with Amp'd, for the first time, accessing media on a cell phone will be "as easy as choosing a channel on TV or a song on an iPod." Speaking of which, you won't need your iPod anymore with an Amp'd phone. The phones connect to a computer via USB and let customers upload their own MP3s as well. Add a pair of earbuds and the phone sounds as good as any flash-based music player.

"Today we have too many gadgets to worry about," Adderton explains. "Amp'd gives you one place to have *all* your stuff." Even, it seems, your raunchy stuff. And you won't have to hide it between your mattress and box spring. —ADAM BAER

## Party Lines

The first two phones available from Amp'd

Under \$170\*

### Motorola Hollywood phone

This clamshell features a 1.3-megapixel camera, a music and video player, Bluetooth, and a 2.2-inch color screen. You can add up to 1 GB memory with a Micro SD card. It also has superior sound quality and, like all Amp'd phones, uses Verizon EVDO for high-speed connections. 3.69" x 1.89" x 1.01" (closed); 4.6 oz.



Under \$120\*

### Kyocera Jet phone

Unlike other carriers' entry-level models, this slider includes a video and music player and a 2.2-inch color screen. It also has a VGA camera with built-in flash and an MPEG-4 video recorder, and it accepts Micro SD memory cards as large as 1 GB. 3.89" x 1.93" x 0.86" (closed); 3.9 oz.

\*Exact price not set at press time.

## Follow the leader

**Even Diddy has hinted that he wants to start an MVNO. These companies have confirmed launches in 2006.**

**DISNEY MOBILE** Disney and Sprint hope to "target families by offering safety features and new ways for parents to connect with their children," says Disney spokeswoman Kim Kerscher, who adds that the companies aren't ready to discuss specifics.

**ESPN MOBILE** This MVNO "will be a sports fan's dream," says ESPN spokesman Paul Melvin. Users will be able to access exclusive sports news, photos, and commentary, among other features.

**SK-EARTHLINK** Other than saying it will target 18- to 30-year-olds, the company is tight-lipped about its plans. But if the SK service in Korea is a model, you'll soon be able to view satellite TV on your mobile phone.