

New wireless testing facilities increase options for Metro Vancouver developers

Wavefront and Tranzeo Wireless Technologies Inc. target growing need in B.C.'s technology cluster for more wireless and electronic test labs

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Two new wireless testing facilities opened in Vancouver this month, helping to fill a gap that has left many developers with little access to the testing infrastructure needed to accelerate commercialization and penetrate international markets.

Wavefront, a non-profit commercialization centre that provides training, advice and testing services to B.C.'s 1,000 wireless and new media development companies, held a grand opening of its 7,000-square-foot lab in Vancouver last Tuesday.

During the last year, Wavefront has forged partnerships with wireless groups in major mobile phone markets like Asia and Europe.

"We want to pick strategic partners," said Wavefront president **Jim Maynard**. "We want to pick large partners and really blow the doors off of these marketplaces."

In the **Wireless Innovation Network of British Columbia's** (WINBC) 2007 poll of B.C.'s wireless industry, 60% of surveyed companies said product quality assurance, functional testing facilities and help were their top needs for accelerated commercialization.

As well, the fastest growing area for capital expenditure was identified as "testing and certification."

At Wavefront, developers have access to lab space for testing their products' usability and to a library of mobile devices for testing new software and applications.

Maynard said Wavefront is close to solidifying a partnership with one of Europe's largest carriers that will give B.C. companies better access to markets in more than 30 countries around the world.

In March, Wavefront partnered with **Mob4Hire**, a remote testing service that provides crowd-sourced mobile application testing over the Internet. Through the partnership, B.C.'s wireless developers can field-test their home-grown applications around the globe without investing resources in travel or recruiting multiple testers across multiple markets.

Tranzeo Wireless Technologies Inc. (TSX:TZT) has spun off a new company and testing facilities where electronic and wireless developers can measure the radio emissions of their pre-commercial products.

Before any electronic or wireless product goes to market, it must be tested to ensure that it doesn't interfere with other electronics and wireless devices. Even iPods must meet radio emission and immunity standards to ensure that they won't reset a PC or other electronic equipment



Sound tests: Even MP3 players must be tested before going to market to ensure that they don't interfere with other electronics and wireless devices in their broadcast range

that's in their broadcast range.

As well, new electronics must be able to withstand power surges and potential interference from other electronics.

David Johanson, open-air test site manager of **Tranzeo EMC**, the newly created company that operates Tranzeo's testing facilities, said the two facilities were opened to third-party developers last month to create new business and retain staff and equipment.

"Essentially, you're talking about a \$2 million setup that's just sitting there gathering dust for a certain portion of the year," said Johanson.

He said emission and immunity standards differ from country to country. When Tranzeo enters a new market, it must test its products to ensure they meet regional standards.

Michael Bidu, executive director of WINBC, said Tranzeo is capitalizing on a need in the marketplace.

"This is very important for any small or medium enterprise trying to sell their technologies or applications to wireless ISPs, government, university campuses, carriers or enterprise," he said in an e-mail to *BIV*.

Bidu said that depending on the nature of the wireless and electronics equipment being tested, developers can also use test facilities operated in B.C. by **Sierra Wireless** (TSX:SW; Nasdaq:SWIR), **Simon Fraser University** and the **University of British Columbia**. ■
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