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3G home gateways: opportunities and challenges

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Report Summary

This report examines residential femtocells, also called cellular home gateways. These are small cellular access points which provide cellular wireless access inside the home and open up new business opportunities for the mobile operator.

3G home gateway solutions are still in their early development stages. As of early 2007, only femtocell prototypes are being used in lab testing. Operators' trials in 2007 will have to analyse two key technical issues: firstly, radio interference between the femtocells and the public infrastructure's macrocells; secondly, the core network integration of femtocells. Should the cellular home gateways be a success, there could be millions of new cellular access points added to cellular networks. There is thus an important scalability challenge, both in terms of radio management and network architecture.

Included in this report are forecasts for Western Europe and market development scenarios.

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