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Orange "Berlin" first in a range of city-themed phones

Milton Keynes not on the list...

by Amy-Mae Elliott published on 13 September 2007

As part of the wider announcement regarding the forthcoming Christmas handset line-up, Orange revealed that they are planning to launch an own-branded handset.

Refreshingly called the "Berlin" (rather than a dull stream of numbers or letters) Pocket-lint has learnt that the initial device will actually be the first of a whole range of city-themed handsets from the mobile phone operator.

Interested to know more about this model, and future plans for the new Orange devices, we spoke to Francois Mahieu, Orange's device director to find out more.

Apparently conceived about a year ago, the idea for the handset range came from looking at how, if Orange's animal-themed call plans can be tailored to suit lifestyles, why not hardware?

"We've really tried to align these handsets to what our customers want", said Francois. "The Berlin would suit someone on the Dolphin talk package, a young person who has a lots of friends and texts a lot. We think the Berlin would appeal to the type of person who would actually visit that city."

Unlike rival operator's white-label devices, this new geographical range has been conceived for, and tailored to, the UK market, although Mahieu does not rule out launches elsewhere in the world.

The Berlin will be an entry-level 3G slider handset with a rubberised finish that will be offered on a pay as you go tariff. It's a basic offering for a youth audience who want 3G connectivity but don't want to break the piggy-bank.



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Future devices, although all will be "affordable", will offer some high-spec features including cameras and Bluetooth to appeal to different market sectors - a touchscreen device was mentioned by Mahieu as possibly coming soon.

"We will definitely launch one more handset in 2007, possibly even two or three, but the main launch for the range will be in 2008", he told us.