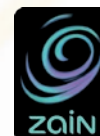


# From operational process to integrated marketing tool: Zain Kuwait takes charging to a new level



Using Nokia Siemens Networks' next-generation prepaid charging solution and customization service, Zain Kuwait can cut pre-launch delays caused by traditional charging systems and respond more rapidly to customer needs with targeted services and promotions.

Zain Kuwait is one of 22 mobile service providers operating under the Zain brand (formerly the MTC Group) in the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa. It is the Number One player in a highly competitive market where mobile phone penetration is well over 100%, almost all of which is based on prepaid subscriptions. Now that a third operating license has been granted to

a new market entrant, the competition is about to become even more intense.

#### Facing the challenge of churn

As in any saturated market, customer acquisition and retention in Kuwait is close to a zero-sum game: in order for one player to win a new account, another has to lose one. And because 90% to 95% of all Kuwaiti mobile

accounts are prepaid with no fixed-term contract, it's much easier for customers to jump from one provider to another in response to competitive marketing campaigns or negative experiences with their current service. To minimize churn and maximize customer lifetime value in this fluid and challenging business environment, Zain Kuwait focuses on two complementary strategies. The first: to keep providing positive reasons for customers to stick with the Zain brand, by responding rapidly to their needs (and to competitor offerings) with innovative new products, services and promotions. And the second: to minimize the risk of customer defection by delivering a consistently high quality customer experience.

#### The role of charging

In pursuing both these goals, the company recognized that a state-of-the-art charging solution had a major role to play. No matter how good their ideas might be, marketing campaigns alone would not be enough to turn them into revenue-generating customer offers. To do that, they needed a fast, flexible and accurate mechanism for tracking usage and calculating the payments due.

"With charge@once select, we are leading the way in moving the charging function out of the operational domain and into the marketing domain. Using its wide range of ready-made marketing use cases, we can quickly configure our charging systems to support new customer offers, and therefore work more effectively to improve the long-term experience of the Zain brand."

Zain Kuwait CEO Mr. Khaled Al-Hajeri

However, they also recognized that in traditional network operations systems, the charging function is among the last and most complex of many elements to be addressed in the overall development process. In most instances it involves writing and testing case-specific code for the charging software, and it can often lead to significant delays in bringing a new service or pricing package to market.

In a prepaid market environment, these delays could make the difference between staying ahead and falling dangerously behind. To meet Zain's demands, the new solution would therefore need to take a far more flexible and streamlined approach.

#### **charge@once select: a campaign-ready marketing tool**

By choosing charge@once select, Nokia Siemens Networks' next-generation prepaid solution, Zain Kuwait can now accelerate the charging-related pre-launch development process. Instead of taking weeks to adapt its systems to support each new customer offer, it can simply activate one of a wide range of ready-to-use, pre-programmed charging options.

These options, known as 'marketing use cases', enable Zain to adapt charging functions such as tariff models and rate plans in a flexible and timely manner, without compromising

quality. This means that new marketing campaigns such as promotional minutes or lifetime bonus plans can be rolled out faster, and can be applied to all major service types from voice and SMS to email, instant messaging, Internet access and music and video downloads.

"With charge@once select, we are leading the way in moving the charging function out of the operational domain and into the marketing domain," says Zain Kuwait CEO Mr. Khaled Al-Hajeri. "Using the wide range of pre-programmed options, we can quickly configure our charging systems to support new customer offers, and therefore work more effectively to improve the long-term experience of the Zain brand."

#### **A complete customization and consultancy service**

As a Nokia Siemens Networks charging solution customer, Zain Kuwait also benefits from our adapt@once customization service.

Whichever charging and rating features they wish to use, a dedicated team of Nokia Siemens Networks Solutioneers is available to work on-site with their marketing and operations people to create customized adaptations to suit exact local market needs. The adapt@once service encompasses everything from business consultancy to market launch, and is an option available to every charge@once select customer.

#### **Challenges**

- Subscriber acquisition and retention in increasingly competitive prepaid market
- Need to improve quality of customer experience
- Need to accelerate service development and delivery process

#### **Solutions**

- charge@once select flexible charging and rating system, covering all current online charging features
- reliable and powerful carrier-grade platform
- optional adapt@once customization and business consultancy service

#### **Business Benefits**

- Fast introduction of new services and features in response to market needs
- Short release cycles for feature enhancements to maintain competitiveness
- Easy adaptation of offerings for successful differentiation
- Prepared for future enhancements
- Optimized Total Cost of Ownership