

RINGTONES, THE SEQUEL



TELECOMMUNICATIONS

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The ringtones sector is rapidly expanding, due both to the proliferation of new channels and devices, and technological (quality) improvement. Two cases in point — Nokia's 3300 phone & Korea Telecom's ringback tones. With the way [traditional music sales](#) are going these days, ringtones for mobile phones may soon be the most profitable segment of the industry 😊 Now a USD 1 billion+ global market (source: Informa Group), new generation ringtones are increasingly indistinguishable from 'normal' digital songs and clips, and can be heard in a growing number of places, emanating from a growing number of devices. Two recent smart new business ideas in this field: — The new [Nokia 3300](#) phone, which doubles as an MP3 player, lets users download entire songs as ringtones, creating yet another market that has gone from analog to polyphonic to MP3. — And, all the rage in South Korea: personalized 'ringback tones'! A ringback tone is the (usual) boring 'ring ring' you hear when waiting for someone to pick up his or her phone (well, accepting a call, really, there's nothing to pick up anymore). But no longer so in South Korea, where, late last year, [Korean Telekom](#) (KT) began offering subscribers top 40 songs to replace the conventional ring. Millions of Koreans now subscribe to the service for about 1 USD per month; companies like ING Bank use ringback tones to get their commercial messages in your face/ear the moment you've dialed their number. China is next: Beijing Mobile and Shenzhen Mobile, cooperating with KT and its tech partner [WiseSpot](#), recently launched the ringback service, to the delight of 16,000 subscribers who signed up during the first week of availability. The US should follow by Christmas of this year. (Sources: Nokia, News.com, TheFeature.com, Planet Multimedia.)

Opportunities

If you're still sulking about missing out on the SMS and analog ringtone bonanza, new ring(back) tones may come to the rescue! The ringtones sector is rapidly expanding, due both to the proliferation of new channels and devices, and technological (quality) improvement. Check out [TRENDWATCHING.COM](#)'s Jingle Casting trend for new applications, or see if you can arrange a meeting with the likes of KT and WiseSpot 😊

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Website: www.nokia.com/, www.kt.co.kr/