

China Unicom to spend \$1.5 billion on 3G next two years

China Unicom plans to spend 10 billion RMB (\$1.5 billion) over next two years on building and developing its 3G network and business, chairman Chang Xiaobing said Tuesday.

Chang said at Mobile Asia Congress in Macau that the expected launch of 3G services will offer new opportunities for growth by helping Chinese operators expand their service portfolio.

While Beijing has yet to announce the 3G licensing timetable, Chang told reporters that he expected China to speed up the issue of 3G licenses, and hoped the company would get a 3G license by year-end.

Once the company has the W-CDMA license, he said, Unicom will increase its investment in 3G and hope to get a bigger share in the mobile market with the launch of high quality 3G services and products.

"In the year of 2009-2010 our capital expenditure on 3G mobile business will reach an estimated 10 billion RMB," he said.

He said the wide adoption of W-CDMA and its developed industry chain will give Unicom an advantage in developing 3G business and compete against its rivals in China's 3G market.

As of June 2008, there are 231 W-CDMA networks with accumulated 253 billion users, accounting for nearly 70 percent of the total 3G subscribers worldwide.

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