



"Viewership content on TV is not the most inspiring but our size limits us"

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"Financial turnaround is not only possible, it is essential for any business restructuring"

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# Business Today

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## GO disputes Melita's fixed line subscriber claims

Charlot Zahra

Telecoms operator GO has put into question arch-rival telecoms operator Melita's announcement last Friday that the Hello fixed line telephone service launched eight months ago had reached the 20,000 subscriber mark.

Asked by BusinessToday for his reaction about the fact that Hello had eaten up 20,000 subscribers since its launch last November and the reasons why, Franco Aloisio, Head Corporate Communications & Public Affairs, GO said yesterday: "The number of subscribers who have stopped their GO fixed line service is closer to 2,000 than 20,000.

"In a competitive market it is normal to have customer churn, and this does not worry us. We have some customers who have left, and we already have had some who have returned!" he said.

As Melita's CEO Philip Micallef pointed out to Business Today, "not necessarily all 20,000 customers have removed their GO line but we know of some who have kept both services and are waiting for a couple of bills from both companies



to arrive so that they can judge for themselves which company offers the best value-for-money."

Micallef said Melita was very satisfied with the take up of Hello. "We are very pleased to offer Maltese subscribers a choice for their fixed line telephony. Take-up even in these normally quiet months is still very strong.

"The Maltese public has shown that it appreciate choice and competition and looks for value-for-money propositions. With the launch of hello Melita became the first true triple-play operator in Malta providing one customer service and one single bill," he told Business Today yesterday.

Asked for the reasons why these

subscribers have joined Melita, Micallef said: "Basically customers who have taken up Hello realized the value-for-money which this system offers.

"People are comparing the bills they receive from Melita and those from our competitors and come to their own conclusions. A calculator is also available on our website to help customers figure out their savings if they install Hello," he said.

Micallef said Hello also provides 100 free minutes per month to the GO fixed network and all Hello to Hello calls are free any time of day and any day of week. "These free on-net calls are proving to be very popular with Maltese families and now even with businesses and

GO plus

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## 'Last-minute rush' leads to extension of registration scheme

A last-minute rush by people interested in registering for their undeclared cash with the Central Bank of Malta before the introduction of the euro led the Finance Ministry to extend the registration scheme until 31 August.

The Central Bank of Malta said in a statement on Monday that this decision had been taken "as there are strong indications that a substantial number of persons who showed interest in the Scheme will not manage to register by the original closing date of 31 July 2007".

Parliamentary Secretary in the Finance Ministry Tonio Fenech told Business Today that "as always happened in the past people leave for the last moment and thus agents start asking for an extension.

"An important feature is that we are also allowing people to register and deposit cash directly with the Central Bank, as it appears that some people who have in the past not trusted banks with their cash would have been discouraged to go to them now. . . ▶ page 4

## Global Petroleum seeks extension of Maltese oil exploration agreement



Map clearly showing the area where oil exploration is possible and where the Maltese government has granted licences. The area is reputed to be very rich in oil deposits

Australian oil exploration company Global Petroleum announced in its quarterly report yesterday that its joint venture partner, German oil and gas company RWE Dea AG, is seeking to confirm a revised time frame for the Exploration Study Agreement (ESA) covering blocks 4 and 5 of Area 3 off the east of Malta with the Maltese government.

Global said this was dependent upon the timing of obtaining a specialised vessel and carrying out a microbial/geochemical investigation on sea bottom samples during 2007.

The agreement was previously extended to March 31 along with RWE's farming agreement.

RWE, which has farmed into Global's interest in the Exploration Study Agreement covering Blocks 4 & 5, has the right to earn up to a total 70 per cent interest if the parties enter into a Production Sharing Contract (PSC) with the Malta Government and RWE commits to the drilling of a well following the completion of the seismic programme phase.

In June last year Global entered into a joint venture with RWE enabling the latter to farm into Block 4 and 5 in exchange for RWE covering Global's share of the costs of the seismic programme and potential exploration well, with Global retaining 80 per cent interest and RWE the remaining 20 per cent interest.

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