

# Business Today



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## MTV Mobile to launch service in Malta soon

Charlot Zahra

Barely two months after the launch of Melita Mobile, a new mobile phone operator will be launched shortly, Business Today has learnt, bringing the number of mobile phone operators in Malta to six.

The new mobile operator will launch under the brand "MTV Mobile", however it is not known whether the brand of the music television network mostly popular with the younger age groups is being used by a local licensee or whether it is a direct investment by the parent company of MTV Networks.

A website at [www.mtvmobile.com.mt](http://www.mtvmobile.com.mt) has already been set up, where customers were invited to register their interest to receive information about the packages that will be offered by MTV Mobile.

It is neither known whether MTV Mobile will be using a Mobile Virtual Network Operator system, whereby mobile phone brands use the infrastructure of another established mobile phone network.

Aspider, the only known MVNO solutions company in Malta, which handles RedTouchFone and Bay Mobile through Vodafone's infrastructure, denied any involvement with the MTV Mobile brand.

So far, GO shied away from opening its mobile infrastructure to MVNOs, with the two MVNOs currently operating in Malta. Asked about their involvement with MTV Mobile, a GO spokesperson declined to comment.

On 27 June 2008, the Malta Communications Authority (MCA) had licensed ONE Productions



Limited, operators of One Radio and ONE Television, as an MVNO

under the ONE Mobile brand, which was subsequently changed to RedTouchFone after the owner of One Telecoms Limited had successfully sued ONE Productions over alleged trademark infringement.

A second MVNO operator, Bay Mobile, was granted a license by the

MCA on 27 June 2008. Bay Mobile is operated by BayTel Limited, part of the Eden Leisure Group, which owns Bay Radio and The Eden Cinemas, among other things.

Like the MTV brand, Bay Mobile targets teenage groups.

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## Air Malta subsidiary sues bankrupt Irish tour operator for €1.3m

Charlot Zahra

A subsidiary company of national airline Air Malta – Holiday Malta Company Limited – has filed a claim for damage of €1.3 million against the owner of Irish travel agency which went bankrupt in January last year, Business Today has learnt.

In its lawsuit, which was heard in front of the Irish Commercial Court on 24 March 2009, Holiday Malta claimed that Robert Evans "had diverted large sums due to it to his own accounts or to accounts controlled by him" and also "failed to honour agreements to put in place securities over properties".

Judge Peter Kelly agreed to adjourn to this month to allow lawyers for the defendant to consider whether to apply to have a court-appointed guardian to him.

Asked to confirm the whether the Air Malta subsidiary had filed this lawsuit against Don Lagohaire Travel Limited, a spokesperson for Air

Malta, the parent company of HM, confirmed this.

He explained that Company "was claiming the payment of €1,318,707 representing trade debts, specific performance of agreements existing between the parties, damages, interest and costs".

Asked as to what kind of commercial relationship existed between the Irish travel agency and HM and for how long, the Air Malta spokesperson told Business Today that the relationship only ended last November after more than 16 years.

"Lagohaire Travel Limited had been appointed by the Company as its General Sales Agent in the Republic of Ireland on 1 April 1993 and this appointment was terminated in November 2008," the Air Malta spokesperson told BT.

Air Malta, however, skirted questions asked by BT as to whether Holiday Malta could detect early signs of bankruptcy from Dan Lagohaire's end, and whether HM was confident

of winning the court case against the Irish travel company.

Industry sources told Business Today that since Holiday Malta had appointed Dun Lagohaire Travel as their agent for Ireland, all payments pertaining to hotel bookings, taxis and excursions, among other things, would be received from the Irish travel agent to pay for costs incurred by HM.

However, it seemed that in this case, Dun Lagohaire had not paid HM for the services booked on behalf its behalf by the Air Malta subsidiary company by the time the Irish company went into bankruptcy.

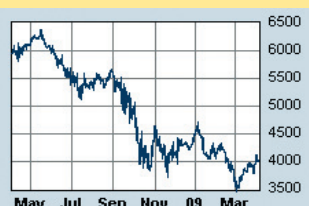
The sources added that despite the fact that Dun Lagohaire had not paid HM for the bookings made on its behalf, HM would still be liable to pay for the travel services booked for the Irish tour operator.

That was the reason why Holiday Malta was, in turn, suing Dun Lagohaire for such a huge sum.

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## World Business Highlights

### FTSE 100



**U.S. Stocks, Oil Retreat as Dollar, Treasuries Gain; Archer Daniels Slides** U.S. stocks slid for a second day after investors from George Soros to Marc Faber predicted the rebound in equities will falter as the market braces for a seventh straight quarter of declining earnings. The dollar rose against most currencies, oil fell and Treasuries gained.

**AIG Payments to Goldman Sachs, Banks Probed by U.S. TARP Watchdog Barofsky** The Treasury's chief watchdog for the U.S. financial rescue program is probing whether American International Group Inc. paid more than necessary to banks including Goldman Sachs Group Inc. after the insurer's bailout.

**OppenheimerFunds Probed by Five States Over College Savings-Account Losses** OppenheimerFunds Inc., a unit of Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co., is under scrutiny by attorneys general in five states for investment losses in college-savings accounts that used its bond funds.

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