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Cingular Sells Interactive Unit

BY SUSAN RUSH
SEPTEMBER 27, 2004
NEWS@2 DIRECT

Cingular Wireless has sold its Cingular Interactive subsidiary to a group of private investors. Financial terms of the deal were not disclosed.

The sale to Cerberus Capital Management affiliates includes a network that supports 25 percent of all BlackBerry users around the world, Cingular says. Beyond the Mobitex network, the acquisition covers the unit's customer service operations, IT systems and the majority of Cingular Interactive's customer base. Cingular Wireless, however, does plan to retain all direct e-mail customers and several other major accounts.

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As part of the deal, Cingular will continue to purchase data services from the interactive unit for its Mobitex-based corporate e-mail, IMPlus and some other data customers.

'We are selling the unit to focus our efforts on the integration and expansion of 3G,' says Cingular spokeswoman Jennifer Bowcock. 'But we will continue to offer the Mobitex data products as a reseller,' she says. 'Customers will not notice a difference.'

The Cingular Interactive management team is expected to remain in place once the deal, which is subject to regulatory approval, closes.

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