

"There is clearly an economic turn" for the better, Karmazin said. "Car sales are increasing. We are seeing improvement in retail sales and in advertising and all of these economic indicators really are very strong for Sirius XM. Very importantly not only are our financing metrics strong, we are now back to growing subscribers at record levels. Last week, the number of subscribers we currently have exceeded the December 2008 level of 19,003,000. So we are back to now having record number of subscribers, and we will continue to grow our subscribers."

Sirius XM's agreement with the FCC to freeze prices as a merger condition expires in July 2011, Karmazin said. "I think those price points and the price freeze should go away. If in fact it goes away, then the company will have a whole lot of flexibility. That doesn't necessarily mean the company will just go out and raise prices. But we believe we offer a great service and we offer a great value. And having that restriction hopefully go away enables us to have another arrow in our bag that we can drive free cash flow and EBITDA and revenue for our shareholders. And we will use every tool available to do those things." — *Paul Gluckman*

### **Fixed-Mobile Convergence**

## **3GPP Says It Has Pinned Down LTE Specs, is Working on Convergence**

Standard group 3GPP's LTE Release 9 is "functionally frozen with some minor exceptions," Adrian Scrase, head of the Mobile Competence Center, said on an ATIS conference call Tuesday. The latest LTE specification includes continued integration of the femtocell concept, self-organization network functionality, positioning support, addition of spectrum bands like 800 MHz and 1500 MHz and broadening of LTE deployment scenarios, he said. 3GPP Release 8 formed the basis for the commercial LTE deployment, he noted.

LTE isn't a data-only standard, Scrase said, adding that support of voice was one of the key considerations in designing the technology. The voice solution for LTE is IMS VoIP and is fully specified, he said. LTE will also support a variety of messaging applications, including SMS, he said, saying the solution covers both the full IMS case and a transition solution for networks that don't support IMS. LTE also supports emergency calls, and VoIP support for emergency calls was included in Release 9, he said. Meanwhile, LTE-Advanced (Release 10), a major enhancement of LTE, supports wider bandwidth, up to 100 MHz, he said.

3GPP is working with the Broadband Forum to support Fixed-Mobile Convergence using the Evolved Packet Core, Scrase said, adding that convergence addresses IP session mobility, authentication and policy. A three-phase plan was adopted, covering areas including interworking between fixed and wireless broadband, traffic offloading and convergence of network nodes, he said.

"WiMAX will be eclipsed with the introduction of LTE-TDD," said Keith Mallinson, founder of consultancy WiseHarbor. LTE will be "substantially" about devices other than phones and dongles, he said, adding that sufficient new spectrum at reasonable cost is essential. A new generation of connected devices will be enabled, said Hank Kafka, vice president of network architecture at AT&T, citing connected devices like media player, digital cameras, health care devices, smart meters, entertainment devices and in-car telematics. Keys to sustainable growth for U.S. wireless carriers include increasing available spectrum, accelerating network efficiencies, capitalizing on complementary technologies and ensuring application efficiencies, he said. — *Yu-Ting Wang*

## **Comm Daily® Notebook**

Colin Crowell, a senior adviser to FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski, is leaving the FCC in June, the commission announced Tuesday. He's the first key Genachowski adviser to leave. Crowell was the first to suggest that