



## **TELUS building customer base beyond wireless phone market**

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**TELUS** Corp. is instantly recognizable for its huge cellphone network promoted with cute fish and cuddly monkey logos.

But it's not so well known that Canada's No. 2 telecom company wants to make its mark with business customers in key markets such as health care and banks.

The Vancouver-based firm has targeted energy, financial services and the public sector as key markets for its network and services that go far beyond the wireless phone.

"Our view is that the Canadian market, the domestic market, has a tremendous amount of potential," Joe Natale, president of **TELUS** Business Solutions, said in an interview with The Canadian Press.

**TELUS**'s Toronto-based business unit is using the company's network, technology and recent acquisitions such as Emergis to grow into everything from managing health-care records electronically, to mortgage applications and web conferencing. Its client list already includes the Ontario and British Columbia governments, the federal government and the City of Montreal.

In Ontario, **TELUS**'s business unit provides IT security for the Ontario government, and the company has won a contract with the federal government to provide its wireless services, including mobile phones. And it's the network provider for the Department of National Defence not just in Canada, but globally, Natale said.

"As much as we've grown substantially across the country, there's still more to go," he said.

"When we feel that we've reached a point of steady-state penetration with our services and capabilities, then we will take a more aggressive stance outside Canada.

"It's not in the next year, but it's certainly in the next five to 10 years. I think we will be looking more aggressively on that front."

Before 2000, **TELUS** was a telephone company based in Western Canada with not much of a presence in Eastern Canada. The **TELUS** Business Solutions unit now has more than 10,000 employees in Ontario and Quebec and 300,000 business customers nationally.

Analyst Troy Crandall said most telecoms are already providing a wider variety of services through their networks aimed at attracting more diversified business and helping those customers cut costs.

"Ultimately, I think that's what governments or even businesses want," said Crandall of MacDougall, MacDougall & MacTier in Montreal.

Natale said that **TELUS** decided in 2000 that it would focus on the coming "data explosion" and stayed away from the trend that saw other telecommunications companies buying stakes in media outlets.