| region manager, India SmartTrust | place the existing handset of a mobile user can be upgraded by using FOTA through a process initiated from the service provider's |

end.

SmartTrust's technology is handset-independent and supports all GSM and CDMA phones with Remote User Identity Module. The service is a boon to those customers who have MMS and GPRS-enabled handsets but do not know how to use them. It helps users fully utilise these services. Arora explains, "A customer's mobile handset can have 17 or 18 different unutilised functions which he may not even be aware of. By using MDM technology, a customer is able to utilise them and make the best use of his handset." At the same time, MDM helps the mobile service operator maintain better customer satisfaction levels.

MDM technology helps mobile users back up their data on a regular basis on the network server at the service provider's end. Frequently-used information such as bookmarks and address book entries can be backed up using MDM, and in case a SIM gets destroyed or lost, the backed up information can be retrieved immediately from the network server.

Adoption set to increase

Although the adoption of MDM in India is in its infancy, with the likes of Bharti running pilot projects, it's expected to grow rapidly. Meanwhile, SmartTrust has customers in Finland, Britain, Germany, Italy, Spain, Malaysia, China, Singapore, Brazil and the United States who are reaping the benefits of this technology. Some of SmartTrust's customers using MDM include Vodafone UK, Vodafone Egypt, D2, Telenor, Sonofon, Cosmote, MTN, T-Mobile, Cingular Wireless, Claro, SMART Communications, M1 and Satelindo.

According to market sources, MDM technology will prove indispensable in helping mobile operators realise nearly $250 million in customer care savings related to diagnosing and resolving issues concerning incorrect network settings on the handset. As devices become more complex and costlier to replace, mobile service providers want to update firmware. It has been noted that nearly five million handsets were subject to a firmware recall last year. It is foreseen that by 2010, MDM will provide operators with annual savings in customer care costs of $1.4 billion.

Network servers will be able to automatically detect any defect in a subscriber's mobile handset and rectify the fault. However, how much more customers will have to shell out for availing MDM services from their mobile service providers is not yet known. For a price-sensitive market, cost will be a factor in MDM's popularity—or the lack of it. But in India, where the number of mobile subscribers has already outnumbered landline subscribers and mobile tariffs are among the lowest in the world, technologies such as MDM have immense potential.