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Edioma - Innovator to Watch

Mobile phones for teaching children Spanish

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Austin-based Edioma wants to meet two needs: teach English to Spanish-speaking children in a fun and interactive way, and help adults who don't share a common language to communicate. Its first product, Egoal, launched in October 2007 and is a soccer-based educational game available to more than 300,000 Spanish-speaking mobile subscribers on Movida (a Spanish-language MVNO using the Sprint network).

Set in the context of an interactive soccer match, Egoal teaches everyday English to Spanish-speaking children ages 5 to 12 years old. Edioma plans to launch additional games during the next 60 days in both free (ad-subsidized) and for-pay versions. The company is also working on a translation product focusing on occupational phrases for Spanish-only speakers who have to interact with non-Spanish speakers. This includes areas such as housecleaning and lawn care, as well as doctor's visits and directions.

Edioma will be available from AT&T and Verizon, and the company is counting on children to bring the games into the home so they can up-sell parents as they become comfortable with the technology. CEO Larry Upton envisions language lessons being purchased from carriers as monthly subscriptions or on a one-time basis. Edioma will also sell products directly from its Web site, with downloads priced at \$2 to \$4.

Edioma is a pioneer in targeting the Spanish-speaking population in the U.S. with games and English learning tools, going beyond mere translation of a few words. It is also the first to target children as well as adults. The Spanish-speaking population is a fast growing demographic that advertisers are eager to target.

The business model is solid, and there is no competition for Spanish children's mobile games in the U.S. yet. With its plans to move into the Latin American market, Edioma can grow exponentially if its products are good and it can raise more funds.