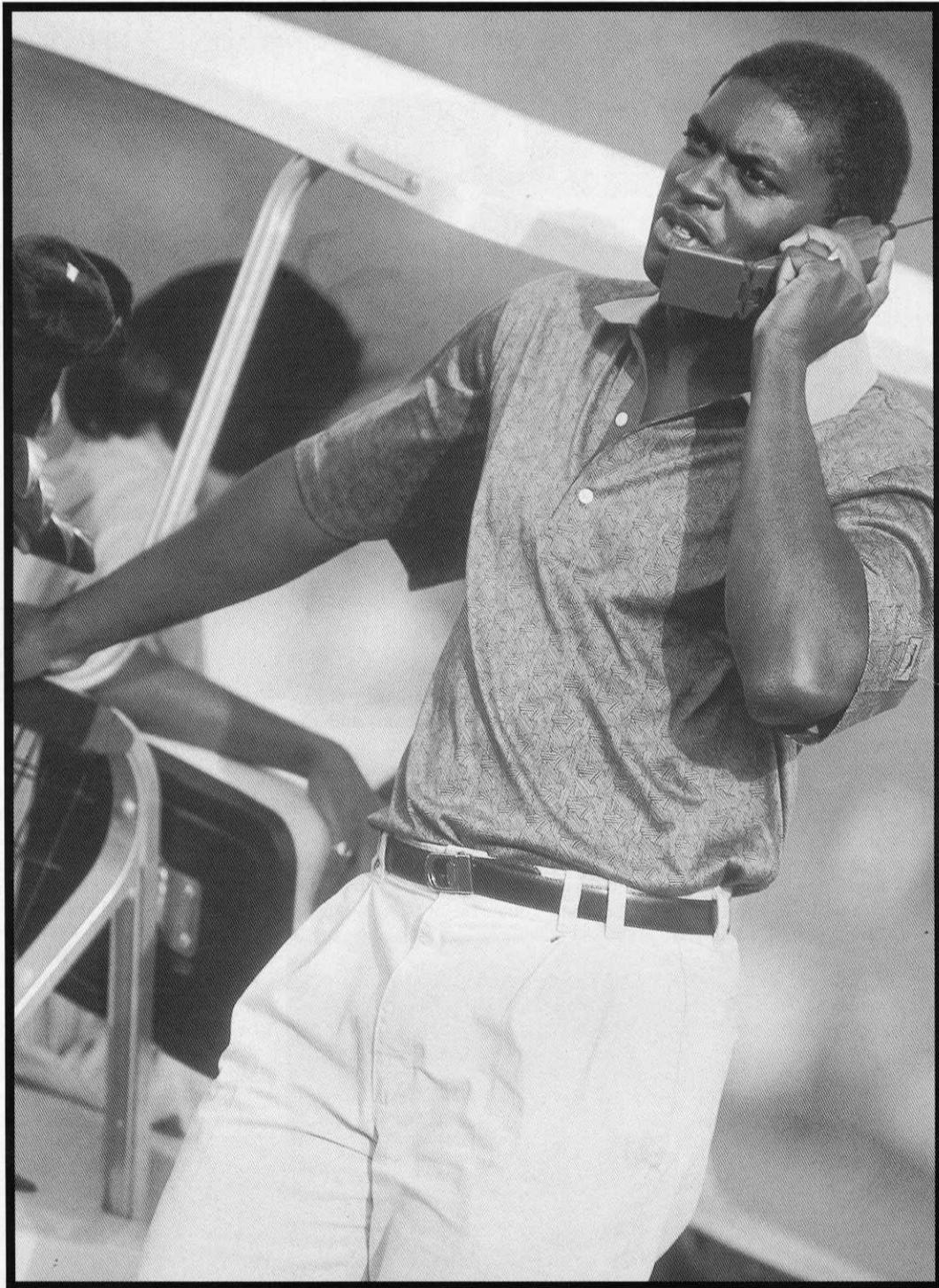


Put a mobile phone in your life – compliments of BT and BIGGA



Mobile revolution

With over 2.7 million users in the UK alone, the mobile phone has become a familiar part of our working and social lives. HOWARD GRAY looks at the reasons behind the rise and rise of this unique technology.

Few modern technologies have had such a significant impact on working life as the mobile phone. Once the ultimate executive icon of the eighties, the mobile has quickly made the journey from status symbol to essential tool of business for anyone

whose work takes them out and about.

Statistics confirm just how popular mobiles have become since the launch of the cellular service in 1985. At the end of its first year in business, Cellnet (one of the two main network operators)

had just 25,000 customers – today, it has over 2.7 million. Across all the UK cellular networks, there are currently around 8 million digital and analogue mobile phone users, with over 12 million forecast by the year 2000.

What are the reasons behind

Mobile revolution

In association with



'You can ensure that you'll never miss an important message – even when you are out and about on the golf course'



8 ► this boom? Firstly, with the growing trend towards mobility in the workplace, the advantages of improved contactability are clear; staying in touch when on the move can have a significant effect on productivity, time management and customer service. People like yourself, who work out in the field can get on with their work and respond quickly to requests without having to keep returning to base to pick up messages. Getting the information you need, where and when you need it, results in better decision making and less wasted journeys – as well as better management control. These are the bottom-line benefits that no busy person can afford to ignore.

The last decade has also been one of technological innovation. The breakthroughs that have contributed most to rising market demand are new digital technology and the development of more advanced handsets.

Analogue was the cellular technology of the day in 1985, but the more recent digital service has quickly become the preferred choice for many (especially business) users, as it offers major benefits such as superior call quality and security, and access to a range of network services such as digital Mobile Data (ie sending and receiving data and faxes via

your mobile phone).

Digital also allows you to use your phone when abroad, in countries where the UK mobile operator has a 'roaming' agreement with a foreign digital (GSM) network. So for example, BT Mobile customers connected to Cellnet's digital service can currently make and receive calls in over 70 countries around the globe.

With around eight million international business trips now made every year from the UK, this roaming facility is widely popular with those in the tourist and leisure industry in particular, as well as a growing number of holidaymakers. If you're staying in a hotel abroad, your mobile can actually save you money – recent research commissioned by Cellnet shows that it is cheaper to phone the UK from your GSM mobile than from a hotel phone in 10 out of 11 countries surveyed.

Handsets themselves have come a long way from the chunky models of a few years ago. Thanks to advances in microchip and battery technology, most modern mobiles are small and light enough to comfortably carry around in your pocket, and have a range of features unthinkable just a few years ago. Most models offer a range of accessories, such as hands-free car kits which allow

you to use your mobile safely while driving.

Recent developments such as the Nokia 9000 Communicator have taken handsets a quantum leap forward by combining a mobile phone and data terminal in one compact unit.

However, anybody with a digital mobile can use the service by connecting their phone, via a credit-card sized data/fax card, to a laptop PC. Users are able to connect, to transmit and receive

e-mail, faxes and short text (SMS) messages from remote locations, as easily as if they were sitting at their desks.

Another popular network service is cellular messaging. Services like Cellnet Callback can be easily activated on your mobile and will answer and record all your calls when you're not able to, or when your phone is switched off. In this way you can ensure that you'll never miss an important message from a colleague or friend, and that you'll remain contactable throughout the day – even when you are out and about on the golf course.

Other factors too have contributed to the expansion of cellular usage. In real terms, the cost of buying and running a mobile has fallen dramatically since 1985. At the same time, tariffs – such as BT's Regular Caller Business tariff – have opened up mobile phone ownership to a much wider audience, allowing a cost-efficient way of being able to stay in touch.

Security is high on many people's list of good reasons to own a mobile, when travelling alone (perhaps at night) or when you are out on the golf course, a mobile is a reassuring link with the outside world.

■ To put a mobile phone in your life, please see the special offer from BT enclosed with this magazine.

