

# siteseeing

Every fortnight, we review the web site of a mobile comms organisation.

[www.gsmexchange.com](http://www.gsmexchange.com)

GsmExchange is a web site designed to allow companies in the communications industry to contact each other in order to **buy or sell equipment**. While it is based in Ireland, the site brokers deals for members in 182 countries. To try to ensure the quality of members, they are vetted as bona fide traders before being given access to the trading sections of the exchange.

The site is designed around a blue-and-white scheme. The main criticism has to be that it is **quite dense**; there are up to six levels of horizontal navigation bars, separated by banner ads and information tickers, plus additional menus and information boxes depending on where you are in the site.

With little differentiation between these

sections by colour or font size and style, on your first visit you'll be left wondering where to start. It is worth persevering, however, as you will soon learn your way around.

**Registration is quite straightforward**, through a simple form. Once you have been accepted as a member and are validated, you will have access to the notice board and trading floors. The notice board works a little like a classified advertisement page, though companies post information about themselves with general invitations to initiate trade, rather than advertising specific stock for sale or looking for a source of specific items.

The **trading floor** is where most of the action takes place. It is split into two sections; one for phones and one for infrastructure. If you have equipment to sell you can list it by selecting the manufacturer, model and condition using drop-down boxes, and then fill-

in a field for the quantity you have available. There is a free text area for other information. The listing then becomes available for other members to browse or search.

When looking for equipment to purchase, you have two options – you can either **post an ad** saying what you need and what you are willing to pay, or you can **search through other members' listings**. After entering your search criteria, you are taken to a page showing the list of matching offers. This list includes the item details, quantity available, price and the name of the company offering the items. Leaving your mouse hovering over the price pops up a useful box showing the **equivalent price in different major currencies**, or you can just dive straight in and make the company an offer.

Finally, there is a **recruitment area**. This isn't directly provided by gsmExchange, it is outsourced to online recruitment specialist monster.com, so it isn't reviewed here.

Overall, the site is a very **useful resource** if you are involved in trading of phones and related equipment. The design is a **little quirky** and not immediately easy to use, but once you have found your way around it doesn't hinder you. The core area of the site, the trading floors, is well thought-out and appears to be quite popular, with **plenty of activity**.

**Mobile News score** (out of 10)

Creativity 7  
Clarity 6  
Innovation 9  
Practical Use 10