

# The mobile industry, CO2 emissions and savings – Part 3 (and final)

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By João on April 25, 2013 at 1:06 pm

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In previous posts ([here](#) and [here](#)), we presented a [report from Accenture and Vodafone](#), on how “the mobile industry can drive both carbon abatement and cost reductions for its business customers”. In the [previous post](#), you found that dematerialization may have the greatest cost savings potential, €14.1 billion, representing 33% of potential total cost savings. So, let’s have a closer look at this area.

“Dematerialisation is the substitution of physical products and activities with low-carbon ‘virtual’ alternatives. The main benefit is to reduce travel – for example meeting via video or teleconference rather than travelling to meet in person, working from home rather than commuting to the office, and shopping online to reduce individual consumers’ trips to stores.”

One of the ways of dematerialisation is based on “Mobile telepresence”: Connecting ‘virtual meeting rooms’ to smart phones via 3G or next generation access networks could increase the use of telepresence by allowing workers to join the conference from almost anywhere using mobile devices”.

And what are financial benefits?

“This technology can cut costs significantly by reducing business travel: Cisco Systems, for example, saved \$45 million in 2007 by using the company’s network of 170 telepresence terminals to hold 28,000 meetings virtually instead of travelling. Accenture achieved a 300% to 500% return on the monthly operating costs of its 30 telepresence terminals through significant savings in business travel. (...)”

Additional benefits:

- Reduce business travel costs
- Eliminate the need to be physically present in telepresence rooms
- Increase productivity by minimising time spent travelling
- Reduce investment in telepresence terminals with some users accessing conferences via mobile devices.

### Potential barriers:

- High bandwidth required for telepresence means adequate next generation access network must be available to offer access via mobile
- High cost of telepresence terminals (from \$80,000 to more than \$300,000 for Cisco's range of products) means that only large companies are likely to make the initial investment."

Insights such as these are potential "building blocks" of any business case to implement mobile telepresence – and involve a lot of finance and management accounting concepts. Better get back to the textbook to master them...