



At home in the world: telecom boss Dino Lalvani

HONG KONG

medium

## A driving force


Dino Lalvani looks as if he belongs on the Côte d'Azur rather than in the boardroom. But the 36-year-old chairman of Binatone, the international consumer electronics and telecom company, is all business.

Binatone has just produced what many call the ugliest mobile phone in the world. The SpeakEasy has huge buttons, no smart-phone functions and is aimed at a very clear market: seniors. "We don't want to be mainstream. Niche is where the money is," Lalvani told *The Times*.

Dino Lalvani was born into the superrich Lalvani family in 1973. His father and uncle started Binatone in the 1950s while at university in Leeds, and became rich producing basic, low-priced electronic goods. Lalvani was educated in England and went on to study business at Babson College in Wellesley, Massachusetts. He worked his way up through the company and finally bought it from his father in 2008.

The business is based in Hong Kong, with European offices in London. This means a lot of travelling. Lalvani spends one week each in London and the US every month. Back in Hong Kong, he works long days, using his phone when he's out of the office. "This business is my life," he says.

The next thing? Throwaway mobiles that will work without a SIM card, anywhere in the world. Lalvani is prepared to challenge mobile phone operators by starting his own network.

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"A person can make money, but money can't make a person"

Country singer Dolly Parton, 63



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Source: Global Humanitarian Forum [www.ghf-genewa.org](http://www.ghf-genewa.org)

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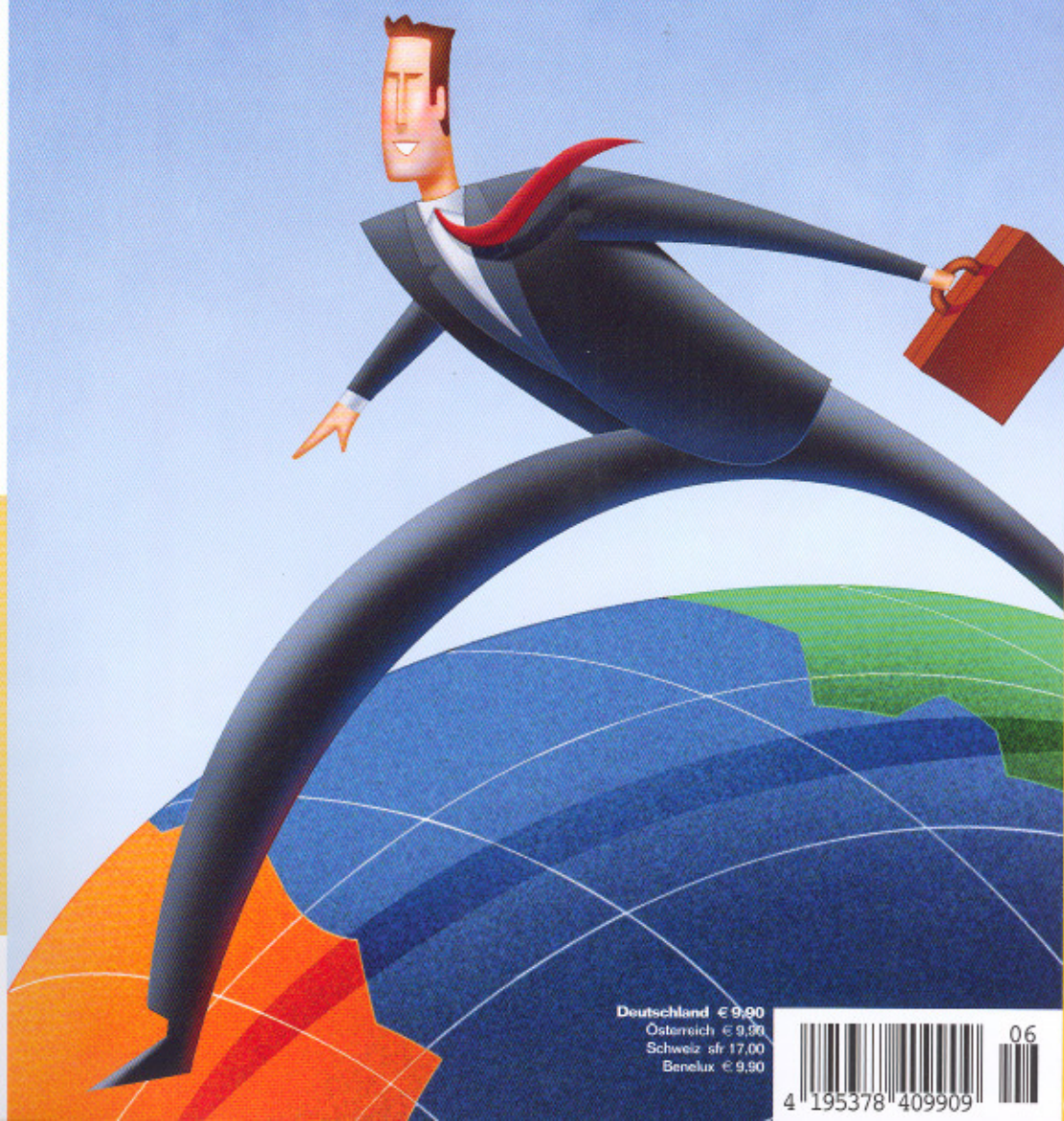
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