

THE IMPORTANCE OF MOBILE TRAFFIC: BAIDU BUYS 91 WIRELESS FOR \$1.9 BILLION

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Baidu, China's largest search portal, recently bought the 91 Wireless app store for \$1.9 billion from NetDragon WebSoft. The app store reported having had more than 10 billion downloaded apps that it distributes through various tools such as 91 assistant, 91 Launcher and others.

If Baidu and Google are the gateways to the Web, what will be the gateway to mobile? On the one hand, entry will undoubtedly continue to be through the mobile Web and here it will be difficult to dispute the dominance of search engines such as Baidu and Google who have already consolidated their hegemony for years. However, in the world of apps, this hegemony does not yet exist and must be disputed among all kinds of aggregators, search engines and app recommenders that can accumulate very high traffic.

Baidu has been aware of its weakness in the field of apps and has wanted to strengthen its position by buying this company against, above all, Google and its Google Play, given the growing popularity of the Android operating system in China. From what it seems, this bet is paying off: its sales have grown by approximately 40% in the last year, making the mobile business already account for more than 10%.

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