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Participants illustrating use of mobile app prototype to judges at 2013 i² Competition Finals

i² Competition 2014 Finalists Announced

The 2014 NTRC's Innovations and Ideas Competition (*i² Competition*) has now advanced past the preliminary stage. The preliminaries ran from November 17—November 20, 2014. During the preliminaries, participants presented a detailed description of their idea or mobile application to a panel of judges consisting of key ICT personnel in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and individuals from various sectors including the Ministry of Education, Chamber of Industry and Commerce. The secondary schools were categorized into 3 groups based on their geographical location, and the tertiary institutions remained as another group by itself. All of these groups were judged at separate preliminary events in their zones.

Based on the judging, the two highest ranking teams in both ideas and mobile application categories of each zone were selected to enter in the grand finals which is scheduled to take place on January 15, 2015 at the NIS Training room. Finalists in the Mobile Application category will be expected to showcase a working prototype or model of their mobile application from the preliminary round. On the other hand the finalists in the Ideas category would be expected to present to the panel of judges what applications/apparatuses or other outcomes may result from their ideas. Students would have a maximum of 7 minutes to present and a 5 minute period for questioning by the panel of judges.

Participants can receive up to EC\$3,500 in cash prizes and other gifts from partners in the competition. In last year's competition, students walked away with 4G handsets from LIME, Blackberry Z10s and Q10s from Digicel and also free internet service from Karib Cable.

The finalists of the competition have been published on the NTRC's website, Facebook page and also in the local Searchlight Newspaper.

Source: [NTRC](#)

Cyber Tips for Your Business



Online Security

Install anti-virus software on all systems, and keep all software and web browsers up to date.

Consider restricting access to inappropriate websites to lessen the risk of being exposed to malware

Increase protection of your networks, including wireless networks, against external attacks through the use of firewalls, proxies, access lists and other measures.

Change any default passwords for any IT equipment or service.

Remove any software or hardware that you no longer need, ensuring that no sensitive information is stored on it when disposed of.

If your business is disrupted or attacked, ensure that the response includes removing any ongoing threat such as malware, understanding the cause of the incident and, if appropriate, addressing any gaps in your security that have been identified following the incident.

Payphone & Internet Service available at major tourist sites in St. Vincent.



Payphone installed at a Tourism site in Belmont, St. Vincent.

Visitors to several tourism sites in St. Vincent and the Grenadines can now enjoy high speed internet access and voice telephony service as a result of the NTRC's Payphone Project. The contract for this project was signed with Telecommunications provider LIME for a total of EC\$ 1.4 million dollars. Under this project, 12 recently established tourism sites, several frequented beaches and selected locations along the Windward and Leeward main roads of St. Vincent and the Grenadines have been outfitted with payphones. At each of the tourism sites, there is also high speed broadband service which is accessed via Wi-Fi by high powered external access points. To get on to the network at these sites, a card must be purchased to retrieve a code which would grant access to the internet. On the other hand, one can make use their credit / debit cards or coins to make calls via the payphones.

Additionally, security cameras have also been installed at the Tourism sites. While the main purpose of the cameras are to minimize the threat of vandalism to the payphones, they also provide some form of security to these locations as the video feeds are monitored by the coast guards.

Source: [NTRC](#)

Dominica Hosts Workshop on Cybersecurity & ICT Policy



The Ministry of Information, Telecommunications and Constituency Empowerment in collaboration with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Area Office based in Barbados and the Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) based in Trinidad conducted a two (2)-Day ICT Workshop on finalizing the National ICT Policy for Dominica earlier, November 2014.

One of the objectives of this workshop was to update the existing National Draft ICT Policy of 2009 with the view of identifying the "best-in-class" methodology to facilitate the implementation of communication and information systems for the effective management of various sectors within the public service and the nation by extension. Another objective was to enhance and update the Draft Document in view of the role of the inclusion of Cybersecurity and Broadband technology in order for participants to have a better understanding of the need for network security and increased access to and efficiency in ICT services while decreasing costs. They also examined the socio-economic importance and linkages of Cybersecurity and Broadband Access Technologies through the use of ICT in developing states and in particular, Dominica in job creation, economic development and capacity building in a National ICT Plan.

Telecommunications minister, Ambrose George, who delivered the feature address at the opening ceremony said the workshop will enable Dominica to seek international access on cyber crime.

"Dominica is one of the pioneer countries in CARICOM in developing a cyber security strategy against the fight on cyber crime and will be seeking accession to the Budapest Convention on cyber crime in its quest in establishing Dominica as a relatively safe haven to do online business and thereby attracting direct and indirect investment to the country," George said.

He added that "The ministry's, and by extension the government's ICT vision and strategy, has been people-centric and not technology focused as technology must only be seen as an enabler or facilitator for such services, while the development of people and meeting their needs and aspirations are paramount."

Source: [Dominica News Online](#)

19th ITU Plenipotentiary Conference considered a success



ITU's 19th Plenipotentiary Conference held in Busan, Korea closed its doors on November 7, 2014 with delegates from around the world resoundingly reaffirming ITU's essential role in global ICT development, and extending the Union's mandate in emerging areas including harnessing ICTs to promote gender empowerment and to help address urgent issues such as youth unemployment, global disease control and aeronautical safety.

The conference took place from 20 October to 7 November at BEXCO conference and exhibition centre in Busan, Korea, under the expert chairmanship of Mr Wonki Min, Assistant Minister at Korea's Ministry of Science, ICT and Future Planning.

"PP-14 accomplished so much and produced so many fruitful outcomes," said Mr. Min. "Over 400 proposals were submitted to the conference by ITU Member States, generating thousands of hours of negotiations, with small drafting groups often meeting through the weekends and evenings," he said.

Mr. Min went on to congratulate delegates for their strong commitment to finding global consensus. "ITU has a long tradition of consensus-building, but it is not until you experience it in person that you really understand and appreciate how effective and valuable this tradition is," he said.

This year, the conference saw a number of new side-events designed to engage members from government, the private sector and civil society in ITU's work in cross-sectoral issues, including: GEM-Tech Awards, Young ICT Policy Leaders Program, Connect 2020 Round tables, MOU between Busan and ITU for further development of Youth and Training opportunities.

Source: [ITU](#)



ITU releases annual global ICT data & ICT Development Index country rankings

Over three billion people are now online and information and communication technology (ICT) growth remains buoyant in just about every country worldwide, according to ITU's flagship annual Measuring the Information Society Report which was released on November 24, 2014. The report is widely recognised as the repository of the world's most reliable and impartial global data and analysis on the state of global ICT development, and is extensively relied upon by governments, financial institutions and private sector analysts worldwide.

Latest data show that Internet use continues to grow steadily, at 6.6% globally in 2014 (3.3% in developed countries, 8.7% in the developing world). The number of Internet users in developing countries has doubled in five years (2009-2014), with two thirds of all people online now living in the developing world.

Of the 4.3 billion people not yet using the Internet, 90% live in developing countries. In the world's 42 Least Connected Countries (LCCs), which are home to 2.5 billion people, access to ICTs remains largely out of reach, particularly for these countries' large rural populations.

In the mobile cellular segment, the report estimates that by end 2014 there will be seven billion mobile subscriptions, roughly corresponding to the total global population. But it warns against concluding that everyone is connected; instead, many users have multiple subscriptions, with global growth figures sometimes translating into little real improvement in the level of connectivity of those at the very bottom of the pyramid. An estimated 450 million people worldwide live in places which are still out of reach of mobile cellular service.

Encouragingly, the report notes substantial improvements in access to international bandwidth in poorer countries, with developing nations' share of total global international bandwidth rising from just 9% in 2004 to over 30% today. But lack of sufficient international Internet bandwidth in many of the LCCs remains an important barrier to ICT uptake in these countries, and often limits the quality of Internet access.

This year's report features a special focus on the potential of 'big data' from ICT devices and applications to improve public services like healthcare, education and environmental management, with the increasing digitization of human activity making it possible to gather and analyse data from a huge range of disparate sources.

Source: [ITU](#)



Bidding in US Government Auction of Airwaves Reaches \$34 Billion

A government auction of airwaves for use in mobile broadband has blown through presale estimates, becoming the biggest auction in the Federal Communications Commission's history and signaling that wireless companies expect demand for Internet access by smartphones to continue to soar.

And it's not over yet.

Companies bid more than \$34 billion earlier in November for six blocks of airwaves, totaling 65 MHz of the electromagnetic spectrum, being sold by the F.C.C. That total is more than three times the \$10.5 billion reserve price that the commission put on the sale, the first offering of previously unavailable airwaves in six years.

Prices are likely to rise further, because the auction has no definite end and could continue for days or weeks. The previous record was \$18.9 billion raised in a 2008 sale of airwaves. Because of their lower frequency, the spectrum in question is considered more attractive for wireless phone use.

The auction is a significant victory for the F.C.C. and the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, the agency in the Commerce Department that oversees the nation's communications systems. It makes it much likelier that broadcast stations might be willing to give up or move their positions on the spectrum to free up airwaves to be sold in the 2016 auction, because they will receive a portion of the proceeds as an incentive. Also, about \$7 billion of the proceeds will be used to finance the building of a nationwide public-safety communications network, known as FirstNet, with the remainder going to the Treasury.

Source: [The New York Times](#)

Net Neutrality Rules Delayed to 2015 as FCC Responds to Obama's Plan



Net neutrality has been a big topic this year and that's set to continue into 2015. Tom Wheeler, the chair of the Federal Communications Commission, originally said that he wanted to have new rules in place by the end of the year. However, that's unlikely after comments from US President Obama earlier in November 2014.

President Obama has called on the FCC to reclassify consumer broadband service under Title II of the Telecommunications Act, which would treat Internet service providers as common carriers and restrict them from favoring particular sites and services. In a statement, Obama added that the FCC should omit "rate regulation and other provisions less relevant to broadband services."

The notion of reclassifying ISPs as common carriers has come up before as an obvious way to restore net neutrality after a court threw out the existing rules back in January. However, opponents claim the reclassification would place restrictions on providers that would hinder growth.

Wheeler praised Obama's statement, but avoided committing to it and asserted that the FCC was an independent agency. While Wheeler has consistently spoken in favor of an open Internet, his proposal for new rules released in April drew ire for allowing ISPs to introduce paid prioritization of Internet traffic. Right now, Wheeler appears to be seeking a middle path that pleases both the public and ISPs.

Source: [Telecom Monthly](#)

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