THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY COMMISSION

ICT NEWSLETTER

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Panel of Judges at Preliminary Judging event for Tertiary Institutions.

20 Groups advance to Finals of NTRC's i^2 Competition

The National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC), has recently held three preliminary judging events for its third annual Ideas and Innovation Competition (i^2 Competition.). The Preliminary Judging events were held on November 16, 2015 for Secondary School participants on mainland St. Vincent; on November 18, 2015 at Union Island for Secondary school participants there; and on November 23, 2015 for the Tertiary Institutions.

At the preliminary events, students were given eight (8) minutes to make a presentation of their Idea or mobile application. This presentation was followed by a round of questions from a panel of five (5) judges. The criteria used for judging the Ideas are as follows: Presentation, Impact, Innovation and how well they answered the judges' questions. The criteria for the mobile application are: Presentation, Impact, Content, Design and how well they answered the Judges' questions.

Feedback received from attendees at the preliminaries suggest that they were impressed by the presentations of the secondary level participants as it was evident that they conducted thorough research on their project. Additionally, they displayed confidence in responding to challenging questions that were put forward by the judges.

At the end of the preliminaries, after the judges' scores were tabulated, the top 5 ranking groups were selected from each of the Idea and Mobile application category of the Secondary Schools division. The same was done for the tertiary division which brings to a total of 20 groups that will advance to the finals. The finals of the i^2 competition is scheduled to be held on 14th January 2016 at the NIS Conference Room, 3rd Floor of the NIS Building. Finalists can be found at the NTRC's website here.

Dealing with Cyberbullies

What is Cyberbullying?
Cyberbullying refers to practice of using technology to harass, or bully, someone else. Bullies used to be restricted to methods such as physical intimidation, postal mail, or the telephone. Now, developments in electronic media offer forums such as email, instant messaging, web pages, and digital photos to add to the arsenal. Computers, cell phones, and tablets are current tools that are being used to conduct an old practice.

How can you protect yourself or your children?

Teach your children good online habits - Explain the risks of technology, and teach children how to be responsible online. Reduce their risk of becoming cyberbullies by setting guidelines for and monitoring their use of the internet and other electronic media

Keep lines of communication open - Regularly talk to your children about their online activities so that they feel comfortable telling you if they are being victimized.

Limit availability of personal information - Limiting the number of people who have access to contact information or details about interests, habits, or employment reduces exposure to bullies that you or your child do not know. This may limit the risk of becoming a victim and may make it easier to identify the bully if you or your child are victimized.

US-Cert

ECTEL Member States moving closer to implementing number portability

Member States of the Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority ECTEL advanced plans to move to number portability in November 2015.

Number Portability (NP) enables telephone users to retain their telephone number when changing from one network operator to another. It is considered to be a key factor in enhancing competition in a multi-operator environment. Some of its benefits include: elimination of the cost of businesses and residential customers of number change and the tedious process of informing others of this change; lowering of the cost of switching service providers; more efficient allocation of limited numbering resources and a more level competitive environment, with lowered barriers to entry for new service providers.

ECTEL's Director of Technical Services Andrew Millet says the two services that will be launched are mobile and fixed line portability. According to Millet, mobile users will be able to change from one provider to another without the need to change their number, and similarly for fixed line customers. Millet says that although work will commence on both services immediately, it is expected that mobile portability will be launched first, hopefully before the end of 2016, followed by fixed line portability.

ECTEL held a workshop on Wednesday, November 18, 2015 to advance the process. The workshop marked the official commencement of work to introduce number portability to all ECTEL Member States; Grenada, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Commonwealth of Dominica, Saint Lucia and St. Kitts and Nevis. This project is expected to increase the telecommunications competitive environment and give more power to consumers of telecommunications services.

Source: ECTEL

OAS partners with Government of Dominica to train 40 IT teachers

The Organization of American States (OAS), through its Development Cooperation Fund (DCF) is partnering with the Government of Dominica to train teachers in the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) into the curriculum of schools across the country.

Under the OAS-DCF program, forty (40) teachers of secondary schools will be professionally trained and certified and will form a cadre of trainers to train additional teachers in the effective use of ICT in classroom instruction.

Minister for Information, Science, Telecommunications and Technology, Kelver Darroux hailed the partnership between the OAS and Dominica as "extremely relevant" since it underpins government's One Tablet per Child Initiative geared towards ensuring that Dominican students are equipped with the 21st century technology skills.

"We believe that if our citizens are to receive knowledge and skills that are relevant and up to date with the changing realities of the global environment, they must be equipped with the relevant tools".

"We will agree that in light of the advances in communication, information, and the corresponding technologies, ICTs must be given greater prominence in the national curriculum. The approach to instruction in the classroom must now be re-conceptualized to provide students with meaningful experiences that will positon them to be successful players in the competitive global marketplace," Minister Darroux said.

He noted that the development of the ICT sector is high on government's agenda, which is evident through the One Tablet Per Child Initiative. Over seven thousand five hundred tablets were distributed to secondary school and college students through that initiative.

"We recognize however that in order to derive maximum benefit from the new devices, our teachers must be trained to employ new teaching methodologies and incorporate ICT in their instructions," Mr Darroux said.

Training and certification are being provided by Microsoft, which has developed an internationally recognized curriculum for teachers on the use of ICT, based on UNESCO guidelines.

Source: Dominica Vibes via ICT Pulse

LIME cracks down on illegal downloads in Grenada

NowGrenada.com has reported that senior officials at LIME have confirmed that the company has had its lawyers issue “Cease and Desist” notices to a number of subscribers of its Internet service, because monitoring by owners of copyrighted materials on the Internet has reveal that owners of IP addresses traced to Grenada are engaging in illegal downloading and streaming.

Brent McIntosh who is a member of the company’s management team, said that the problem is mainly in the area of downloading and streaming of movies and music. “Each person who becomes our subscriber to the Internet service is given a unique IP address, and monitoring by right holders have identified that some of these addresses which belong to us are engaging in the illegal activity,” McIntosh told a public forum organised by the National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) in observance of its 15th anniversary.

“What happens, is that we, as the Internet Service Provider (ISP), will receive copyright infringement notices informing us about the infringement, and at the same time requesting that the necessary legal action is engaged,” McIntosh told the more than 50 persons many of whom were young adults. “We in turn will have our lawyers send out those notices to the person assigned the IP address that was identified in the copyright infringement notice we received, asking them to stop the act.

There are subscribers who have received more than one notice, but they continue the practice, and as a result a number of subscribers’ contracts were terminated,” he said. He further explained that the Terms and Conditions in the contract signed when a person becomes a subscriber or accepts the company’s service, clearly spells out the consequences of engaging in copyright infringement. On average, the company receives between 3 to 5 copyright infringements notices per week from rights owners, and some of these subscribers are now getting classified as “repeat offenders” because they will reactive services using different names when applying for the services.

Source: WestIndianLawyers.com

Managing Director of the NTRC Craig Nesty, presenting the electronics to Chairperson of the Board of the Alpha Centre, Claudia Bellot

NTRC Dominica donates teaching electronics to Alpha Centre

The Alpha Centre, which caters to students who are disabled and/or challenged, is now better equipped to do so following a donation of up to date software and electronic devices.

The National Telecommunication and Regulatory Commission (NTRC) Dominica on Wednesday 25 November 2015 donated ten tablets, five two in one touch screen laptops, software, desk and other accessories such as headsets, keyboards and cases to assist in the teaching process at the Centre.

This was an initiative of the Universal Service Fund. A major component of this project is capacity building and as such, consultant Donna Lee St John, who is also a special education teacher and trainer at the Alpha Centre, helped to determine the best software to purchase for children with special needs and trained the teachers in the use of the software.

Mrs St John pointed out that the new software and equipment will be a change in the system at the Alpha Center which is an excellent change as the Alpha Centre “cannot be forgotten in our quest to transform the quality of education that all children receive”.

“This endeavor seeks change. Change in the way we teach as special education teachers, change in the way in which our high performing special needs students have not been given a chance to enter into the classrooms. These changes, if embraced correctly, will bring about a complete turnaround in our society and the way that they view special education,” Mrs St John noted.

“Thanks to the NTRC, these students now have access to interactive technology which will greatly improve teaching and learning in mathematics, reading, and communication for children with autism, Asperger syndrome, down syndrome, mental dis-capacities, augmentative and alternative communicative disorders,” Mrs St. John indicated.

Source: DomincaVibes

Li-fi 100 times faster than wi-fi

A new method of delivering data, which uses the visible spectrum rather than radio waves, has been tested in a working office.

Li-fi can deliver internet access 100 times faster than traditional wi-fi, offering speeds of up to 1Gbps (gigabit per second).

It requires a light source, such as a standard LED bulb, an internet connection and a photo detector.

It was tested in November 2015 by Estonian start-up Velmenni, in Tallinn.

Velmenni used a li-fi-enabled light bulb to transmit data at speeds of 1Gbps. Laboratory tests have shown theoretical speeds of up to 224Gbps.

It was tested in an office, to allow workers to access the internet and in an industrial space, where it provided a smart lighting solution.

Speaking to the International Business Times, chief executive Deepak Solanki said that the technology could reach consumers "within three to four years".

One of the big advantages of li-fi is the fact that, unlike wi-fi, it does not interfere with other radio signals, so could be utilised on aircraft and in other places where interference is an issue.

Source: BCC

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

ITU's flagship annual Measuring the Information Society Report, released today, reveals that 3.2 billion people are now online, representing 43.4% of the global population, while mobile-cellular subscriptions have reached almost 7.1 billion worldwide, with over 95% of the global population now covered by a mobile-cellular signal.

The report also notes that all 167 economies included in the ITU's ICT Development Index (IDI) improved their IDI values between 2010 and 2015 – meaning that levels of information and communication technology (ICT) access, use and skills continue to improve all around the world.

The Measuring the Information Society Report is widely recognized 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, international organizations, development banks and private sector analysts worldwide.

"ICTs will be essential in meeting each and every one of the 17 newly-agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," said ITU Secretary-General Houlin Zhao, "and this report plays an important role in the SDG process. Without measurement and reporting, we cannot track the progress being made, and this is why ITU gathers data and publishes this important report each year."

"ITU's work in gathering and publishing statistics allows us to monitor the real progress being made in ICT development worldwide," said Brahima Sanou, Director of ITU's Telecommunication Development Bureau, which produces the report each year. "Progress is encouraging in many areas but more needs to be done – especially in the world's poorest and remotest regions, where ICTs can arguably make the biggest difference, and help bring people everywhere out of extreme poverty."

Source: ITU

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