NTRC

Mr. Apollo Knights (Director, NTRC) speaking at handing over ceremony.

NTRC hands over computers to 6 local institutions.

On Tuesday, December 6, 2016, the NTRC handed over a total of ten (10) computers to six (6) local institutions at a handing over ceremony at the National Insurance Services (NIS) Training room,1st Floor of NIS Building, Kingstown. In his opening remarks, NTRC's Director, Mr. Apollo Knights said that the donation of the computers initiated with a discussion between himself and Mr. Sylvester Cadette, Programme Officer at The International Telecommunications Union (ITU) earlier this year. The Director added that this was followed up with a formal request from the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to ITU. The computers which are valued collectively at thirty seven thousand eastern Caribbean dollars have Intel Core i5 processor, 8 Gb RAM and 1 TB solid state hard drives which should enhance processing speed.

The recipients of the computers were: The Kingstown Day Nursery represented by Ms. Nina Maloney; SVG National Trust represented by Deidre Millington-Myers; Point Village, Stubbs, Enhams and Rose Hall Community Centers represented by Mr. Roger Young of Ministry of National Mobilisation; and Paget Farm Community Library represented by Ms. Leah Belmar.

Mr. Knights indicated that a lot of thought went into selecting the recipients of the computers. The donation to the community centers and the Paget Farm library will impact various persons in the respective communities; the donation to Kingstown day nursery will impact the young ones which are the future leaders of St. Vincent; and the donation to the SVG National Trust will assist in their operations of the preservation of the heritage of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

All representatives were given an opportunity to give brief remarks at the handing over ceremony in which they expressed their gratitude for the donation and promised that the computers would be put to good use.

Source: NTRC

How to Protect your Mobile Devices

Symantec reports that nearly 40% of mobile device users have experienced mobile cyber crime. Here are some tips on how to protect your devices.

1. Install applications from trusted sources. Users must recognize that some applications may be malicious. If an app is requesting more permissions than seems necessary, do not install it.

2. Don't jailbreak your device. To "jailbreak" or to "root" a device means to bypass important controls and gain full access to the operating system. Doing this will usually void the warranty and enables applications, including malicious ones, to bypass controls and access the data owned by other apps.

3. Disable unwanted services. Capabilities such as Bluetooth and NFC can provide ease and convenience in using your smartphone. They can also provide an easy way for a nearby, unauthorized user to gain access to your data. Turn these features off when they are not required.

4. Keep Software Updated. Updated software normally contains fixes to security vulnerabilities on your mobile device.

16 Groups advance to finals of NTRC's 4th annual i^2 Competition.

A total of sixteen (16) groups have advanced to the finals of NTRC's Ideas and Innovation (i^2) Competition which is scheduled to take place on Thursday, January 19, 2017 at the NIS Conference Room at 9:30 AM. The top ranking groups were selected after the preliminary judging round of the competition which concluded on December 16, 2016 at the Union Island Secondary School.

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.

Finalists in the competition can win upto EC$3,500 in cash and other prizes from partners and local telecommunications services providers.

Partners of the 4th annual i^2 Competition include: St. Vincent Brewery Ltd., Courts, Massy Stores Supermarket, St. Vincent & the Grenadines Broadcasting Corporation, The Searchlight Newspaper, National Insurance Services, Center for Enterprise Development, National Broadcasting Corporation, Fanfare Events, King Computer Corporation and Right Stuff.

Source: NTRC

Merry Christmas

May Peace, Joy, Hope and Happiness be yours during this Holiday Season and throughout the New Year

Commissioners & Staff of NTRC

NTRC (Dominica) continues to contribute to development of ICT in Dominica

The National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) Dominica through the Universal Service Fund (USF) is once again contributing to the development of Information Technology on the island.

The NTRC donated over $23,000.00 worth of ICT equipment towards the formation of a computer lab at the Christian Union Primary School located in Goodwill.

Engineer at the NTRC Mr. George James handed the equipment to the Principal and Chairpersons of the board and spoke to the students on the functions and role of the NTRC and USF. Mr. James elaborated that the funds are a contribution by the telecommunications service providers as specified under the law and by order of the minister. He also mentions that this donation is an opportunity for the students to develop their Information Technology skills.

The Christian Union Primary School Principal, Ms. Nathalie Laville, expressed her gratitude towards the NTRC for a prompt response to her request and assured the NTRC that these equipment will go a long way in the development of the students at the Christian Union Primary School. In addition, the representatives of Board of Directors, auxiliary staffs extended their deepest appreciation to the NTRC for their kind donation and plans to enhance their learning in various subject areas.

The NTRC has the responsibility for the management of the Universal Service Fund which was established by Statutory Regulatory Order 34 of 2009 to promote universal telecommunication service throughout Dominica and to encourage efficient access to and use of telecommunication networks and services throughout Dominica, with special focus on rural, under-served and maritime areas, with a goal to help promote social, educational and economic development.

Source: Dominica News Online

NTRC (Dominica) presents HAM software to schools

The National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) in collaboration with HAM Radio (HAM-INICA) and the Dominica State College (DSC) made an official presentation of HAM software to a number of schools. The event took place at the Dominica State College's auditorium on November 23rd, 2016.

Students of the different high schools, including the St. Marys Academy as well as members of the NTRC and HAM-INICA board, were present at the event.

The HAM radio, otherwise known as 'Amateur Radio', is a software/service that brings people together through communication, either across the island or across the globe without the use of internet or cell phones.

Executive Director of the NTRC Craig Nesty, in an interview with Dominica News Online (DNO) outlined the purpose of the HAM software as it relates to effective and efficient communication.

"What we are trying to do is revitalize HAM-radio operations. The beauty about HAM radio is that it can be built very simply using a battery and antenna. It makes communication a lot more resilient and a lot more robust," he stated.

Nesty hopes to have the HAM radio go nationwide where there is a creation of awareness for HAM-radio and for it to be introduced in various schools island wide.

"It is about a thousand hobbies in one, so you can do electronics, you can do basic communications, learn about a number of things and have fun," he said.

Nesty highlighted one of the main goals of the software which is to raise awareness and "invite persons who are interested in the HAM radio to know that there is an opportunity there."

He hopes that after "going back to the drawing board", in the next 5 or 6 years every school will have as part of their curriculum 'HAM-radio operations.'

As a period of interaction with the HAM radio program presentation, the students present were to make two-member teams and engage in a competition that required the use of the HAM software itself.

Source: Dominica News Online

Cuba signs deal with Google for faster access

HAVANA, Cuba (AFP) — Cuba signed a deal with Google on December 12th to enable faster access to content from the US tech giant on the communist island, where internet service is notoriously limited and slow.

Eric Schmidt, executive chairman of Google parent company Alphabet, signed the deal in Havana alongside the head of Cuban state telecommunications company Etecsa, Mayra Arevich.

Under the deal, Cuba will gain access to a network called Google Global Cache, which stores content from Google sites such as Gmail and YouTube on local servers, accelerating users' access, Google said in a statement.

"This agreement will enable users in Cuba to reduce access time for Google internet content, bringing better speed and quality," Etecsa said.

Cuba has one of the lowest internet access rates in the world.

Last year, just one-third of Cubans went online, according to official statistics.

The island has some 900 state-run internet cafes and 200 wifi hotspots. But connecting costs US$2 an hour, a fortune in a country where the average monthly income is US$29.

Only restricted professions such as journalists and doctors are allowed internet service at home.

The government has allowed Cubans to access some Google content since 2014, but connection times can be extremely slow.

Currently, all data arrives via fiber optic cable from Venezuela.

Expanding Cubans' internet access was one of the stated goals of US President Barack Obama's rapprochement with the island, announced in December 2014.

The Google deal comes as the historic thaw between the old Cold War foes faces an uncertain future under President-elect Donald Trump.

Trump, who takes office on January 20, has criticized Obama for not extracting more concessions from Cuba on democracy, human rights and the economy.

Source: Jamaica Observer via ICT Pulse

Virgin Media broadband will be DOWN until 2017, company reveals

Virgin Media recently announced its second price rise of 2016 claiming the extra money would be used to make the service "bigger and better than ever before."

However, just months after customers were hit with the increase some are being warned to expect a total loss of service until mid January.

Some Virgin Media broadband users in south west London are suffering broadband blackouts with internet access going offline every evening.

The service outage appears to hit homes at around 7pm with many unable to get back online until the early hours of the morning.

To make matters worse, Virgin says the issues won't be fixed until January 18th 2017 meaning many will be without broadband over Christmas and the New Year celebrations.

In a statement to Express.co.uk, a Virgin Media spokesperson said: "We are aware of an issue affecting some customers' broadband services...and are working hard to resolve it as quickly as possible. We apologise to customers for any inconvenience experienced."

And it seems other parts of the UK are also facing problems with Twitter full of people complaining of speed problems and connection issues.

Source: Express

T-Mobile Asks Regulators to Open Up More Licensed Spectrum

Wireless carriers often and predictably cite a severe shortage when it comes to the airwaves that cellular networks are built on. This is nothing new, even if in some cases the public posturing is only that; AT&T currently has approximately 40 MHz of unused spectrum and Verizon has been known to hoard spectrum in the past. Still, making more spectrum available certainly helps the wireless industry, and spectrum is fundamentally critical to carrier competitiveness.

T-Mobile (NASDAQ: TMUS) is now asking regulators to open up more licensed spectrum.

Over the past decade or so, T-Mobile has become one of the biggest proponents of Wi-Fi calling, in part as a way to ease up network congestion by offloading traffic to Wi-Fi networks that operate on unlicensed spectrum bands (2.4 GHz and 5 GHz). Simply put, focusing on promoting Wi-Fi calling helped the carrier make up for a weaker spectrum position, which was also holding back its network performance. That was then, and these days T-Mobile has effectively caught up in terms of network performance.

Over the summer, the FCC released plans to open up millimeter wave bands (those above 24 GHz) to forthcoming 5G technologies, but T-Mobile takes issue with the commission's emphasis on unlicensed use.

Furthermore, T-Mobile estimates that every 10 MHz of spectrum that is licensed adds $3 billion to GDP while supporting over 200,000 new jobs. The company believes that the FCC can and should be doing more to promote wireless innovation, and wants it to make more spectrum available for licensed use. There's also a huge swath of spectrum in the 64-71 GHz band that the FCC shrugged off, but T-Mobile believes this band has a lot of potential for licensed use. The carrier notes that the same was said of the 28 and 39 GHz bands a few years ago, which were previously considered unsuitable for licensed mobile operations but are now considered "desirable" bands for licensed mobile operations.

Source: Fox Business

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