



THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY COMMISSION

# ICT NEWSLETTER

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A section of the audience at the second annual NTRC's *i*<sup>2</sup> Competition Grand Finale & Prize Giving Ceremony



## Stay Safe on Social Networks

Social networking sites rely on connections and communication, so they encourage you to provide a certain amount of personal information. When deciding how much information to reveal, people may not exercise the same amount of caution as they would when meeting someone in person. The internet provides a sense of anonymity and security, hence people tailor information for their friends to read, forgetting that others may see it.

Here are some tips to protect yourself on social networks:

**Limit the amount of personal information you post** - Do not post information that would make you vulnerable, such as your address or information about your schedule or routine.

**Be wary of strangers** - Consider limiting who are able to contact you on these sites.

## Students put forward imaginative ideas at NTRC's Second Annual *i*<sup>2</sup> Competition

Several groups from various secondary and tertiary educational institutions across St. Vincent and the Grenadines participated in the second annual innovation and ideas (*i*<sup>2</sup>) competition organized by the NTRC. This event took place at the NIS' Main Conference room on January 15, 2015. The competition provided a forum for the Secondary and Tertiary students to display their innovations in producing mobile applications or ideas that would essentially aid the Government's operations resulting in saving financial resources. The ideas and applications proposed included providing electronic access to many of the government services for which there are currently long processes.

In his feature address, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade, Commerce and IT, Senator the Honourable Camillo Gonsalves indicated that the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is interesting in implementing some of the ideas that were presented in the 2014 Competition. He added that the ideas have real merit in their potential to streamline and update and upgrade the Public service, and will soon be implemented. The Minister also indicated that he was pleased with the increased level of participation of groups in the 2015 competition when compared with 2014 competition.

The event came to a close in the evening with the relevant groups and mentors receiving cash prizes from the NTRC and other special prizes from the three main telecommunications service providers in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, namely, LIME, Digicel and Karib Cable. This year, the NTRC partnered with numerous other entities to make the competition a success, such entities included Searchlight Newspaper, SVG Broadcasting Cooperation, Toastmasters International, Hot 97 and National Insurance Services.

The Grand Finale and Prize Giving Ceremony was streamed live over the internet via ITFX Digital Solutions such that persons in the diaspora and those who were unable to attend physically could have gotten the opportunity to look at the students' presentations. Project summaries and media from the competition are currently being cataloged and would be posted on the NTRC's website for the public's viewing.

Source: NTRC

## Broadband Regulatory Safeguards training workshop held in St. Vincent.

A three day workshop facilitated by The Caribbean Regional Communications Infrastructure Program (CARCIP), The Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority (ECTEL) and The Caribbean Telecommunications Union (CTU) was held in St. Vincent during the period January 19th—21st 2015. The main focus of this workshop was on Broadband Regulatory Safeguards in the Era of Convergence and was attended by representatives of the ECTEL member states and the Caribbean Telecommunications Union. The main facilitator for the workshop was Mr. Calvin Monson, Senior Vice-President, Telecommunications, Castalia Strategic Advisors, Washington DC, USA. Mr. Monson was instrumental in explaining the electronic communications convergence and its implications for regulation; the benefits related to open access, consumer protection and broadband quality of service in an era of electronic communication convergence; regulatory tools and safeguards applicable in the current and future environment. Mr. Monson also enlightened participants on the topic of Internet Exchange Points (IXPs). IXPs which are now being deployed in various Caribbean countries were identified as infrastructure put in place to allow networks (internet service providers; governments; content providers) to interconnect directly rather than through expensive international third party networks. IXPs can result in an overall improved experience for consumers as the time to fetch locally hosted content would be shorter. The group discussed that although IXPs may result in a result in less overseas traffic, this may not translate to reduced broadband subscription costs for consumers as the providers may opt to offer more bandwidth to their subscribers at the same cost.

Source: NTRC

## CTU Celebrates 25th Anniversary with ICT Week Conference



Several Caribbean Government ministers, regional regulators and policy makers, senior private sector officials, technology researchers are gathering in Port of Spain, Trinidad, from February 2 to 6, for the CTU 25th Anniversary ICT Week. The event provides a forum for delegates to share perspectives on how information and communications technology is uncovering unprecedented opportunities and new challenges for Caribbean development.

At the opening Ceremony, Grenada's Prime Minister, Dr. Hon. Keith Mitchell told the gathering that "The age of 25 is past the age of maturity. The CTU is therefore a fully-fledged adult, well-equipped to provide leadership to the ICT Cluster. There are also the Senior ICT officials from each country and the ICT lead agencies, many of whom are gathered here today. We have CANTO working committees, and we must keep the private sector engaged and aware of our plans."

Additionally, CTU Secretary General Bernadette Lewis said "The CTU has been recreating itself in order to respond to the needs of its stakeholders and to be relevant in the rapidly changing environment. Consequently, the theme chosen for the 25th Anniversary ICT Week is 'Celebrating our past, committing to our future,'".

The 25th anniversary of the CTU's establishment by heads of Caribbean governments was actually attained on April 28, 2014. Lewis described the week of activities as the culmination of activities held throughout 2014 to celebrate the organisation's achievements and ongoing work in the regional ICT space.

"Our 25th Anniversary ICT Week is a celebration of the strategic partnerships the CTU has forged over the years, which have been pivotal in enabling the CTU to fulfil its mandate. We acknowledge their sterling contribution to the work of the CTU and to making ICT Week possible," Lewis said.

ICT Week sessions covered a range of important technology development issues, including cyber security, critical internet infrastructure, internet governance, open data and digital entrepreneurship.

Source: [Trinidad Guardian](#)

## Grenada Government addresses Illegal use of Technology



Grenada's Social Development Minister, Delma Thomas has called on Grenadians to desist from using the internet for illegal activities as police continue their probe to determine how a number of pornographic photos, some showing school children, have been posted on various websites.

Thomas said children need to be guided in the use of technology to ensure they are aware of its negatives and urged non-government organizations (NGOs) to help in that regard.

The Social Development Minister also called on the media to join the campaign and urged them not to dramatize stories since they can have a negative effect on families, schools and the nation on a whole.

"We would be calling on the media to work along with us in terms of our educational programmes, to help teach our young people how to use technology in a wise way."

Police said the photos had first been posted on the social media site, Facebook, but were removed amid complains they were in violation of the Facebook legal agreement.

But they are now appearing on other social websites and the police said they have received numerous complaints from several people on the matter.

Parliament recently approved the Electronic Crimes Act that prohibits the publication of child pornography and pornographic materials online.

Anyone found guilty of contravening the law is liable to a fine not exceeding EC\$200,000 or to a term of imprisonment not exceeding five years or to both fine and imprisonment.

Source: [Antigua Observer](#)

## LIME and Flow Merger gets Green Light in Jamaica



Jamaica's Minister of Science, Technology, Energy & Mining, Phillip Paulwell, has approved the proposed merger between the Jamaican subsidiaries of Cable & Wireless Communications (CWC) and Columbus Communications, which comes as part of a wider USD \$3 billion regional tie-up which was first announced in November 2014. CWC is active in Jamaica's fixed and mobile markets via its LIME unit, while Columbus offers cable TV, broadband and telephony services as Flow Jamaica. A statement from the ministry has outlined a number of restrictions on the deal, including: existing interconnect termination rates to remain in effect until a new fixed termination rate is established; CWC must comply with any limitations of the licences being transferred from Flow; customers should have the option to keep their existing package or transfer to a more favorable one; customers opting to terminate their contracts should be allowed to do so without penalties; CWC should provide access to international bandwidth on a non-discriminatory basis; LIME and Flow should be ready to enable the implementation of number portability by 31 May 2015; and CWC should ensure that other licensees are provided with non-discriminatory access to infrastructure such as ducts, poles and landing stations which could act as a competitive bottleneck.

The Communication Workers' Union (CWU) has expressed deep regret and concern at the decision of the Jamaican Government, to approve the acquisition of Columbus International by Cable and Wireless Communications.

The union says, the position adopted by the Jamaican government, is ill conceived, and unfortunate.

Secretary General, Joseph Remy says the union found it disconcerting that Jamaica's Technology Minister, Phillip Paulwell felt little could be done to block the impending merger. he CWU further said Paulwell's approval was given despite the position adopted by the Caribbean Telecommunications Union at a meeting in Trinidad late last year, to seek a regional response on the matter.

Last November, Lime and Flow announced the 3 billion US dollar merger, but the deal is still awaiting regulatory approval from the Caribbean, as well as the United States anti-trust authorities and telecommunications regulators. The CWU has called on the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and the telecommunications authority to reject any approval for the transfer of control of Flow to Cable and Wireless.

Source: [IrieFM](#), [Telegeography](#)



## FCC raises broadband definition to 25Mbps

The United States Federal Communications Commission (FCC) voted to greatly increase its definition of broadband service, from the previous definition of 4Mbit download and 1Mbit upload to the new standard of 25Mbps download and 3Mbps upload. According to FCC Chairman Tom Wheeler, this move reflects the tremendous growth in consumer data consumption, the growing popularity of services like Netflix, and the need to create a future-proof standard that won't be obviated in a handful of years.

Wheeler also pointed out that consumer demand for 25Mbps service is robust, with 29% of Americans currently opting for that tier of service, up from 7% in 2011, and that many companies only certify lower-end plans as minimally effective or efficient for users. Netflix, for example, recommends a minimum of 5 Mbps for HD quality and 25Mbps for 4K service. With VoIP services and 4K streaming coming on fast, US consumers are going to demand higher-end services for the foreseeable future.

Wheeler has made it clear that he also is prioritizing improving broadband service to rural Americans as well as all Americans in general. At present, 17% of all Americans lack access to 25Mbps down 3Mbps up service, including 53% of all rural Americans. More troublingly, 20% of rural Americans lack access to even the old 4Mbps down and 1Mbps up standard. This has fallen by just 1% since 2011.

Source: [ExtremeTech](#)

## ITU marks 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary with awards for ICT innovation

Geneva, 27 January 2015 – Marking ITU's 150th anniversary this year, Secretary-General Houlin Zhao launched the ITU150 Awards that will be presented at the commemorative event in Geneva on 17 May 2015, World Telecommunication and Information Society Day.

"ITU's 150th anniversary provides an excellent opportunity for ITU membership to celebrate the innovations that have led to the evolution of today's telecommunications / ICT ecosystem, one of the greatest engineering feats ever, as well as to look to future developments," said Mr Zhao. "On this occasion, the ITU150 Awards will honour individuals from Government, ICT industry, Academia and Civil Society who have contributed to improving the lives of people around the world through ICT innovations developed, promoted or implemented by ITU."

The deadline for nominations is 15 March and the results will be communicated to the laureates on 1 April. Additional information on the criteria and the nomination process for the ITU150 Awards is available at [www.itu.int/en/150/Pages/awards.aspx](http://www.itu.int/en/150/Pages/awards.aspx).

Nominations may be submitted only by ITU membership.

World Telecommunication and Information Society Day marks the establishment of ITU on 17 May 1865 with the signing of the first International Telegraph Convention in Paris. A full day of events is planned this year on 17 May in Geneva, including the Awards Ceremony and a multimedia smart show. ITU Members will also be celebrating this special 150th anniversary across the globe. Throughout 2015, ITU will organize several events highlighting ICTs as the drivers of innovation and sustainable development both at ITU headquarters in Geneva and around the world.

Source: [ITU](#)

## Contact Us



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