

MTN Signs Interconnect Agreement With Medallion

As the new Interconnect regime determined by the Nigerian Communications Commission NCC, takes effect, Nigeria's largest

By Efem Nkanga.

GSM operator, MTN, has embraced the new interconnect regime introduced by NCC by signing an inter-

connect agreement with Medallion Communications Limited.

MTN according to a statement made available to THISDAY signed the agree-

ment on the 25th of this month. Medallion is a licensed interconnect exchange operator. This is the first time MTN is going into an interconnect agree-

ment with any of the licensed interconnect clearinghouses.

Medallion's interconnect clearinghouse services, the statement stated would help MTN reduce its interconnect operating cost by ensuring that the number of links to fixed operators is minimized and the use of network resources optimized. It

would also enable fast and efficient settlement of interconnect charges, and ensure that payment for all calls terminated on MTN's network is guaranteed. The reduction in operating cost would be passed on to subscribers on MTN's network in the form of lower call tariff, while ensuring a better quality of service delivery to the subscribers.

Ericsson Creates More Business Units

By Efem Nkanga.

Carl-Henric Svanberg, President and Chief Executive Officer of Ericsson, the world's leading telecom end-to-end solutions provider has disclosed that Ericsson is implementing a more customer-oriented organization with three business units, each optimized for its specific market segment.

According to a release made available to THISDAY, Ericsson is set to leverage its position in mobile networks, services, transmission and expand its leadership in next generation converging IP-networks with a focus on multimedia applications and services.

Svanberg stated that Ericsson sees opportunities to further strengthen its market and technology leadership by developments in the broadband industry - fixed as well as mobile - coupled with the move toward next generation networks that will create immense possibilities for richer multimedia services that will accelerate opportunities for growth. Multimedia is an area with obvious business opportunities and potentially a powerful driver for increasing network capacity and investments by operators.

According to Svanberg, the new organization will have an even stronger customer focus and pave the way for continuously improving efficiency in all areas. Also, to further strengthen Ericsson's technology leadership, an additional 500 engineers will be recruited to accelerate research, especially in the area of next generation IP-networks and multimedia technology.

The new Ericsson organization will have three business units; Networks, Global Services and Multimedia.

The integration of Ericsson's network operations into the Networks business unit, according to Svanberg, will enable a focused solutions offering that supports converging and more cost-efficient operations. The new unit will

include mobile and fixed access, core and transmission networks as well as next generation IP-networks. Ericsson is the world leader in mobile networks and has a leading position in fixed networks. The new unit will have approximately 21, 500 employees.

The Global Services business unit comprises the professional services and network rollout units and will continue to support operators with technology evolution and efficient operations. It provides operators with economies of scale and proven expertise as well as first class operations with attendant considerable savings. Through its Global Services operations, Ericsson provides round-the-clock support to networks with 725 million subscribers and manages networks with 65 million subscribers. This unit, established in 1999 is unaffected by the re-organization. It has approximately 23,000 employees worldwide.

The new Multimedia Business unit said Svanberg will comprise the multimedia units within the former systems business unit, enterprise business unit, Ericsson mobile platforms and Ericsson Consumer & Enterprise Laboratories respectively. The new unit will have approximately 4,000 employees.

Leif Edwall, managing director; Ericsson Nigeria corroborating Ericsson's positioning to sustain its leadership and drive innovation in the telecom industry, added that "in the multimedia business, we have the content and application management, the technical excellence and execution resources as well as strong relationships with content providers and operators. And let's not forget another strong asset, Sony Ericsson Mobile Communications and our close relationship with Sony - which further strengthens our consumer perspective for superior end-to-end offerings".

The new organization, said Edwall will further consolidate Ericsson's ability to cre-

ate synergies with telecom operators in Nigeria and elsewhere providing them with leading-edge expertise and

experience and in turn, enabling them provide leading edge service, cost-effectively.



*Ahmed Faroukh CEO MTN and Amina Oyagbola, Executive Director also of MTN and Ikechukwu Nnamani, the MD/CEO of Medallion Communications

MTN Slash Tariff, Introduces Xtra Connect for Families

In proof of its renewed commitment to further connect Nigerians with the buoyant rhythm of life, leading mobile telephony operator, MTN, Tuesday, 19th September introduced a plethora of extraordinary products, one of which is Xtra Connect, at a special press conference held at Dance Hall, Planet One Entertainment, Maryland, Lagos.

Specially designed for families, Xtra Connect is an incentive package which enables subscribers to the network to make calls and send SMS at amazingly reduced rates. With the product, peak and off-peak MTN to MTN calls can now be made for N30 per minute and N25 per minute respectively. What this means is that calls exclusively made on the MTN network within hours of increased business activities, usually between 7am and 7pm, now attract a tariff of only N30, whereas those made within hours of increased domestic activities, usually between 7pm and 7am, go for N25. The service is charged purely as per second and at no premium - 50k per second for peak calls and 42k per second for off-peak calls. By implication, a user pays as he or she goes, maximizing the usage of available airtime. This also means a customer can spend as little as N5 for 20 seconds call which is enough to say so much. MTN is truly making phone calls accessible to all - no more barriers, no more hassles.

Similarly, calls to three 'family and friends' numbers will attract 50% i.e. customers will pay as little as N15 per minute

during peak period and N12.5 off peak. These are also charged per second. The actual implication of this, therefore, is that a user enjoys double airtime value on calls placed on three 'family and friends' numbers round the clock on MTN network. With Xtra Connect, an MTN subscriber is empowered to talk bountifully and laugh for as long as possible on the MTN network. No more rushing to end your call. You can now talk and express you self the way you want to. What a wonderful time to join the MTN network community.

The product also guarantees an all time low SMS rate of N7 per SMS for MTN to MTN messages. Similarly, customers on this package also receive 60 free Call Me messages so he or she can place a call in moments of urgency or need on a monthly basis.

Again, a customer can have access to the MTN network only needs to make or receive a call, SMS or MMS within 90 days and such customer has access to the MTN network for life. To enjoy the fabulous possibilities encapsulated in the MTN Xtra Connect, all a user do is to send 700 to a dedicated migration code, 131 by SMS on the MTN network. Commenting on the new product, Olu Akanmu, General Manager, Consumer Marketing, MTN Nigeria, said that MTN has brought GSM services astonishingly close to everyone including members of the lowest social stratum, adding that the company has "made calls on its network as affordable as pure water".

While unveiling the company's pricing plans and reward bundles at the event, Ahmad Faroukh,

Chief Executive Officer, MTN said that the re-structured tariff and the enthralling package of customer recognition and reward offerings have been specially put together to deliver the 'pleasures of life...in full measure' for every class of customers on the MTN network, maintaining that "it is a most friendly, value-laden package which is yet unprecedented in this market".

Speaking on the MTN Xtra ordinary range of products which includes MTN Xtra Connect, MTN Xtra Cool, MTN Xtra Profit, MTN Xtra Pro, MTN Xtra Special, as well as value added services such as MTN Loaded, MTN Caller Tunez, Mobile Office, MTN Connect4life, MTN Share 'n' Sell, Faroukh argued that these are revolutionary devel-

opments. According to him, they are products that are reminiscent of the bold and revolutionary move that MTN made five years ago to democratize access to telephone services.

MTN is Nigeria's leading mobile telephony operator and a major initiator and sponsor of life-transforming programmes in the arts, IT, sports, tourism, and entertainment. The company is equally in the vanguard revolutionary Corporate Social Responsibility with robust and sustainable projects aimed at improving the quality of life of Nigerians. The company's sustained effort in social intervention has attracted flurry of commendations from credible local and international organizations.

PUBLIC NOTICE SPORTS CLUB AWKA

This is to inform the general public that the above named body has applied for registration to the Corporate Affairs Commission under Part 'C' of the Company and Allied Matters Act 1990.

The Trustees are:
(i) Chukwunke Emmanuel Nwogbo
(ii) Clement Chukwuma Nwogbo

The aims and objectives:

- To develop, encourage and promote Sports and other social activities in Awka, Anambra State.
- To promote peace and harmonious co-existence among Nigerians, through Sports.
- To scout, encourage and develop talents for the Sports industry in Nigeria and abroad.
- To develop and organize programmes and projects aimed at revamping Sports and Social activities in Nigeria with particular emphasis on the promotion of sustainable environment for the development of Sports.

Any objection to this registration should be forwarded to the Registrar General, Corporate Affairs Commission, Wuse Zone 5, Abuja within 28 days of this publication.

Signed:

Hesinwa Oghu
Capital Chambers (Solicitors)
Suite B2/3 Ibe Hotel, Zone 5 Wuse, Abuja.

SLGP CORRIGENDUM DFID

Draft Call For EoI's For IBP Preparatory Studies

With reference to DFID/SLGP advert published in **THISDAY Newspaper** of Tuesday September 26, 2006, "Draft Call For EoI's for IBP Preparatory Studies" on page 14, please note that "As part of SLGP's partnership with Kaduna State, the programme is assisting the Ministry of Water Resources to prepare an issue based project (IBP) to improve the delivery of water to rural communities".

**State and Local Government Programme,
40, Mississippi Street,
Off Alvan Ikoku Way,
Maitama, Abuja**