

TELECOM BUZZ

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Good Things Come in Small Data Packages

A Power Packed 2013 ahead for Indian Telecom Industry



Blackberry Unveils Low-Cost Plans for its Services in Certain Regions of India



MobileComm brings ICT into the limelight at a leading University



Editorial

Last 15 months were difficult ones for the Indian Telecom Industry accompanied by a period of uncertainty, policy paralysis, falling subscriber base and falling ARPUs. However after the period of lull and gloom, the sector is finally seen gaining pace with less competition, introduction of new technologies and changing consumer behavior

Experts are hopeful that despite the tough regulatory environment, the fourth quarter of 2013 will be brighter for the telcos as compared to the previous years. Data will seek operator's attention with consumers getting access to low cost data tariff plans in the coming months. Strategies are being deployed across the launch of LTE and we may expect to see LTE deployments in a big way by the year end. A threat to the operators voice and SMS revenues from the free messaging apps like whatsapp, nimbuzz, etc. is something which needs attention however operators have already understood the importance of collaboration with OTT players and thus are seen making strategic partnership with them.

Last year Reliance communications tied up with WhatsApp and Facebook allowing its customers to access these services for as low as Rs.16/month. Many other players have struck up a similar kind of deal.

Thus we are hopeful that 2013 will bring with it a slew of opportunities for Indian Telecom Industry.

Happy Reading!

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A Power Packed 2013 ahead for Indian Telecom Industry

Companies are expected to grow thanks to lesser competition, increase in subscriber base, increasing Data demands and advent of 4G.

The general belief that ‘whatever happens, happens for good’ seems suitable for Indian Telecom Industry that is set to rebound after a period of lull and uncertainty. Last 12 months have been tough, as sector witnessed disturbing trends such as regulatory uncertainties and policy paralysis that brought it almost to a standstill. The industry that was once responsible for putting India on the World Map has seen all time low confidence from investors. Blame it on the cancellation of 2G licences last year that generated an enormous amount of negative publicity and discouraged investors, both domestic and international.

But after all said and done, it is finally in 2013 we are expecting to see a reorganized and a stable Indian Telecom Industry. Companies are expected to grow thanks to lesser competition, increase in subscriber base, increasing Data demands and advent of 4G.

4G/LTE IS MAKING ITS WAY :

The consumer behavior is changing from being ‘Voice centric’ to ‘Data centric’ with more and more users demanding data services anywhere anytime. As a result, operators are witnessing higher growth in the data traffic and data-based revenue as compared to their voice revenues. Considering the high data usage among users, operators are now seen focusing more on the launch of 4G.

“By the end of this year we will be launching LTE in few of our niche circles”, as said by Arvind Bali, MD & CEO, Videocon Telecommunications in the recent ‘4G World India’ organized by UBM.

“By Dec 2013, you’ll see 4G deployment in a big way”, Chairman and MD, Telecommunications Consultant India.

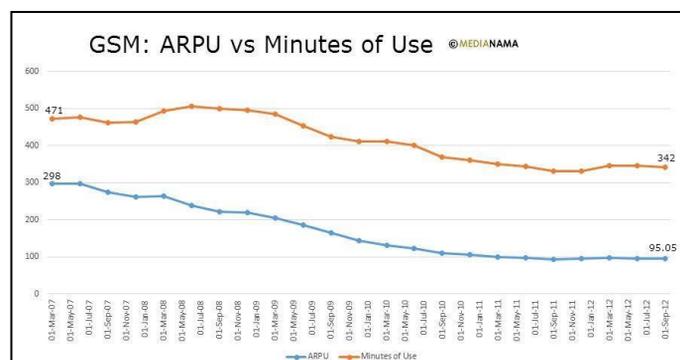
Data messaging apps such as Whatsapp and social networking sites such as Facebook & Twitter are at the center of this transition that is eating away the operator’s crucial revenue. Thus, collaboration is the key here. Operators and OTT players need to collaborate in order to monetize networks and develop new revenue streams. Recently, Reliance Communications struck a deal with social network Twitter to launch a first of its kind bundled prepaid plan ‘Reliance Twitter Access Pack’ for all Reliance GSM subscribers in the country.

AVERAGE REVENUE PER USER

The 122 licences that were quashed last year left a positive impact on the ARPU’s of incumbent operators. This can be attributed to the reduced competition in the otherwise saturated Industry. Of late, telecom operators are looking at ARPMs as a key metric to determine company’s financial performance.

Barclay’s expects a 0.9 percent ARPM increase for Bharti Airtel, Idea Cellular and Reliance communications. The increase in ARPMs would lead to a revenue growth of 5.5 percent for Idea, 3.1 percent for Bharti Airtel and 1.3 percent for RCom on a quarter-on-quarter basis, the research firm said (As reported in The Business Line)

However, what needs to be observed is that whether the increase in ARPU is due to the increase in Minutes of Use or due to the tariff hike by the operators. We have seen incumbent operators increasing their voice and data tariffs early this year but analyst firms are seen divided on whether the minutes of usage will increase.



(Between March 2007 and September 2012)

All in all we are hopeful that we’ll see a somewhat stable Telecom Industry in 2013 with more maturity and innovation and diversification in services. This would make up for the losses incurred in past few years. Thus, whatever happens certainly happens for good.



Good Things Come in Small Data Packages

The concept of data in sachets can make 3G and 4G services popular in developing countries, where costly handsets act as a deterrent to the growth of any new technology

The consumer behavior across globe is changing from being 'Voice centric' to 'Data centric' with more and more users demanding data anywhere and everywhere. A transition in the pricing models is the need of an hour given the exponential growth of data over voice. With data revenues surpassing mobile voice revenues, operators are attempting to accelerate their gains in data.

Taking a cue from the popularity of shampoo sachets, Telecom Operators are now seen wooing their end users with a low-cost data tariff plans. Experts believe that the two factors that determine the mass adoption of any new service in India include:

- a) Affordable devices
- b) Affordable services

While we are expecting to see low cost devices by the end of 2013, low cost services are seen gaining the attention of service providers. The concept of data in sachets can make 3G and 4G services popular, where costly handsets act as a deterrent to the growth of any new technology. This will further add on to the data traffic over operator's network and thus an increase in data revenue.

Experts believe that the market in developing countries is highly price sensitive characterized by high volume and low margins. In data space we cannot afford to have price wars similar to that of voice and Indian subscribers are not willing to accept plain vanilla data offerings at high tariffs. Thus, the concept of 'Data sachet' will be highly successful to give customers a taste of mobile internet and its advantages.

BENEFITS OF LOW-COST DATA PLANS

- a) Mass adoption of services
- b) Drive mobile internet adoption among non-internet users.
- c) Increase in mobile data subscribers
- c) Increase Data Revenues

The common strategy behind the introduction of these low pricing schemes is to make non – internet users try mobile internet and then they may get hooked to it and move from a daily plan to a monthly plan. The main target audience here would be youth and students wherein a lot of browsing happens through their smartphones.

For instance, Vodafone India recently introduced 'One Time

Trial Packs' for 2G and 3G with 500 MB data allowance for Rs 25 on 2G and Rs 49 for 3G.

Similarly, Bharti Airtel, a leading global telecommunications company is offering its 3G users access to internet and 10MB download valid for a day starting at Rs. 11. Aircel was the first one to take a plunge with the introduction of 'Pocket Internet' with various tariff schemes. Other players like MTS, Uninor and Reliance Communications have similar low-cost data plans.

The question here that demand attention is where does the revenue come from? Operators cannot encash much from these small data packages moreover the stiff competition from the OTT players including skype, Facebook, whatsapp and many other if further eating up the operator's crucial SMS and voice revenues. OTT Players are riding for free over the operator's data services. Thus collaboration is the key here wherein operators can partner with OTT players to bring about cheap applications to the end user.

Overall, the concept of sachet looks appealing and innovative that can stimulate the use of mobile internet and boost the operator's data revenue in turn improving their financial performance.

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■ Reliance Jio in talks to lease Infratel towers, RCOM inks tie-up with Aircel

Reliance Jio Infocomm, the telecoms unit of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), is in talks with infrastructure management firm Bharti Infratel regarding plans to lease the latter's towers, Reuters reports. After it signed an agreement with Infratel's parent company Bharti Airtel to lease capacity on its i2i submarine cable network last week, Reliance Jio is now looking to finalize tower sharing agreements. Bharti Infratel with over 82,000 towers could be one of the options.

In a related news RCOM is looking to expand its pan-India network significantly through strategic 2G GSM Intra-Circle Roaming agreements with existing operators. These ICR agreements will increase RCOM's national 2G GSM network footprint by 10,000 base stations and bring in an addressable market of over 150 million customers, adding up to a market opportunity of over Rs 10,000 crore. The first such agreement has come up with Aircel that will allow its 2G GSM customers to roam seamlessly on all partner networks, free of any additional cost.

■ Alcatel-Lucent and Bay of Bengal Gateway consortium to build undersea cable system linking Middle East, Indian sub-continent and Far East

Alcatel-Lucent (Euronext Paris and NYSE: ALU) and a consortium composed of Vodafone Group, Dialog Axiata, Emirates Telecommunications Corporation (Etisalat), Reliance Jio Infocomm, Omantel and Telekom Malaysia, have signed a turn-key contract to deploy a new 100 Gigabit-per-second (100G) submarine cable system to connect Oman, the United Arab Emirates, India, Sri Lanka and Malaysia. Commercial operation of the system is planned to start by end of 2014. It will offer an ultra-high design capacity, underpinning the continued growth of new applications and services in the Middle East, the Indian sub-continent and the Far East.

■ Blackberry Unveils Low-Cost Plans for its Services in Certain Regions of India

In order to expand its reach in markets which are not so lucrative, Blackberry unveiled low cost plans in the regions of - West Bengal (excluding Kolkata), Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh), North East, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu (excluding Chennai), Uttar Pradesh West and Uttar Pradesh East. The users in this region can avail all its communication services for Rs 129 per GB while in other circles like Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka and the four metros, people can avail of only Blackberry Messenger (BBM).

■ Uninor Hires Auto Drivers, Milkmen and Newspaper Vendors to see SIM cards and Recharge Vouchers

In an attempt to reach to more and more customers, Telenor's Indian arm Uninor has launched an initiative wherein auto-drivers, milkmen and newspaper vendors will offer Uninor recharges at doorstep to provide seamless experience to customers of all levels in Maharashtra Circle. This go-to-customer strategy, an industry first, will be replicated across the state and eventually in all the six circles where Uninor operates - UP East, UP West, Bihar and Jharkhand, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Goa.

■ O2 inks ten-year BT deal to boost network capacity

Source: TeleGeography

British fixed line incumbent BT has inked a ten-year deal with Telefonica UK, which offers mobile services under the O2 UK banner, under which it will support the introduction of 4G services for the cellco's subscribers. Under the terms of the deal, BT will build a new high capacity transmission network which it claims will enable O2 UK to meet increasing demand as mobile data traffic continues to increase. BT has also said it will provide O2 UK with a sizeable increase in backhaul capacity by delivering the high-speed mobile backhaul links between its mobile base stations and the new transmission network.

■ MTN activates Uganda's first LTE network

Source: TeleGeography

South African-backed MTN Uganda announced the launch of the nation's first 4G Long Term Evolution (LTE) network in Kampala. 20 base stations were upgraded to LTE at launch, though the cellco plans to extend the network, which is capable of theoretical maximum download speeds of 100Mbps, to other towns in the near future. To that end, MTN plans to invest a further USD70 million in infrastructure development in 2013.

■ Globacom, Huawei ink USD750m network upgrade deal

Nigerian mobile operator Globacom has signed an agreement with Huawei for the upgrade and expansion of its wireless infrastructure. Local newspaper The Guardian cites Globacom's chief operating officer, Muhammed Jameel, as saying that the contract will see Huawei upgrade Globacom's base transceiver stations (BTS), mobile switching centres and microwave radio facilities.



February 2013 U.S. Smartphone Subscriber Market Share: Apple Ranked as the Top OEM

Smartphone OEM Market Share

133.7 million people in the U.S. owned smartphones (57 percent mobile market penetration) during the three months ending in February, up 8 percent since November. Apple ranked as the top OEM with 38.9 percent of U.S. smartphone subscribers (up 3.9 percentage points from November). Samsung ranked second with 21.3 percent market share (up 1 percentage point), followed by HTC with 9.3 percent share, Motorola with 8.4 percent and LG with 6.8 percent.

Top Smartphone OEMs 3 Month Avg. Ending Feb. 2013 vs. 3 Month Avg. Ending Nov. 2012 Total U.S. Smartphone Subscribers Age 13+ Source: comScore MobiLens			
	Share (%) of Smartphone Subscribers		
	Nov-12	Feb-13	Point Change
<i>Total Mobile Subscribers</i>	100.0%	100.0%	N/A
Apple	35.0%	38.9%	3.9
Samsung	20.3%	21.3%	1.0
HTC	11.0%	9.3%	-1.7
Motorola	9.5%	8.4%	-1.1
LG	7.0%	6.8%	-0.2

Smartphone Platform Market Share

Google Android ranked as the top smartphone platform with 51.7 percent market share, while Apple's share increased 3.9 percentage points to 38.9 percent. BlackBerry ranked third with 5.4 percent share, followed by Microsoft (3.2 percent) and Symbian (0.5 percent).

Top Smartphone Platforms 3 Month Avg. Ending Feb. 2013 vs. 3 Month Avg. Ending Nov. 2012 Total U.S. Smartphone Subscribers Age 13+ Source: comScore MobiLens			
	Share (%) of Smartphone Subscribers		
	Nov-12	Feb-13	Point Change
<i>Total Smartphone Subscribers</i>	100.0%	100.0%	N/A
Google	53.7%	51.7%	-2.0
Apple	35.0%	38.9%	3.9
BlackBerry	7.3%	5.4%	-1.9
Microsoft	3.0%	3.2%	0.2

MobileComm brings ICT into the limelight at a leading University in India

Banking upon its past endeavors to bridge Industry – academia gap, MobileComm India left no stone unturned to create mass awareness about ICT industry among the graduates at a recently held workshop on 'Wireless Communications'. Mr. Deepak Bajaj, MobileComm Learning Solutions was one of the keynote speakers of the workshop who threw insights on the new concept of convergence, ICT opportunities and its challenges ahead.

Speaking at the Workshop, Deepak Bajaj said that the future of ICT is exciting. The rise of digital communication has made it possible for previously separate IT, Media and Telecom Industries to converge and work with each other synergistically. We can sense the massive opportunities ICT will bring with it and therefore MobileComm has already taken a step forward with the recent launch of an ELearning course on 'ICT – The Future' for the beginners.

The workshop saw participation from around 100 Final year UG and PG students of ECE department, Thapar University.

To view 'ICT-The Future' ELearning course click [here](#).

About Thapar University: Thapar University, Patiala has been selected for the Phase – II of Technical Education Quality Improvement Program (TEQIP) with the broad objectives of Scaling-up postgraduate education and demand-driven Research & Development and Innovation, establishing Centers of Excellence for focused applicable research, and enhancing Institutional and System Management effectiveness. One of the aims of this phase of TEQIP is also to enhance Industry-Institute Interaction and bridge the gap between the wants of industry and research capabilities of the universities.



7 things to ponder over if you're into 'sales'

Source: YourStory.in

The Article was originally written by Manish Vaswani, Co-founder at Zootout.com

We've heard this a zillion times, and as true as they come, nothing happens till sales happen. We all are selling ourselves or our product/service at every instance. Right from founders, product designers, manufacturers, up to sales team, every individual from front end to back end is in some way selling something- it may an idea, inputs, views or anything else. New trends in businesses today may have changed job title's to more modern terms, like – Business Development, Client Service, Chief Marketing Officer etc., but logically the task still remains same, that of a 'Sales Man'.

Few essentials which should be considered as basic selling techniques-

1. **Customer also Buys YOU:** Product that you're selling is probably being sold by hundreds or thousands of more people. More than just a pure luck factor of being at the right place at the right time, what matters more is YOU. The first thing one sells to a potential customer is the person himself, only then it comes to offer the product. So, make sure you're positioning yourself well before you move on to the product.

2. **WHY your Offering:** In this competitive market, your product needs to have a value add for which you can speak. That one distinct value which has the potential to convince the buyer that this will make his life easier.

> *I give you a platform to connect with your entire social group; I am making your life easier – Facebook, Twitter, etc.*

> *I provide you a hand size gadget which allows you to anytime connect with anyone; I am making your life easier. Smart phones, Tablets etc.*

3. **Ask the right questions** - As a citizen of the sales world, it is very important to act in subtle manner in regards to the kind of person we are dealing with. Every person has a distinct convincing point, and the best way one could determine them for sales prospects is by utilizing the power of asking right questions. There is one selling point where the listener gets convinced, that selling point differs from person to person. Asking few relevant questions, and knowing which is the biggest problem your sales prospect is facing, for which your offering has an solution, could assist to perfectly close the sale.

4. **Stay abreast with trends** - Charles Darwin once said, "It's not the strongest of species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." As a selling professional, it is significant for one to provide the most updated and modified offering to the customer, which is updated as per the trend. Read all you can.

5. **Share successful stories** - People love stories, romantic stories. Bollywood industry's glorious power is its biggest evidence. Even in selling, telling a customer about other customer's happiness story could assist us to close sales, marketing & PR goals faster. Success breeds success.

6. **Set the motive right** - Another most important aspect to ensure successful sales is that one needs to really have a genuine motive behind selling. It should NEVER be done for money. You can sell it only if you feel it.

7. **Spend time in analysis & research, as much as in Selling** - Proper Research is a must. Doing research and finding the right target audience is half the sale made. As a sales-personnel, one has 2 choices, either one could meet and offer the product to 10 prospects every week, or one can spend a portion of time in doing proper research and offer to 5 right prospects.



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