

Telkom Kenya to shake up mobile industry

Telkom Kenya is finalising preparations for the rollout of its GSM network later this week. Kenya's mobile market is the largest in East Africa and has experienced exponential growth in recent years with the number of mobile phone subscribers growing from 900,000 in June 2002 to 11.5 million in May 2008.

With mobile phone penetration in Kenya currently standing at only 34%, there is huge potential for Telkom Kenya's new product offering. Growth will be driven predominantly by new users who were previously unsubscribed, dual network users and users switching from the already existing networks.

"We cannot cover the whole of Kenya in one day," said Telkom Kenya CEO, Dominique Saint Jean. "We will start with the major towns especially Nairobi and Mombasa and spread to the rest of the country gradually. From a market point of view, Telkom Kenya will address all segments of the population but give more emphasis to small and medium enterprises as well as corporate bodies, which have not been covered sufficiently..."

Mobile communications and derived services have proven to be important engines for social and economic growth and development. Investing in infrastructure for information, communications and technology greatly increases a country's productivity and competitiveness. Telkom Kenya has heavily invested close to Sh6b in revamping and maintaining its infrastructure while several more billions have also been spent on customer service and staff training.

"We are positioning ourselves as a telecommunications supermarket where customers can find attractive solutions to all their telecommunications needs, from fixed and mobile telephony to internet broadband and television services," Saint Jean explained.