

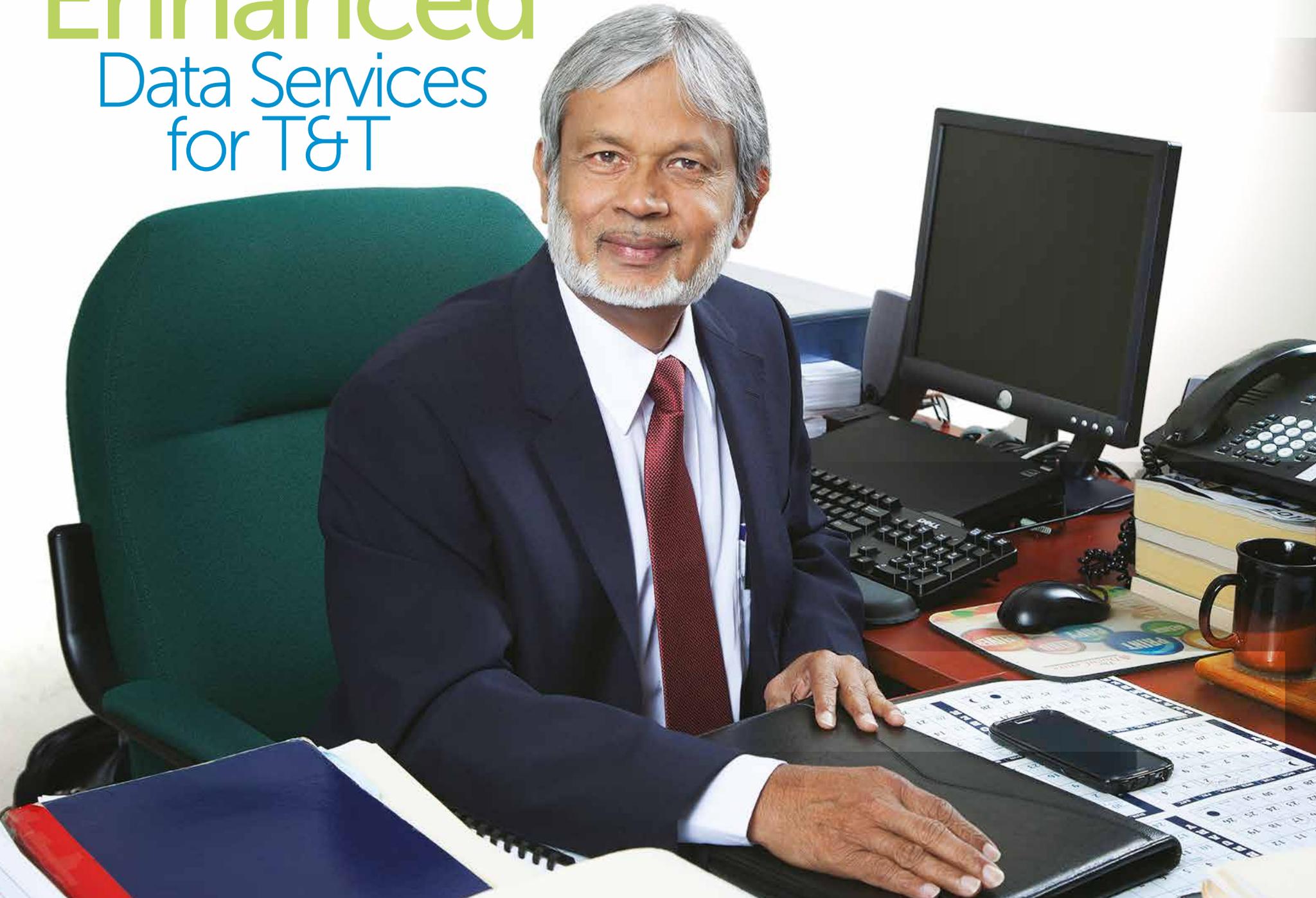


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Enhanced Data Services for T&T



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PROGRESSIVE

FAIR

FEARLESS

TATT

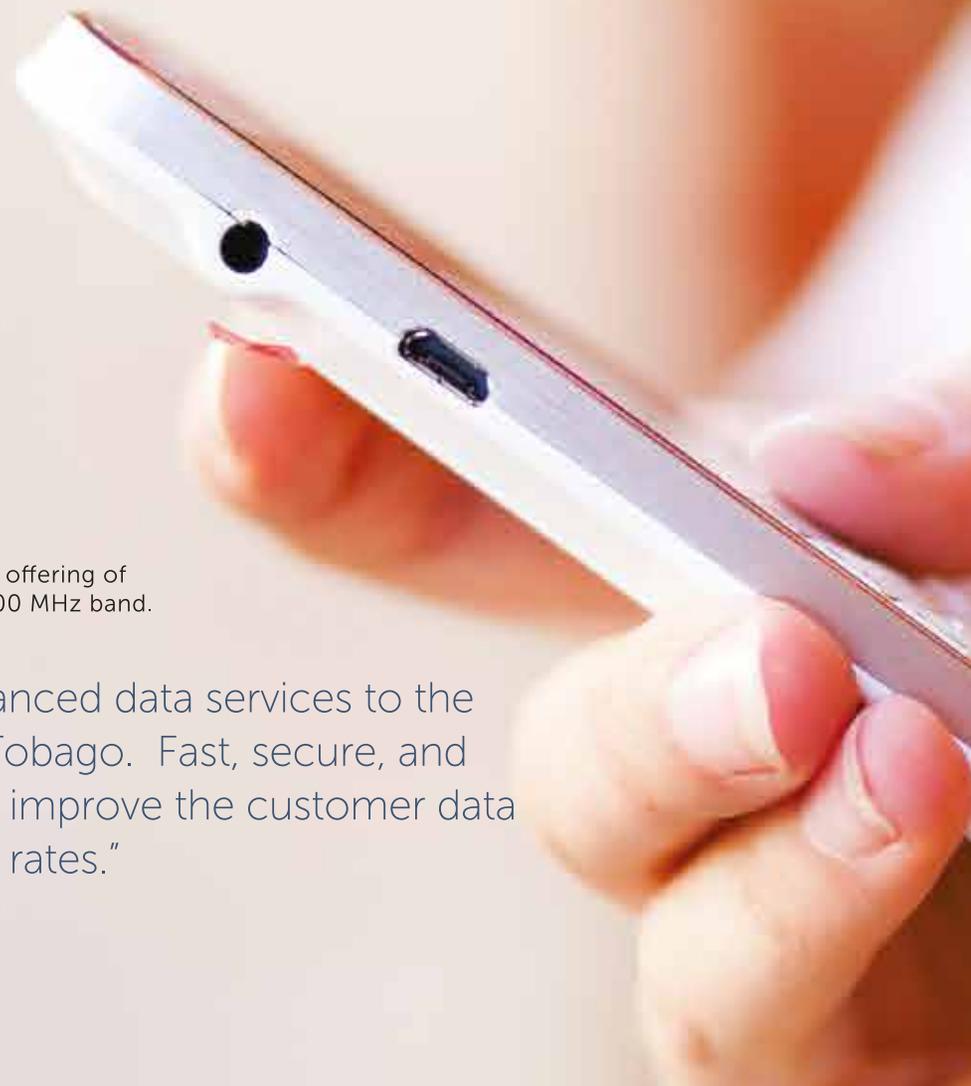
Seeks Enhanced Mobile Data Services for Trinidad and Tobago



CRIS SEECHERAN
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

TATT explains why the new product offering of higher frequency spectrum in the 700 MHz band.

“It is about bringing enhanced data services to the people of Trinidad and Tobago. Fast, secure, and robust data services that improve the customer data experience at affordable rates.”



Cris Seecheran, Chief Executive Officer, Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago explains why the new product offering of higher frequency spectrum in the 700 MHz band.

Mr Seecheran was speaking to *TATT Bytes* on TATT's issuance of a Request for Proposal in order to attract providers of Enhanced Mobile Data Services via the following mechanisms:

1. Award licences for 700 MHz spectrum to incumbent mobile operator(s) and/or potential third mobile operator
2. Potential for award of a Concession to a third mobile operator.
3. Potential award of licences for available 850 MHz and 1900 MHz spectrum to a third mobile operator

Consumer Demand Drives Broadband Speed

Mr Seecheran explained that there is a current trend, world over, for higher and more efficient broadband speeds, especially in the mobile market. In addition to the above, TATT has been seeking to make broadband more universal and affordable throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

It is that demand that guided TATT to take the decision to make spectrum in the 700 MHz band available to providers in order to facilitate the provision of enhanced data services and TATT took the opportunity to further open the mobile market to increased competition.

Prime frequency bands, like the 700 MHz band, will enable either new or incumbent mobile operators to utilise 'state-of-the-art' technologies in the deployment of new networks and services.

TATT envisages that new technologies utilising the 700 MHz spectrum, will open the door for greatly enhanced mobile broadband speeds and enhanced services to the public.

Do we need it?

There is a clear demand.

Mobile Internet Takes Lead

Cris Seecheran explained that in a country with 1.88 million mobile voice subscriptions in 2013, it is estimated that 23.2 per cent of the mobile population used mobile Internet services via their phones. As at December 2013, approximately 422.5 thousand mobile voice subscriptions were using mobile Internet services.

When compared, there were approximately 224.1 thousand fixed Internet subscriptions versus the approximately 450.6 thousand mobile voice subscriptions over the same period. Fixed narrowband Internet subscriptions accounted for two thousand.

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4G Paves the Way

Even more noteworthy, he stressed, was the jump in technology with the introduction of High Speed Packet Access (HSPA+) by the operators in Trinidad and Tobago. This jump to a basic 4G network has paved the way for the provision of services at broadband mobile Internet access speeds, a significant step up from the 2.5G technology (i.e. Enhanced Data Rates for GSM Evolution (EDGE)). Since 2012, mobile operators have offered customers mobile Internet services utilising both HSPA+ and EDGE technology.

These higher broadband speeds, he added, will bring improvements in application performance and enterprise mobility creating a range of benefits:

- Increased sales and improved customer service
- Improvements in products and services
- Productivity gains
- Personal and team productivity
- Management effectiveness and innovation
- Process efficiency and effectiveness
- Direct cost reductions
- Improved employee motivation
- Improved flexibility, agility and decision making

It is this enhanced performance and increased national productivity that TATT is trying to bring to the local market and why it took the decision to make spectrum available to providers in order to facilitate the provision of enhanced data services and included the opportunity to further open the mobile market to increased competition.

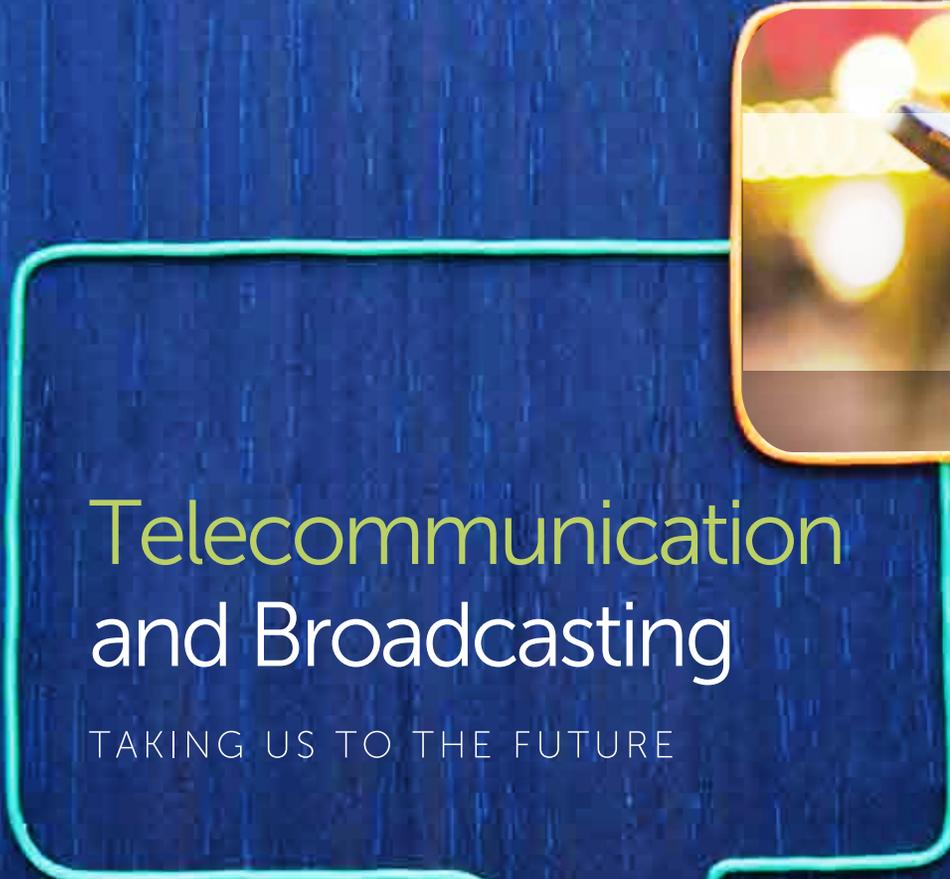
At this stage in the tender process, TATT is evaluating the six (6) bids received in response to the RFP for the provision of Enhanced Data Services in Trinidad and Tobago. Tenders closed on Wednesday April 30th, 2014 and were opened in the presence of bidders who exercised their option to be present. The Tender evaluation process is expected to be completed by TATT in three (3) to four (4) months.

It is anticipated that any award(s) arising from the RFP process will be completed by end September 2014.

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The Telecommunication and Broadcasting industry of Trinidad and Tobago continues to thrive with total revenues, estimated at TT\$5.3 billion in 2012. So said Dr Ronald Ramkissoon, Director at the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago, as he welcomed participants to the organisation's 14th ICT Open Forum titled "Telecommunications and Broadcasting: Taking us to the Future".

He noted that the telecommunications sector alone is estimated at TT\$4.1 billion and continues to be the primary contributor of total revenues of that sector. The mobile market accounts for over 50 per cent of these revenues. Revenues for the broadcasting sector was reported at TT\$903.7 million in the same year.



Telecommunication and Broadcasting

TAKING US TO THE FUTURE



DR RONALD RAMKISSOON
DIRECTOR





ICT OPEN FORUM COMMENTS

1. Those providers with call-in directory enquiries should make such enquiries free for all sightless persons registered with agencies like Blind Welfare Association. The suggestion was also made that such sightless persons should provide their registration information from their respective Associations
2. Data on the number and location of hotspots and WIFI spots should be made available to the public
3. A request for minimum Internet speeds of 20 mbps
4. A request was also made for deaf persons to have special and free access to texting since texting is important for deaf people and it costs a lot of money

"It is clear, therefore, that TATT has regulated an industry in which most of its markets are burgeoning. We have come a long way from when the state was the primary provider of telecommunications and broadcasting services," Dr Ramkissoon noted.

Turning to the reason for the day's forum, he added that TATT now needs to know what chat consumer experiences have been in the sector over the years.

This knowledge, he stressed, is crucial as we (TATT) review the status of our work to date, vis-a-vis where we should be, and as we consider appropriate policy or administrative steps in order to ensure the continued development of the sector in such a way as to safeguard, enrich and strengthen the national, social, cultural and economic well-being of the country.

Dr Ramkissoon added that this information will help to guide TATT's development of its 2013/2016 strategic plan including determining deliverables for that period.

Special thanks to attendees at the Forum who included: Deaf Empowerment Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago • Persons Associated with Visual Impairment (PAVI) • Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce • Trinidad and Tobago Amateur Radio Society • Copyright Music Organisation of Trinidad and Tobago • Organisation of Disaster Preparedness and Management • Trinidad and Tobago Bureau of Standards • The Ministry of Legal Affairs (Consumer Affairs Division) • Members of the Public • Media

Trends in Telecommunication and Broadcasting

TAKING US TO THE FUTURE



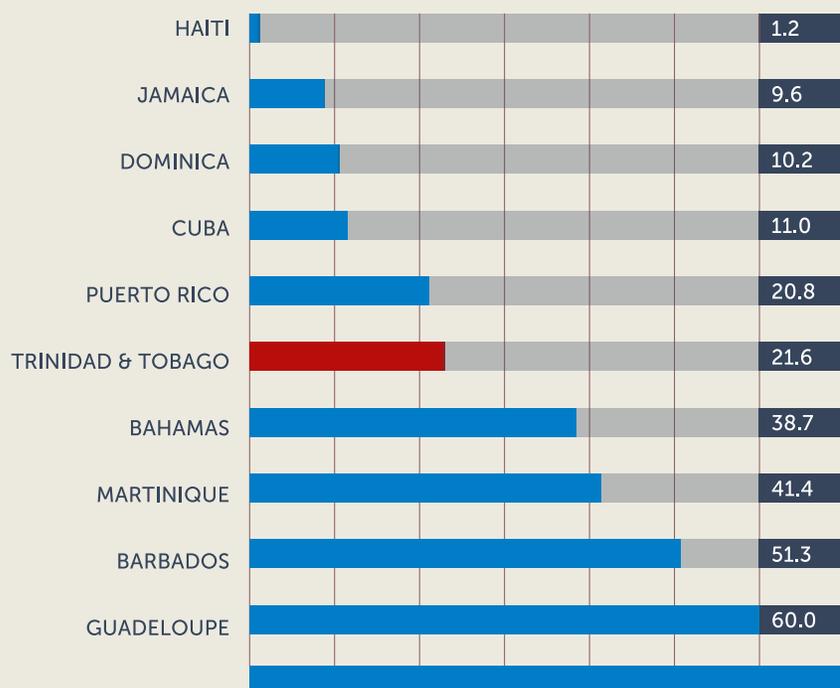
KWESI PRESCOD
EXECUTIVE OFFICER, POLICY,
PLANNING AND MARKET
ECONOMICS

Kwesi Prescod, Executive Officer, Policy, Planning and Market Economics at the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT) took a close look at emerging trends in telecommunications and broadcasting, at a recent ICT Open Forum entitled “Telecommunications and Broadcasting – Taking us to the Future”.

His presentation focused on TATT’s role as well as some of its initiatives to improve the quality of service enjoyed by telecommunications and broadcasting consumers. He also solicited feedback on how TATT can improve its service to the public and the quality of telecommunications and broadcasting services currently provided in Trinidad and Tobago.

During his presentation, he compared fixed line and mobile penetration rates of Trinidad and Tobago against selected Caribbean countries such as Haiti, Jamaica, Dominica, Barbados and Cuba.

Amongst the top 10 countries in terms of penetration rates, Trinidad and Tobago ranked fifth best in terms of fixed line penetration and third best in the English-speaking Caribbean with a penetration rate of 21.6 fixed lines per 100 persons.



With regard to Mobile, Trinidad and Tobago ranks second best in the region – second only to Guadeloupe. Within the English-speaking Caribbean, we have edged out Jamaica to take first position with 142 subscriptions per 100 persons.

Turning to Internet and Broadband, Prescod cited rapid growth in broadband penetration between 2006 and 2012 moving from just 6.0 per cent of households in 2006 to just fewer than 52 per cent by the end of the period.

Examining “over-the-top services” like Voice-over Internet Protocol telephone services, he advised that though these services appear utterly fantastic because they are really cost effective and useful, they should never supplant all local telephone services. Prescod warned “to supplant your local telephone service by these types of facilities is to deny yourself the protection of the regulator on the one hand and more importantly local emergency calls to the ambulance, police, and fire services.”

Mobile Market continues to dominate

“ Every day we are moving closer to having almost as many mobile-cellular subscriptions as people on earth. ”

So says Brahim Sanou, Director of the International Telecommunications Union Telecommunication Development Bureau, in one of that organisation's online articles titled "The World in 2013".

According to that report, which was printed in February 2013, the number of mobile telephone subscriptions globally was reported to have stood at 6.8 billion, just about four months after the world officially marked the global population reaching seven billion.

Statistics for Trinidad and Tobago alone are staggering, as at the end of December 2012, the number of mobile subscriptions reached 1.88 million in a country where the population stood at 1.3 million in 2011.

Mobile Subscriptions Up

This reflects a 3.1 per cent or 57.5 million increase in the overall number of subscriptions in the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors compared to December 2011. These figures were released in the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago's (TATT's) Annual Market Report – Telecommunications and Broadcasting Sectors – January to December 2012, which is available on its [website www.tatt.org.tt](http://www.tatt.org.tt).

The market report, which is published annually, provides information on the performance of key segments within the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors and zeroes in on prevailing

market trends in the following areas:

- Fixed and mobile telephone
- Internet
- Free-to-air radio
- Free-to-air television
- Subscription television
- International telephone

The 2012 market report indicates that revenues in Trinidad and Tobago's telecommunications and broadcasting sectors continue to climb reflecting prevailing global trends, such as faster uptake of mobile services and slower growth in the fixed line telephone market as a consequence of the popularity and accessibility of mobile telephony.

Revenues Up

Thus overall, the data shows an increase in revenues in all sectors in 2012. Total revenues for the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors is estimated at TT\$5.3 billion, an increase by 12.6 per cent from the previous year. Of this figure, the telecommunications sector generated revenues totalling TT\$4.4 billion or 82.9 per cent of overall industry revenue. Broadcasting yielded TT\$908.8 million or 17.1 per cent of the overall industry revenue.

It should be noted that the TT\$5.3 billion or US\$834.1 million generated by both sectors in 2012, equates to 3.3 per cent of this country's Gross Domestic Product.

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Figure 1 outlines percentages of gross revenues contributed to both the telecommunications and broadcasting markets during 2012.

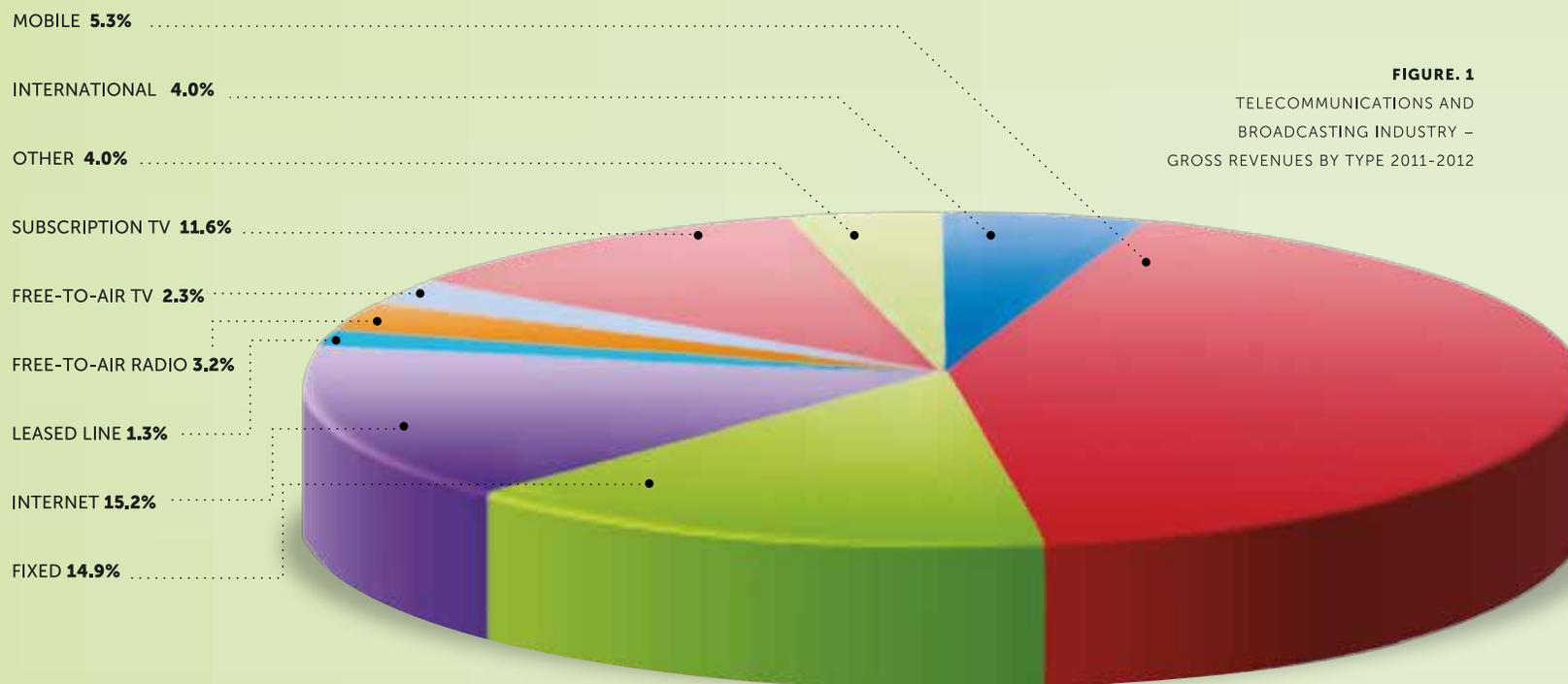


FIGURE. 1
TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND
BROADCASTING INDUSTRY –
GROSS REVENUES BY TYPE 2011-2012

Steady Growth

This steady growth in the local telecommunications and broadcasting sectors is taking place against the backdrop of a volatile global economic environment.

However, while there may have been anticipation that this environment would have somewhat impacted Trinidad and Tobago’s growth thrust, in his 2012 budget presentation Minister of Finance, Senator Larry Howai revealed otherwise. He noted that after three years of negative or negligible growth during the period 2009-2011, Trinidad and Tobago’s economy reached a turning point in 2012.

“Growth,” he said, “is expected to be in the vicinity of 1.2 per cent. The return to economic growth in 2012 is anchored on the improved performance of the non-energy sector.”

The telecommunications and broadcasting sectors are one component of the non-energy sector described as “burgeoning” by Dr Ronald Ramkisson, during an address at one of TATT’s ICT Open Fora. Commenting on the performance of the sectors during 2012 he added, “we have come a long way from when the state was the primary provider of telecommunications and broadcasting services.”

Dr Ramkissoon credited the liberalisation process undertaken by TATT for the current success of the sectors over the last nine years.

Revenue increases are indicative of subscription increases which took place across both sectors during the period under review. While there was an expectation of increases in subscriptions in the mobile market due to global trends, there were also increases in the Internet and subscription television markets.

Figure 2 supplies subscription statistics for the five-year period 2008 to 2012.



Keeping Abreast of International Trends

It is anticipated that over the next three-year period, the markets will continue to experience growth as TATT embarks upon a number of initiatives that will deepen competition, infrastructure and keep this country abreast with international trends.

These initiatives will be documented in TATT's 2013 to 2016 strategic plan which is currently being finalised. Some of the initiatives include:

- Strengthening of the regulatory framework including amendments to the Telecommunications Act
- Engaging a third mobile telephone provider
- Establishing number portability
- Strengthening TATT's human resource capital

All of these initiatives, TATT is confident, redound to the benefit of the average consumer of telecommunications and broadcasting services.



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