

NTRC launches Vincy Wifi App



The National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) has launched two apps on the Android and iOS platform on March 19, 2019 at the National Insurance Services (NIS) Conference Room.

Speaking at the launch, Mr. Apollo Knights, Director of NTRC outlined that the app which is dubbed “Vincy Wifi” is a mobile application designed to assist locals and visitors of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to find the locations of various connectivity hotspots across the country. Such connectivity spots include open wifi hotspots at all educational institutions across St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Wifi hotspots at various Community centers and tourism sites. The aforementioned wifi hotspots were put in place by the NTRC via the Universal Service Fund (USF). The app provides the user with information about the school, pictures of the school and also allows someone to report a wifi fault.

Mr. Cyron Cyrus, a Software Engineer at the NTRC made a presentation on the development of the mobile applications and provided a demonstration on how the app is used. Mr. Cyrus amongst other things illustrated how the app uses data from Open Street Maps to provide turn by turn directions to a user’s selected connectivity spot in the app.

Further, NTRC’s Intern Mr. Khamisi Bascombe presented on the work done by the NTRC to update the digital maps of St. Vincent and the Grenadines using the OpenStreet Map platform. He illustrated the various techniques and tools that were used to ensure that all road data throughout St. Vincent and the Grenadines is correct.

The app can be accessed on the Google Play Store and Apple App store via the name “Vincy Wifi”

Source: [NTRC](#)



Tips to Reduce Mobile Data Consumption

Streaming

Be aware that high quality music streaming can use over 100MB per hour and HD video can consume about 1GB in an hour. If you must stream on data, consider choosing a lower-quality stream if available.

Mobile Friendly Websites

Use the mobile friendly version of websites. Most websites have mobile friendly versions that strip out data heavy elements such as animations and large images. You know that you are on a mobile friendly site if the web address has an “m” in front of it.

Push Notifications

Turn off push notifications for apps that you do not need notifications for. Apps with push notifications turned enabled can consume data even when they are not actively being used by you.



ISOC SVG to host 2nd Internet Governance Forum Next Month

The Internet Society (ISOC) St. Vincent and the Grenadines Chapter are currently making plans to host its second Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on April 12, 2019 under the

theme “The Pressing Need for Security in the Internet of Things”.

The IGF is expected to have presentations from the Attorney General’s office, the Police, local internet service providers, and the private sector.

The IGF brings various people and stakeholder groups to the table as equals to exchange information and share good policies and practices relating to the Internet and technologies. While the IGF may not have decision-making mandates, it informs and inspires those who do. It facilitates common understandings and knowledge exchange of how to maximize Internet opportunities and address risks and challenges.

More details of the time and venue will be posted on IGF’s URL: igf.isoc.vc.

NTRC Dominica donates ICT Equipment to Pioneer Primary School



Executive Director of the NTRC, Mr. Craig Nesty (centre) with Pioneer Prep principal and students

The Pioneer Preparatory Primary students have been equipped with BBC Micro:bits through a kind donation from the National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) in Dominica.

With funding from the Universal Service Fund, the NTRC donated approximately \$ 50,200.00 worth of ICT equipment to the school. This is in keeping with the school’s objective to integrate Digital Technology in the classroom.

Executive Director of the NTRC, Mr. Craig Nesty handed the ICT equipment to the principal and students at the Pioneer Preparatory on Friday February 8th, 2019. During the presentation, Mr. Nesty spoke to the students of role and functions of the NTRC, and he went on further to explain the role the NTRC plays in the management of the Universal Service Fund, which is designed to provide services to rural areas, to people who are differently abled and to introduce new technology into Dominica. He said that the NTRC was pleased

to have received a proposal from Pioneer Prep that was aligned to this vision.

“The Micro:bit”, Mr. Nesty explained, “is a tiny programmable computer, designed to make learning and teaching easy and fun. From dancing robots to banana keyboards, your micro: bit has all the features you need to code awesome stuff – the possibilities are endless! Mr. Nesty encouraged the students to participate in the microbit global challenge. Pioneer preparatory school now joins over 1 million British students where micro computers have been provided for middle and primary school students in Britain”.

He closed with a quote from famous deceased poet, Maya Angelou: “People will forget what you said and what you did but people will never forget how you made them feel”. The NTRC wants to make you feel empowered to create, innovate and cultivate new ideas and solutions that would lead to a better world. Think Big and Build!

Students of the Pioneer Preparatory Primary School expressed their gratitude to the NTRC for their kind donation. According to Nakisai, a student, “it is an honour to accept your generous gift, it will help build our education in many different ways.” He added, “this contribution is so much, and we will take care of the gift and use it well.”

Another student noted that, “the ICT equipment will increase the fun educations at school. The teachers have problems getting worksheets on time, but with new printer, laptops, hard drives and even a desk top, we will have an advantage”.

He said he envisions more engaging and exciting classes.

The Micro:bit is a pocket-sized computer 70 times smaller and 18 times faster than the original BBC Micro computers used in schools. It has 25 red LED lights that can flash messages and be used to create games.

Source: Dominica News Online

ECCB to Issue World's First Blockchain-based Digital Currency



L-R: Governor, Eastern Caribbean Central Bank – Timothy N. J. Antoine and CEO of Bitt Inc., Rawdon Adams sign contract to conduct a blockchain-issued Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) pilot within the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union – 21 February 2019

The Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB) and the Barbados-based fintech company, Bitt Inc. (Bitt) have signed a contract to conduct a blockchain-issued Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) pilot within the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU).

The watershed contract was signed on 21 February at the ECCB's Headquarters in Basseterre, St Kitts and Nevis.

This ECCB CBDC pilot is the first of its kind and will involve a securely minted and issued digital version of the EC dollar (DXCD). The digital EC dollar will be distributed and used by Licensed Financial Institutions and Non-Bank Financial Institutions in the ECCU. The DXCD will be used for financial transactions between consumers and merchants, including peer-to-peer transactions, all using smart devices. For example, an individual in St Kitts and Nevis will be able to send DXCD securely from

his/her smartphone to a friend in Grenada in seconds - and at no cost to either party.

The Governor of the ECCB, Timothy N. J. Antoine, emphasised that in contrast to previous CBDC research and experiments, the ECCB is going a step further.

“This is not an academic exercise. Not only will the digital EC Dollar be the world's first digital legal tender currency to be issued by a central bank on blockchain but this pilot is also a live CBDC deployment with a view to an eventual phased public rollout. The pilot is part of the ECCB's Strategic Plan 2017-2021 which aims to help reduce cash usage within the ECCU by 50 per cent, promote greater financial sector stability, and expedite the growth and development of our member countries. It would be a game-changer for the way we do business”.

CEO of Bitt Inc., Rawdon Adams, said, “I thank the ECCB for choosing Bitt. Our mission is the practical application of cutting edge technology to solve persistent financial problems. It is about a successful currency union building on its impressive record of financial stability, development and integration to deliver a quantum improvement to the lives of all its 630,000 citizens. Enhancing economic growth and the quality of life of ordinary people is the aim.”

The ECCB is now poised to embark on the DXCD pilot from March 2019. The pilot will be executed in two phases: development and testing, for about twelve months, followed by rollout and implementation in pilot countries for about six months. As part of pilot implementation, the ECCB will ramp up its sensitisation and education initiatives to facilitate active public engagement throughout all member countries.

The ECCB is being technically supported on this Project by Pinaka Consulting Ltd.

Source: [ECCB](#)

WhatsApp Reduces Jamaica's Telephone Tax Revenue



THE Government confirmed on March 5, 2019 that the increasing use of the free WhatsApp messenger by mobile phone users continues to be reflected in drops in telephone call tax revenues.

Minister of Finance and the Public Service Dr Nigel Clarke admitted to the loss in revenue, in responding to Opposition spokesman on finance Mark Golding's questions about a \$1.1-billion gap in the figures produced

in the revenue estimates, which were tabled along with the 2019/20 Estimates of Expenditure in Parliament on February 26, 2019.

The minister attributed the reduction in the projected revenues to the increasing use of the free WhatsApp call service, which has become very popular among Jamaican mobile phone users.

Golding described as “fairly dramatic” the 35 per cent fall in revenues from the telephone call tax, according to the Revenue Estimates projected. The estimates projected a reduction in income from the projected \$3.2 billion for 2018/19 by approximately \$1.1 billion, and has estimated instead revenues of \$2.113 billion for 2018/19 and \$2.116 for 2019/20, instead.

Source: [St. Lucia Times](#) via [ICT Pulse](#)

UK cyber-security efforts criticised by audit office



The government has been told there are "failings" in the way it is planning to protect the UK's critical infrastructure from cyber-attacks.

The warning came in a National Audit Office (NAO) assessment of the UK's national cyber-defence plan. The government is increasingly worried that these essential sectors will be targeted by foreign states seeking to disrupt UK life.

Modern life was now "totally dependent" on cyber-security, said one expert.

The Cabinet Office's National Cyber Security Programme is intended to be funded until 2021, and has involved the establishment of the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC).

The government-driven strategy to keep the UK safe in the face of constant cyber-attacks involves 12 "strategic outcomes" that cover such things as:

- understanding, investigating and disrupting threats
- defending against evolving cyber-attacks
- managing and responding effectively
- securing government networks

- developing cyber-skills in the UK

The NAO said that delivering the strategy was a "complex challenge" and added that the government did not know where it should concentrate efforts to "make the biggest impact or address the greatest need".

The only section marked as "red" in the report was the plan to protect power plants and hospitals. This meant that fewer than 80% of its projects to defend these institutions would finish on time.

These key targets were being "actively defended", said the report, but added that it was hard to gauge how effective this activity had been as methods to measure success were still being developed.

The government itself had "low confidence" in the evidence gathered for half of its strategic plans, said the report. Though it noted that this was an improvement on the "very low confidence" expressed late last year about the same topics.

The report noted the success of the NCSC, including the creation of a tool that has led to 54.5 million fake emails being blocked between 2017 and 2018. The UK's share of global phishing attacks also fell from 5.3% to 2.2% between 2016 and 2018.

The NAO said the Cabinet Office did not produce a business case for the programme before it was launched. This led to a mismatch of budget and strategy.

A total of £1.3bn was committed for the National Cyber Security Programme.

"It's a bit like putting the cart before the horse," Prof Alan Woodward, a computer security expert at the University of Surrey, told the BBC.

Source: [BBC](#)



Contact Us

National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission
2nd Floor NIS Building, Upper Bay Street Kingstown
St. Vincent
Tel: 784-457-2279 | Fax: 784-457-2834 | Email: ntrc@ntrc.vc

