



THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS REGULATORY COMMISSION

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Debon Moses with a trolley of groceries at Bodanies Supermarket

Debon Moses wins NTRC's Christmas Giveaway

Miss Debon Moses is happy to have won \$500 worth of groceries from Bonadies Supermarket No. 2 compliments the National Telecommunications Regulatory Commission (NTRC) via its Facebook Christmas Hamper Giveaway.

The Christmas Hamper Giveaway was the NTRC's final public awareness promotion for 2015 to improve its relations on social media platform Facebook. To enter the competition, persons were required to "Like" the NTRC's Facebook page (NTRC SVG), and enter their contact details to gain one entry. To gain additional entries and improve their chances of winning, persons were required to invite their friends to join the competition. For each invited friend that joined, entrants were awarded two additional entries. At the end of the competition, Miss Debon Moses was selected as the winner.

The Commission held several other promotions on Facebook throughout 2015 where persons won tablet computers and back to school vouchers. The competitions held resulted in an increase in followers by over 2,000. An increase in followers provided a larger social audience by which the Commission could disperse information about topics such as Cyber security related issues, the Commission's activities amongst others. The Commission has also used Facebook to further advise the public who publicly share their telecommunications related complaints.

For 2016, the Commission will be continuing its efforts to disperse information and interact with the Vincentian public using Facebook and other popular social media platforms such as Twitter and Instagram.

Cyber Tips

Realize that you are an attractive target to hackers. Don't ever say "It won't happen to me." -

Practice good password management. Use a strong mix of characters, and don't use the same password for multiple sites. Don't share your password with others, don't write it down, and definitely don't write it on a post-it note attached to your monitor.

Never leave your devices unattended. If you need to leave your computer, phone, or tablet for any length of time—no matter how short—lock it up so no one can use it while you're gone. If you keep sensitive information on a flash drive or external hard drive, make sure to lock it up as well.

Always be careful when clicking on attachments or links in email. If it's unexpected or suspicious for any reason, don't click on it. Double check the URL of the website the link takes you to: bad actors will often take advantage of spelling mistakes to direct you to a harmful domain. Think you can spot a phony website?

Sensitive browsing, such as banking or shopping, should only be done on a device that belongs to you, on a network that you trust. Whether it's a friend's phone, a public computer, or a cafe's free WiFi—your data could be copied or stolen.

FLOW Tech Kids Project "a resounding success" in Dominica



Telecommunications Company Flow is giving a high rating to the hosting of its first Kids Tech Project hosted at the newly opened Experience Centre. The inaugural project which was held on December 18, 2015 brought together five children between the ages of four to nine for a one of a kind experience into the exciting world of technology.

The children, accompanied by their parents arrived at the store on Saturday morning for two hours of fun, games and entertainment. The first order of business was to participate in the popular Temple Run game. After two rounds of competition, four year old Kayla Astaphan emerged as the winner with the highest score.

The second activity tested the children's' ability at design. Using the provided tablet device, the technology savvy children were instructed to dress-up Santa Claus on a Christmas card. The final design produced by each child is posted on the Flow Dominica Facebook page. The design with the most likes will be named as the winner and the designer will be awarded a grand prize. Fans, family and friends are encouraged to visit the page to vote for their favourite.

"Saturday's activity is the first of many by the company aimed at introducing children into the fascinating world of telecommunications and technology" said Flow's General Manager Jeffrey Baptiste. He said the objective of the Flow Tech Kids project is to provide a live platform to allow the children the opportunity to demonstrate their competency in using computer devices, and online programmes.

Source: [Dominica Vibes](#)

Chairman of ECTEL concerned about Cable & Wireless and Columbus Communications merger

BASSETERRE, St. Kitts – Attorney General and Minister of Communications, Honourable Vincent Byron Jr. said that the Government is concerned about the effects that the merger between telecommunications company Cable and Wireless and Columbus Communications to form FLOW will have on the telecommunications market in St. Kitts and Nevis and the wider Eastern Caribbean.

Cable and Wireless, the parent company for LIME, announced in March 2015 that it has completed its US\$1.85 billion acquisition of 100 per cent of the equity of Columbus Communications Inc., the operators of FLOW. The merger has sparked concerns and debates around the Caribbean that the merger could create a telecommunications monopoly, which was removed in large part with the arrival of DIGICEL as LIME's main telecommunications competitor in 2001.

Minister Byron, who is also the chairman of ECTEL (Eastern Caribbean Telecommunications Authority), the telecommunications regulatory body for the Eastern Caribbean, said that the merger is a concern for St. Kitts and Nevis, considering that the Government is a majority shareholder in The Cable, the main cable television and internet provider on St. Kitts that competed with LIME. He said the priority should be for consumers of the sub-region to get good quality telecommunications services at an affordable price.

He also said that ECTEL will also be addressing other issues, including number portability, the removal of roaming charges within the sub-region and the free use of over the top services such as WhatsApp.

Byron went on to stress the importance of ECTEL member states having the proper legislative framework in place in order to implement some of these developments in telecommunications.

It is also the goal over the next five years of ECTEL that every household is connected by broadband technology, and that everyone has a smart phone and access to these services.

Source: [Jamaica Observer](#) via [ICT Pulse](#)

Government of Barbados enters into Contract with Digicel that will result in cost savings

The Government of Barbados has entered into a contract with telecommunications company Digicel that will cut its telephone costs in half.

Prime Minister Freundel Stuart made the revelation on December 16, 2015 during debate in the House of Assembly.

The Prime Minister sought and received approval of Parliament for the first payment of \$776,800 to apply Digicel's Wide Area Network (WAN) system to the Ministry of the Civil Service, the Personnel Administration Department, the Ministry of Energy, the Telecoms Unit, and the Civil Aviation Department, beginning this month.

Offering an example of the savings in store for Government through removal of the old telecommunication system and implementing WAN, Stuart said: "The current accumulated phone calls for the Ministry of the Civil Service and the Personnel Administration Department is \$180,000 annually.

"During the first year of this project, December 2015 to November 2016, of the new telephony installation, Government will pay nothing for the phone system.

"From December 2016 and onwards, the cost of phones will be reduced to \$90,000."

He added: "When other departments become connected, the [WAN] solution will observe savings of up to 53 per cent".

Emphasising that the saving "was not an option that Government could frown on", he said, "We are concerned about the chaotic use of information and communication technology in the public service"

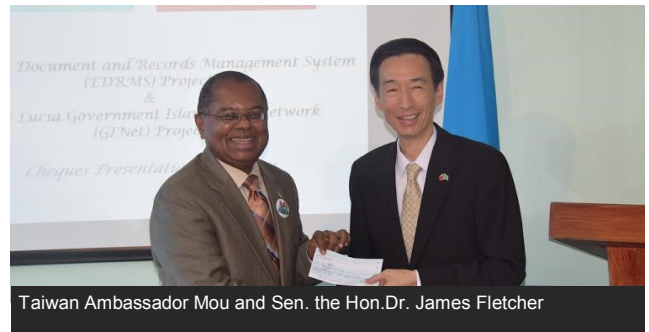
Stuart described the move to WAN as "a giant step" in the direction towards e-Government.

He said that as the largest organisation on the island it should be enjoying reduced costs owing to size, but "separate entities in Government go off on their own and the advantages of economies of scale are not realized".

The Prime Minister told the Committee of Supply of Parliament that the \$776,800 payment was the first in a series of periodic disbursements that the administration will make to Digicel, which was awarded the contract based on it making the best offer in a tendering process.

"It was agreed that a managed services wide area network solution at a cost of \$2.4 million, VAT inclusive, for the first three years would be implemented."

Source: [BarbadosToday](#) via [ICT Pulse](#)



Taiwan donates US\$145,000 to St. Lucian Government for EDRMS projects

The Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) has come to the assistance of the Government and People of Saint Lucia by making a donation of EC\$ 389,789.00 (US\$145,000.00), towards the Government island wide Network (GiNet) and Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) projects.

EC\$80,646 (US\$30,000) of that amount is allocated for the GiNet Project, while the remainder, EC\$309,143 (US\$115,000) as the second disbursement will be used for the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS).

Both of these projects are under the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Cooperation Agreement between the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the Government of Saint Lucia.

According to the new Taiwanese Ambassador to Saint Lucia, His Excellency Ray Hua-Wei Mou, "My government has taken the initiative to assist with the GiNet Project. We are working on free or low-cost "Wireless Local Area Network, WLAN" in public areas. Internet penetration will be enhanced. Also, government and enterprises will be motivated to provide a wide range of innovative applications on this public Internet infrastructure".

The EDRMS primarily includes e-document authoring, online handling and approval, exchange, filing and archive sub-systems. The aim of this system is to allow the Government of Saint Lucia to create process and manage documents and records electronically.

The technicians have already completed the training of the Second Phase on how to use the system and are now at Phase III, which is the Development of Archives Module. Archiving will help in reducing the time in processing the documents, and improve the organization's internal and external communication efficiency, and reduce the risk of government critical information loss. The Archive Module will also support the government's records and information management, and compliance with the e-Laws regulation.

Source: [St. Lucia News Online](#)

India's Internet Regulator Puts Facebook's 'Free Basics' Program on Hold

Facebook's plan to provide limited Internet services for free in India has run into a roadblock, with the country's top Internet regulatory body requesting its local partner to temporarily suspend the program.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) asked Reliance Communications to cease providing Facebook's Free Basics program to its customers until further notice, the Times of India reported on December 23, 2015.

Free Basics, part of Facebook's Internet.org initiative to bring underprivileged citizens of developing countries online, provides certain free web-based services to subscribers of Reliance — its telecom partner in India. However, it has become controversial in the South Asian nation — the social-media giant's largest user base after the U.S. — where critics say it violates net neutrality, the principle that prevents Internet providers from favoring particular websites or services.

"The question has arisen whether a telecom operator should be allowed to have differential pricing for different kinds of content," a senior government official told the Times. "Unless that question is answered, it will not be appropriate for us to continue to make that happen."

Facebook, which has consistently insisted that Free Basics is a purely philanthropic initiative, encountered even more backlash for asking its Indian users to send TRAI a message of support for the program and conducting a widespread advertising campaign across the country's newspapers, television and even billboards.

Source: [TIME](#)



FCC questions T-Mobile, AT&T, and Comcast over free data programs

The Federal Communications Commission has sent letters to T-Mobile, AT&T, and Comcast asking for information on programs that

allow their customers to stream music, videos, or other content without having it count toward their data cap. The inquiry is a big deal. Net neutrality advocates argue that these programs violate the Commission's rules, giving a distinct competitive advantage to the apps and services that they let customers use data free; upstarts, they argue, will always fail in comparison. The FCC avoided directly addressing this issue when it established its new net neutrality rules earlier this year, but today's inquiry suggests that it shares some of these competitive concerns.

"We want to ensure that we have all the facts to understand how these services relate to the Commission's goal of maintaining a free and open internet while incentivizing innovation and investment from all sources," the FCC writes in each letter. It's asked the three companies to make staff available to them for discussions within a month.

The three internet providers argue that their services do not violate net neutrality. T-Mobile, which offers data-free music and video streaming for select services, tells *The Hill* that its program "encourages competition, and we believe it is absolutely in line with net neutrality rules." Comcast, which offers its own data-free streaming TV service, argues in a statement to the Los Angeles Times that it's offering a "cable service" not subject to net neutrality rules, as opposed to a streaming service that goes "over the public internet." AT&T, which lets companies pay to offer data-free services, tries (and fails) to sound super punk, saying, "We remain committed to innovation without permission and hope the FCC is too."

Source: [The Verge](#)



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