

# MTN Uganda launches Wi-Fi hotspots

As MTN Uganda continues to cement its position, it has now launched a new Wi-Fi service with a number of MTN hotspots around the country. The hotspots will be available to MTN and non-MTN customers.



Customers with Wi-Fi capable devices will have access to this service in areas where there is MTN Wi-Fi coverage. To use MTN hotspots customers will be required to register.

MTN customers will need to have an internet bundle of airtime on their number while non-MTN customers will have to load MTN airtime onto their accounts on the portal. To buy an internet bundle, MTN customers just need to dial \*150# and make a selection of a preferred bundle.

Some of the devices the customer can use include smartphones, tablets and laptops. These devices must be Wi-Fi compatible in order for them to access the network.

MTN chief marketing officer, Ernst Fonternel, said, "MTN hotspots will provide both MTN and non-MTN customers with a secure internet access in a number of locations across the country. Customers have a choice from a number of tailor-made bundles to suit their internet usage needs".

Over the last two years, MTN has made major investments to its data infrastructure in Uganda. MTN Uganda launched the first Mobile Money service in Uganda with tremendous success, introduced 3G+, expanded the mobile distribution footprint, and greatly enhanced the mobile core, radio capacity and infrastructure technology. Furthermore, it extended the fibre network backbone and built regional switching centres in the East, West, North and Central regions.

## Improved 3G+ network coverage

Added Fonternel, "Last year, we further improved and widened our 3G+ network coverage to deliver the newly improved speed to our close to 1 million data customers supported with the widest network coverage, a wide range of devices and affordable tariffs".

In terms of infrastructure, last year MTN Uganda rolled out an additional 600km of fibre infrastructure closing the year with 2 800km of fibre to provide the capacity for high speed data connectivity and wider national coverage of 3G mobile data services that extend internet access to the rural areas of Uganda.

This was achieved through expansion of our national fibre network with additional rings to protect customer services and provide direct fibre connection to MTN Rwanda. This will provide the capacity for high speed data connectivity and wider national coverage of 3G mobile data services that extend Internet access to the rural areas of Uganda.

MTN Uganda has over the last six months rolled out 81 new Base Transmission Sites to new coverage areas while commissioning another batch of capacity sites to enhance the quality of network services. MTN had a total of 1 100 sites at the end of 2012.

## **Connecting to the world**

Over the past couple of years, MTN has also made back haul links enhancements to the Mombasa submarine cables (EASSY and TEAMS). This has enabled connectivity with the rest of the world while providing better connectivity for voice and data.

In October last year MTN Uganda launched its multi-million dollar Data and Switching Center at Mutundwe as well as a new MTN Business Unit which will be a world-class provider of converged communications solutions aimed at providing MTN business customers with superior, directly managed services, fully backed by consistent service levels.

Mutundwe Switch currently serves 50% of the western region and will be grown to serve 50% of the entire network and population. Currently the equipment in Mutundwe parents 60 Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) and will be grown to serve 543 out of a total of 1 085 BTSs. In 2013, there are plans to install and commission an earth station at Mutundwe providing additional resilience for international traffic.

"This investment is aimed at providing our customers with the best possible user experience across the Country. We are happy that we shall now be able to provide our customers with this world-class internet that promises speed, convenience, coverage and affordability," concluded Fonternel.

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