

Mobile internet penetration rises to 88 million

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Despite the slow broadband penetration in the country, Nigeria still has a steady and impressive growth rate in mobile internet penetration, according to recent statistics released by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC).

The statistics, which was posted on the NCC's website, showed that as at May 2015, the total mobile internet penetration across GSM operators' networks was 88,136,580, which was an improvement from the previous months.

As at January this year, mobile internet penetration was 81,891,840; and in February this same year, the figure rose to 83,209,380. In March this year, the figure also climbed to 85,315,094. As at April this year, the figure rose again to 86,904,705, before hitting the 88 million mark in May this year. Industry sources, however said the figure must have exceeded 100 million currently, giving its steady growth rate, since January this year.



Image via [123RF](#)

A breakdown of the over 88 million mobile internet subscriptions, showed that over 40 million subscribers on the MTN network, were connected to the internet, via their mobile devices, while over 19 million subscribers on the Globacom's network, were connected to the internet, via their mobile devices, which included mobile phones and tablets.

Airtel has over 17 million connected subscribers to the internet on its network, while Etisalat has over 10 million connected subscribers to the internet, via mobile devices.

The steady growth rate recorded in mobile internet penetration in Nigeria has no doubt, enhanced telecoms' percentage

contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which was put at 8.5 per cent, representing an increase from the 7.6 per cent in 2014.

As at 2010, the telecoms percentage contribution to GDP was 8.9 per cent, which however dropped to 8.6 per cent in 2011. The figure further dropped to 7.7 per cent in 2012, before it eventually declined to 7.4 per cent in 2013. But in 2014 and 2015, the figure increased to 7.6 per cent and 8.5 per cent respectively, according to NCC's statistics.

Currently, the percentage market share of mobile GSM operators in the country is put at 98.52 per cent, that of mobile Code Division Multiple Access (CDMA) was put at 1.36 per cent, and that of fixed wireless was put at 0.12 per cent. Applauding the steady growth rate of mobile internet penetration in the country, some industry stakeholders, who attributed the growth rate to the shift from features phones to smartphones, said the figure would continue to increase, as more Nigerians, especially the youths, continue to embrace the smartphone technology.

With a population of about 170 million people, voice telecoms subscriptions alone is over 143 million and the number is on the increase, making Nigeria the fastest growing telecoms market globally.

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