

Global mobile data traffic doubled in year: Ericsson

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN: The amount of data used by mobile devices doubled over the past year, boosted by growth in video streaming services, according to a study released on Wednesday (21 November) by Swedish telecommunications group Ericsson.

Data traffic doubled in the third quarter of this year on an annual basis, and rose 16% from the previous quarter, it said.

The trend is set to continue, with the amount of information transferred over mobile networks doubling every year for the next six years, driven in large part by users accessing more video content.

The report says that computers and tablets currently dominate mobile traffic, but the high growth in smartphone subscriptions means data consumption will be split equally between the two in 2018.

"Smartphone traffic is growing faster due to the high growth in subscriptions," the report added.

Around 40% of all phones sold in the third quarter of this year were smartphones.

Mobile devices have turned social media into an activity that consumers engage in throughout the day, Ericsson noted.

"It has begun to influence and merge with other behaviors, such as watching TV or other video content," it said.

According to the report, the two activities take place in parallel or even merge into a new kind of behaviour among users.

The study also highlighted that using free games apps that are financed by advertising often leads to significantly higher data consumption for the user than the paid-for, premium versions of the software. Global mobile penetration reached 91% in the third quarter this year.

The report predicts that the total number of mobile subscriptions will reach 6.6bn this year and rise to 9.3bn by 2018.

Source: *AFP* via I-Net Bridge