

Virgin Mobile celebrate two years

By [Tshepiso Seopa](#)

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Virgin Mobile celebrated its second birthday on Tuesday, 24 June 2008, after launching in South Africa on the same day in 2006. The mobile operator attributes its success to its brand positioning as the best, not necessarily the biggest, in the telecoms industry and also that it targets consumers with a higher income.

The company has signed up over 500 000 customers in its infancy and aims to increase this figure to 603 000 by the end of the year. The company says its average revenue per user (ARPU) of R216 is significantly higher than MTN's R148.50 or Vodacom's R121.50.

"Mobile portability champions"

Speaking at Virgin Mobile's two year birthday media briefing, the CEO of Virgin Mobile Peter Boyd said: "The company is proud to have been the mobile number portability champions in South Africa and that Virgin Mobile remains the only cellular provider with unlimited SMSes and no termination fees.

"There are challenges, however, that remain for the company as the only mobile virtual network operator in South Africa. This includes rolling out more dealerships and overcoming margin pressure," he added.

To achieve that, Virgin Mobile included a rollout to more dealers and franchises this year, as well as putting adapting to the local market language on top of its to-do list. Boyd also said that it may increase its tariffs if other mobile phone operators in the country decide to increase theirs.

"The company would follow suit if other mobile companies were forced to increase costs because of the rising inflation. We will look at the industry and follow, but try and retain that differential value," said Boyd.

Giveaway

According to a press release, as part of its birthday celebration, Virgin Mobile is giving its customers the newly launched, state-of-the-art HTC Touch Diamond mobile phone. The phones come with a personalised, autographed book from author and Virgin Mobile founder Sir Richard Branson.

"Thank you for your loyalty and for making every second count. Happy Birthday. Have a diamond," said Branson. "Screw it, let's do it again."

“It's true that we do know our customers by name. We care about them and we know where they live. So it was quite possible for us to visit them at their homes and offices to surprise them with a gift from Sir Richard Branson who was here when they signed up for our services,” said Boyd after doing a couple of surprise deliveries to loyal customers.

ABOUT TSHEPISO SEOPA

Tshepiso Seopa was a junior journalist at Bizcommunity.com

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