

# Forecast indicates more than 54 million mobile users in SA by 2017

According to the Cisco Visual Networking Index Global Mobile Data Traffic Forecast for 2012 to 2017, in the Middle East and Africa (MEA), there will be 849 226 090 mobile users in 2017 with the number reaching 54 236 460 in South Africa.

The expected steady increase in mobile traffic is partly due to continued strong growth in the number of mobile internet connections (personal devices and machine-to-machine applications), which will exceed the world's population (United Nations estimates 7.6 billion) by 2017.

## 2017 VNI South Africa highlights:

- Mobile data traffic will grow tenfold from 2012 to 2017, a compound annual growth rate of 58%.
- Mobile data traffic will reach 98 347 Terabytes (0.10 Exabytes) per month in 2017, the equivalent of 25 million DVDs each month or 271 million text messages each second.
- Mobile data traffic will account for 15% of South African fixed and mobile data traffic in 2017, up from 11% in 2012. (An official Cisco VNI fixed IP traffic forecast through 2017 will not be released until June 2013.)

## Business Mobile Traffic in South Africa:

- In 2012, South Africa's business mobile data traffic grew 1.9-fold, or 90%.
- South Africa's business mobile traffic will grow eightfold from 2012 to 2017, a compound annual growth rate of 50%.
- Business will account for 19% of South Africa's mobile data traffic in 2017, compared to 24% at the end of 2012.

## Video in South Africa:

- Mobile video traffic will grow 16-fold from 2012 to 2017, a compound annual growth rate of 73%.
- Video will be 73% of South Africa's mobile data traffic in 2017, compared to 46% at the end of 2012.
- Video reaches half of South Africa's mobile data traffic by year-end 2012.

## Consumer Mobile Traffic in South Africa:

- In 2012, South Africa's consumer mobile data traffic grew 2.1-fold, or 113%.
- In South Africa, consumer mobile traffic will grow 11-fold from 2012 to 2017, a compound annual growth rate of 60%.
- Consumer will account for 81% of South Africa's mobile data traffic in 2017, compared to 76% at the end of 2012.

During the 2012 to 2017 forecast period, Cisco anticipates that global mobile data traffic will outpace global fixed data traffic by a factor of three.

**The following major trends are driving global mobile data traffic growth:**

- **More mobile users:** By 2017, there will be 5.2 billion mobile users (up from 4.3 billion in 2012).
- **More mobile connections:** By 2017, there will be more than 10 billion mobile devices/connections, including more than 1.7 billion M2M connections (up from 7 billion total mobile devices and M2M connections in 2012).
- **Faster mobile speeds:** Average global mobile network speeds will increase seven-fold from 2012 (0.5 Mbps) to 2017 (3.9 Mbps).
- **More mobile video:** By 2017, mobile video will represent 66% of global mobile data traffic (up from 51% in 2012).

**Impact of mobile devices/connections:**

- Smartphones, laptops, and tablets will drive 93% of global mobile data traffic by 2017.
- M2M traffic (such as GPS systems in cars, asset tracking systems, medical applications, etc.) will represent 5% of 2017 global mobile data traffic.
- Basic handsets will account for the remaining 2% of global mobile data traffic in 2017.
- In 2012, 14% of all mobile-connected devices/connections (1 billion) were IPv6-capable.
- By 2017, 41% of all mobile-connected devices/connections (4.2 billion) will be IPv6-capable.

## **Traffic offload from mobile networks to fixed networks**

To address the rise in demand for mobile internet and to address the lack of available new mobile spectrum, and the expense and complexity of adding new macrocell sites, service providers are increasingly looking to offload traffic to fixed or wi-fi networks.

## **4G adoption and mobile data traffic growth**

Many global mobile carriers are deploying 4G technologies to address consumer and business users' demands for wireless services. In many emerging markets, carriers are creating new mobile networks with 4G solutions. In mature markets, carriers are supplementing or replacing legacy (2G/3G) networks with 4G technologies. The Cisco Mobile VNI study now projects the growth and impact of 4G.

Craig Zeeman, director, transformational accounts of Cisco South Africa, said: "By 2017, global mobile data traffic will continue its truly remarkable growth, increasing 13-fold over the next five years, to reach an amount more than 46 times the total amount of mobile IP traffic just a few years ago in 2010. With such dramatic adoption, we are rapidly approaching the time when nearly every network experience will be a mobile one and, more often than not, a visual one as well. This trend is a result of the seemingly insatiable demand by consumers and businesses in the Middle East and Africa to achieve the benefits gained when connecting people, data, and things in an internet of everything."