

## Visafone set to roll out in Nigeria

Visafone, one of the emerging telecom operators in Nigeria, has announced plans to commence services in 12 states of the federation cutting across 40 cities.

By [RemmyNweke](#) 17 Mar 2008

Jim Ovia, Visafone's founder, said at a session with dealers in Lagos that the roll-out plan would include the federal capital territory (FCT), Abuja. He also said that in the last one month, Visafone has been test-running its network in various parts of the country and would in a matter of days launch its commercial operation.

Ovia added that Visafone is not sparing anything in carrying out its aggressive roll-out based on the wide breadth it received from the Unified Access Service licence, granted last year by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) soon after it acquired the eight-year old Cellcom.

He noted that Visafone aims to become one of the most-preferred telecom operators in the country, expressing the telco's readiness to offer seamless and efficient services.

Ovia further said that based on the Third Generation (3G) Coded Division Multiple Access (CDMA) being deployed by Visafone, Nigerians are assured of the best clarity and the widest coverage at the shortest time, adding that CDMA is more advanced technology to the Global System for Mobile communications (GSM).

According to him, Visafone promises an exciting bouquet of superior services that include the very best of Voice, High Speed Data 3G (EVDO) internet and other innovative Value Added Services (VAS) to individual subscribers while also providing unparalleled business solutions to large corporates as well as the Small and Medium Scale Enterprises in the country.

Visafone Managing Director, Ninan Thomas, outlined the telco's business plan and strategy, saying that he would bring to bear on the network his experience at Reliance India as well as Motorola in the United States (US).

"Our overriding plan is to act as a spring board for Nigeria's economic growth and development. To achieve this, the company will assist in fast tracking that growth and development through the provision of cutting edge communications infrastructure as well as seamless and efficient services that will ensure excellent customer service, unequalled clarity, the widest coverage and seamless connectivity," he said.

The emergence of Visafone is expected to shore-up the competition in the nation's telecom market place especially on mobile phone business segment. Visafone, he pointed out, tends to contribute its own quota to improve the quality of service, enlarge subscriber base and broaden capacity in the telecom industry.

Recently, about 13 banks gave their support for Visafone with a syndicated facility of \$200m in support of the new mobile phone company, even as it plans to engage about 5000 Nigerians in the next five years. Visafone was incorporated in Nigeria on June 20, 2007 following its acquisition of Cellcom. Just as Visafone plans to roll out with customised dual Subscriber Identification Module (SIM) phones in the next few weeks

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