

## SA company first 'on the grid' in Dubai awards

The 3rd Annual Comms MEA Awards 2008 were presented at a lavish ceremony at Grand Hyatt Dubai on Monday 15th December.



Shameel Joosub, Managing Director of Vodacom South Africa, collects the award at the Hyatt in Dubai.

Dubai, UAE, Wednesday 17th December, Vodacom was presented with the New Telecommunications Service of the Year award this week at the 3rd Annual Comms MEA Awards in Dubai, the most prestigious event dedicated to the Middle East and Africa (MEA) communications sector.

The winning company has launched one of the region's first mobile-based social networking platforms, described by the judges as a 'perfect combination of Web 2.0 applications and mobility'. Vodacom's the Grid is also said to be the first of its kind in Africa.

The Comms MEA Awards set out to celebrate and pay tribute to the telecoms industry professionals and operators that have shown outstanding performance and results in key market segments.

Organised by ITP Technology Publishing, the awards ceremony took place at Grand Hyatt Dubai, and saw gathering of more than 250 senior executives and personalities from the MEA telecommunications industry.

Twelve awards were presented at the ceremony in categories that encompassed a different facet of the telecoms industry from individual excellence, to corporate success, to outstanding service and expertise in implementation. In addition to these categories, there was also the hotly contested category of lifetime achievement award, awarded to an individual who has helped shape and inspire the MEA telecoms market.

The awards acknowledged those operators and individuals who have taken a leadership role in the growth of the regional industry. The winners were chosen for consistently investing in technology, implementing winning strategies and developing services that capture the hearts and minds of end users.

Accepting the award, Shameel Joosub, Managing Director of Vodacom South Africa, says, 'the Grid is South Africa's first location-based social networking service available on cellphones and can be used at no extra cost by anyone with a South African cellphone number. The impact of this innovative technology reaches far beyond traditional social networking borders as anyone with the Grid loaded on their cellphone can find friends in their area on the Grid, locate them on a map, chat to them and share experiences and much more.'

'The recognition of the Grid as New Telecommunications Service of the Year by the Comms MEA Awards is a great honour for Vodacom and testifies to the endless possibilities for growth in the mobile social networking environment across the world,' Joosub says.

For more information on the Comms MEA Awards and for details of all the winners please visit <http://www.itp.net/events/commsmeaawards/>

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