

# Airtel, Samsung announce African partnership

Airtel Africa has announced a two-year strategic partnership with global mobile manufacturer, Samsung. The partnership is set to improve both Airtel's and Samsung's brand equity, their distribution infrastructure, expand its African footprint and drive penetration in Africa to achieve common goals.



The agreement gives Airtel exclusive distribution rights for selected Samsung products for the initial six months after they are launched. The companies will work together to provide market-specific products based on trends and consumer preferences, ensuring Airtel customers have access to products that are tailor made to their individual needs. The wide range of innovative products that Samsung will collaborate with Airtel on include smart phones, mass market handsets, tablets, dongles and routers.

Between July and September this year, Samsung became the world's largest supplier of smart phones, according to research conducted by Strategy Analytics. Over the three month period, Samsung shipped 27.8 million smart phones globally, compared with 17.1 million from Apple and 16.8 million from Nokia.

## Committed to Africa's needs



Manoj Kohli

"This partnership demonstrates that we remain committed to meet Africa's needs," explains Manoj Kohli, CEO (international) and joint managing director, Bharti Airtel. "We will work closely with Samsung to provide customers across every segment with cutting edge products. We will leverage each other's distribution networks to ensure that the range is within reach of our high value and corporate clients, our larger base with price in mind and especially cater to our young adult market."

Kohli added, "Airtel and Samsung will also join forces to develop services that will enhance m-Commerce, m-Health and other areas that have significant social benefits for the communities that we live and work in across Africa."

Airtel's footprint currently stretches across 17 countries on the continent and the company intends to expand even further into sub-Saharan Africa. As an integral part of this expansion plan, the telecommunication services provider plans to roll out upto 2 200 retail stores across Africa in 2012. These will act as key retail outlets for the Samsung portfolio.

"African markets are very important to us," explains JK Shin, president of Samsung Mobile Division. "We know that our success in Africa depends on forging meaningful partnerships with key players on the continent, and this is why we decided to join forces with Airtel. We share similar goals, and believe that companies have a greater responsibility to the markets in which they operate. This is why our vision for Africa is to develop products and programmes that are built in Africa, for Africa, and by Africa. This strategic partnership with Airtel will help us do exactly that."

"We are confident that this partnership will help Airtel achieve its vision to reach 100 million customers by 2013." concluded Shin.