

## **Starcomms to ring in Calabar and Warri**

In furtherance of the promise it made last year to connect more towns and cities to its ever expanding network, Starcomms Nigeria's 4<sup>th</sup> largest telecommunications operator and leading "triple-play" (mobile, fixed wireless voice, wireless broadband) provider is getting ready to connect Calabar and the oil rich State of Warri, Delta State to its network. The roll out is coming on the heels of the network's earlier promise of ensuring that subscribers on its ever expanding network get the very best and latest in seamless communication.

The company recently added Abeokuta, Shagamu, and Ijebu-ode, onto its network coverage, and the addition of these two towns indicate the fastest growing network's expansion project designed to cover the entire length of Africa's most populous country.

Starcomms, which has already stamped its feet in Nigeria's telecommunications industry, is currently operating in key cities- as Lagos, Ibadan, Abeokuta, Shagamu, Ijebu Ode, Port Harcourt, Aba, Onitsha, Asaba, Benin, Abuja, Kano, Rano, Maiduguri , Kaduna, Zaria. With these two soon to be rolled out cities, Starcomms would be covering the 18 key cities of Nigeria. Plans are at an advanced stage to link other cities and towns this year, taking its footprint into 31 cities.

Outlining the company's plans, Chief Executive Officer, and Managing Director of Starcomms, Mr. Maher Qubain said the network launch in Calabar and Warri is part of an aggressive marketing drive aimed at making world class products and services available to all parts of the country, adding that the range of the company's voice & CDMA 1x data products and services would be available.

He further stated, "Our presence in Calabar and Warri is part of the plan to cover the key cities of the country within the FY2008. We are driven by the feedback, which indicate a high demand for our services in the areas. Now is the time for subscribers to realize their yearnings." According to Mr. Qubain, "the company's roll out in Calabar and Warri is based on the fact that the art of communication should not be the preserve of a few, but the preserve of all. We promised our subscribers when we launched our 0702-8 range of mobile numbers that we will soon cover the length and breadth of Nigeria, Calabar and Warri roll out is another step in that direction. The CEO said the company had long realized that to remain a leading player in the telecommunications industry, it must spread out to as many people and locations as possible, and this informed recent efforts to shore up the capital base through private placement and listing on the Nigerian Stock Exchange.

The CEO added, "Starcomms would be showcasing and launching its entire product category – Mobile, Talkie desktop phone service, Data, Smart Center, Value Added Services, for customers to experience and enjoy our unique services and value propositions. The customers can approach the various authorized dealer outlets and Showroom to purchase the product of their need. The Mobile service would enable customers stay connected within and outside the two cities, thus, creating a high mobility on the 0702-8, and the recently launched 0702-9 number range. The company's rapid surge is evident in the release of new number series in the 0702-9 block in less than a year and half, again becoming the first CDMA service provider to be doing so.

In 2002, the company re-tooled its systems and procedures to improve the capacity, quality and performance of its network to the CDMA 2000 1X RTT technology. On December 1<sup>st</sup> 2003, the company commenced operation in Kano followed by Maiduguri on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the same month, while the Port Harcourt office was commissioned in 2005. On August 1 2006, Starcomms became one of the first batches of operators to be licensed as a unified operator by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC).

On Monday July 14, 2008 Starcomms made history by becoming the first telecommunications operator in Nigeria to be quoted on The Nigerian Stock Exchange, a move that presented an excellent opportunity for every Nigerian to participate in one of the fastest growing and profitable sectors of the Nigerian economy. The ₦64.35 billion Private Placement was handled by Chapel Hill Advisory Partners Limited and Stanbic IBTC Bank Plc, together with Morgan Stanley acting as international financial adviser and coordinator.

As the 4<sup>th</sup> largest telecommunications operator in Nigeria and a market leader in providing “triple play” services including mobile voice, fixed wireless voice and wireless data products and services, the company is widely recognized for its innovation, brand and quality of service. In 2007 Starcomms was named both Nigerian Telecoms Company of the Year (Nigeria Telecoms Awards) and Nigerian Wireless Telecoms Company of the Year (Nigeria Information Technology and Telecoms Awards).

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