

**Regional Development Forum 2008**  
“Bridging the Standardization Gap in Developing Countries”  
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**Overview  
of  
Caribbean Telecommunications  
Union's  
Caribbean Broadband Review**

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# Overview

- Historical Perspective
- Early Stages of Liberalisation
- Cost of Broadband Services
- Overview of Regional Infrastructure
- Impact on Broadband Prices
- Requirements for Deriving Benefits from Broadband

# Historical Perspective

- Pre-2000 Caribbean markets dominated by monopoly service providers
  - International facilities controlled by dominant service providers
  - Cost of broadband service high
  - Commercial use of broadband services.
  - Low internet penetration – dialup services

# Early Stages of Liberalisation

- 2000 - Commencement of liberalisation of Caribbean markets.
  - ➔ Many licenses granted, new entrants experienced challenges in setting up operations
  - ➔ International facilities were still controlled by dominant service providers
  - ➔ Slow development of truly competitive markets

# Cost of Broadband 2005-2006

COUNTRY	TECHNOLOGY	DOWN (Speed Kbps) UP		US\$/ MONTH
USA	ADSL	768	128	15.00
Canada	Cable	600	128	24.30
Canada	ADSL	1,000		31.30
Antigua & Barbuda	BWA	512	128	183.10
Antigua & Barbuda	BWA	1,024	256	366.60
Bahamas	Cable	1,000	256	21.70
Barbados	ADSL	768	128	86.30
Belize	ADSL	1025	256	265.00
Cayman Islands	ADSL	512	256	70.80
Cayman Islands	BWA	1,024	512	76.80
Dominican Republic	ADSL	768	512	49.80
Dominican Republic	ADSL	512	512	132.00
Grenada	ADSL	512	128	73.00
Grenada	ADSL	768	256	139.10
Grenada	ADSL	768	256	307.90
Jamaica	ADSL	1,024	256	40.00
St. Lucia	ADSL	512	128	73.00
St. Lucia	ADSL	1,544	512	219.80
Trinidad & Tobago	ADSL	512	128	481.59

**Source:** Assessment of the Telecommunication Services Sector in CARICOM Dr. Peter Stern - 1996

# Cost of Broadband ~ 2005-2006

- High cost of Broadband
  - Slow uptake of Broadband Services especially for residential service
  - Narrowband service limits meaningful access to Internet and its potential

# Overview of Regional Infrastructure

## ■ Marine Fibre Systems

- Eastern Caribbean Fiber System
- Americas-2 Consortium
- Pan-Am Consortium

*\*\*Characterised by fragmentation*

## ■ Satellite systems

- Typically high costs

# Regional Connectivity - *Recent Systems*

- Columbus Group
- Global Caribbean Network
- Antilles Crossing



<http://www.columbus-networks.com/index.html>

*Emergence of resilient integrated pan Caribbean systems providing more options for international connectivity*

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# Impact on Cost of Broadband - 2008

- Significant reductions in the cost of broadband
- Increased uptake of broadband services

Country	Download kbps	Upload kbps	2005/6 US\$/Month	2008 US\$/Month
Trinidad & Tobago	512	128	481.59	129.57
Barbados	1544	256	108.10	99.00
Antigua & Barbuda	512	128	183.10	129

# Importance of Broadband

- Development of telecommunications is seen by Governments around the region as an enabler for social and economic development across all sectors of the economy
  - e-learning, e-commerce, e-government, e-health, etc.

# Universal Access

- Governments looking at strategies to provide Universal Access to broadband facilities
  - Jamaica – Universal Access Fund Company formed
  - Trinidad – FastForward: National ICT Strategy
- National broadband network linking key public institutions
- Knowledge-based society

# Requirements for Deriving Benefits from Broadband

- Public awareness and education
- Universal Access
- Harmonised policies, legislation and regulations
  - enhance regulatory certainty
  - reduce market distortions
  - promote economies of scale
  - Reduce costs of market entry (e.g. simplified licensing requirements)

## Requirements cont'd...

- Standards
- Political commitment to interworking of regional governments and institutions for greater collaboration and functional regional integration
- Increased usage



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