Challenge of Managing Digital Content: Vanuatu's Experience

ITU - TRAI

Asia – Pacific Regulators' Roundtable

21 – 22 August, 2017, New Delhi

TRR
Telecommunication &
Radiocommunication
Regulator

Vanuatu - An Overview

- Archipelago consisting of 83 islands of which 63 are inhabited
- Population of approximately 272,459 (2017 mini census) with the annual growth rate of 2.3%
    - Around 40% of the population is under 15
    - 75% of the population live in rural areas
- GDP (2015) of VUV83,594 million (US$767.4 million)
- Largest contributor to GDP is Tourism
    - Agriculture follows close behind
- GNI (per capita (2014)) $US 3,148
    - 5% of monthly income is around $US 13
    - Cheapest unlimited internet service is $US 58 per month (512 kbps advertised speeds
    - ~$US 9.70 for a 1GB monthly allowance of data
- Political system
    - Single chamber, multiparty, democratic republic
- Common General Challenges
    - Illiteracy & Servicing a multi-spread country with challenging topography and topology
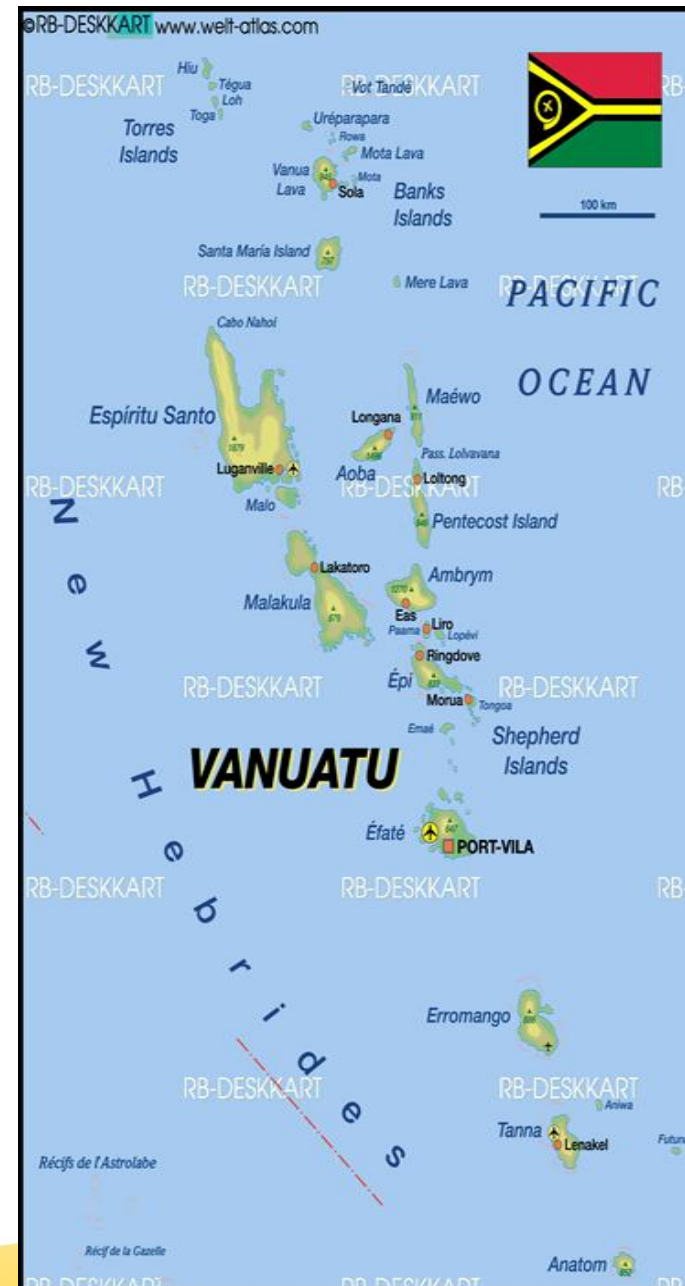
Market Overview

- Independent Regulator - TRR.
  - Established under the Telecommunications and Radiocommunications Regulation Act No.30 of 2009
- Two full service carriers (Telecom Vanuatu, Digicel)
  - TVL dominant in fixed line and ISP
  - Digicel dominant in mobile
    - Mobile Coverage is around 96% population coverage (mostly Edge, GPS and now 3G, 3G+ 4G in specific town areas only
- A further 4 ISP players
  - Telsat, Wantok (fixed 4G), Global Pacific Telecom and SPIM
  - They cover Port Vila only at this point in time
  - Kacific Broadband Satellite company providing broadband internet across the archipelago
- Gateways outside Vanuatu
  - Single Submarine Cable (Private Construction) – Interchange Cable Limited
    - Connects Vanuatu – Fiji then to Sydney
    - Commenced operations March 2014
  - Satellite Connectivity with all Key players

TRR
Telecommunication &
Radiocommunication
Regulator

Main ICT/Telecommunications At Glance Market Indicators

Indicators	2014	2015	2016
Mobile subscriptions	129,185	174,818	192,167
Mobile data subscriptions (Est.)	5,000	35,000	60,000
Fixed internet subscriptions	4,122	4,323	4,524
Fixed-line telephone subscriptions	5,590	4,797	4,267
Total domestic mobile call minutes	213,572,542	226,189,426	241,751,930
Total domestic fixed call minutes	12,198,909	12,128,721	11,847,545
Total outgoing international call minutes	4,320,780	4,247,112	3,453,917
Total SMS sent	190,509,085	116,950,064	93,467,210
Total Mobile Data Downloads (Mb)	16,251,427	85,435,487	272,693,622
Market gross revenues (Billions VT)	3.89	3.95	4.48

Existing Experience and Issues at Hand

- Illiteracy Rate is high in terms of reading and writing
- Trust and Confidence associated with Tourist Activities eg. Land Diving Versus Banchee Jump) – see you Tube

- Cost of Internet Capacity (both wholesale and retail is still highest in the region)

- Market Structure is Duopoly in terms of mobile service

- Very limited local Content creation

- No Government or any Private Businesses - two way online interactions (online services)

- No local Content Policies or Rules

- Too many related Legislations which limits other development eg. Copy Right Law, E-Business, Telecom, Broadcasting and Television, Censorship etc….

- Use of Social Media Platform as main eg. Facebook subcribers create a group known as "Yumi Toktok Stret" – meaning direct discussions…. Creates a lot o vague IDs …….

- Lack of Innovative Ideas using existing devices

- Political stability, economic recession, natural disasters (cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis, climate change)
- Duopoly Market on mobile services

TRR
Telecommunication &
Radiocommunication
Regulator

Opportunities

- Gov't has realized the importance of using mobile application and now introduced – InforDis

- TRR creating avenues to stimulate innovation using Mobile Devices (through its Consumer Awareness and Education programme)

- Improve on Mobile Money Activities to gain back the consumers trust and confidence and that will attract more online/mobile payment or other activities

- Capacity Build associated stakeholders such as Cultural Centre, Ministry of Agriculture and others to realize the potential of creating local content to attract more customers and preserve value

- The Government of Vanuatu with TRR's support and assistance is currently discussing and finalizing strategies for its National Computer Emergency Response Team and contribute to Security activities. This is a start to give confidence to all other business stakeholders and also consumers to be open minded about Digital content

- TRR is currently working on finalizing its regulatory framework on the management of .VU to promote uptake of internet users in Vanuatu but more importantly to stimulate uptake of local content.

TRR
Telecommunication &
Radiocommunication
Regulator

Way forward Approach

- Harmonization of the existing legislation such as E-Business Legislation, Copy Rights and Related Rights Act, Censorship of Films Act, Telecommunications Act, Broadcasting Television Act;

- Consult and collaborate with all appropriate and related Stakeholders and make arrangements on the best way forward on managing Local content versus overseas content;

- Need to ensure there is a consistent, appropriate and effective approach in all sectors – to achieve GOV's aims and intentions, to benefit all Vanuatu citizens

- Facilitate effective Cost Model to cater prices offered by Operators;

- Promote more education awareness across the country;

- Study the pros and cons for the approach of regulating Local Content.

TRR
Telecommunication &
Radiocommunication
Regulator

Thank you!