INFRASTRUCTURE SHARING IN BOTSWANA

06 May 2010
GABORONE

Martin Mokgware
B.T.A

Introduction

- An initiative intended to push the National ICT Policy agenda for faster implementation of key programmes e.g:

  - ❖ e-Gov't:
  - ❖ Connecting Communities;
  - ❖ Universal access and service;
  - ❖ International Connectivity; and
  - ❖ Efficient and safe networks

INFRASTRUCTURE SHARING

- Capability of operators to share networks, where they build parts of the network together and still own their respective subscribers

- Access to essential facilities

- Open access principle
    - creation of competition in all layers of the network
    - Technology neutral framework

- Concept of sharing becoming internationally fashionable and best practice approach in undertaking business

- Competitors collaborate in order to lower their ever increasing capital costs and mitigate the risk of proliferating network deployment

Infrastructure Sharing (Cont.)

- Two types of network sharing, i.e Active and Passive infrastructure sharing

  - ❖ Active infrastructure sharing involves joint use of electrical network components or the intelligence in the network. e.g microwave radio equipment, base stations, switching equipment etc

  - ❖ Passive infrastructure sharing relates to the non-electrical and civil engineering elements of communication networks. e.g Towers, shelters, manholes, cable ducts dark fibre optic cables etc

Why Share (core network)

- To lower the cost of network deployment
  - To speed up development of broadband networks
  - Transition to an NGN network infrastructure
  - Efficient access to rights of way
  - Stimulate innovation and new businesses

Why Share (Mobile network)

- To lower the cost of network deployment, especially in rural and less populated or underserved areas (Reduced CAPEX and OPEX)

- To respond to environmental and public health concerns

- National roaming

- "Open access" mobile providers : tower companies, etc.

- Increased competition on services

- Enables operators to survive and compete

CONCERNS IN THE BOTSWANA MARKET

▸ Evidence of enduring market power for BTC in access and backhaul

▸ Further fixed infrastructure deployment unlikely

▸ BTC's vertical integration provides the ability and incentive to discriminate against competitors who are also wholesale customers and leverage its upstream market power

▸ Duplication of efforts by major operators in rolling out networks especially for provision of mobile services

▸ Few basic services available and few competitors

▸ High cost of services

▸ Lack of content and applications

Way Forward

- Policy maker and Regulator to create a framework and platform conducive to ICT investment – to the interest of the public and private sector

- BTA to engage a Consultant to assist in the process

- Partnerships very crucial to build a vibrant and competitive communications environment central to the needs of all stakeholders

- Funding, Content creation, publication, co-operation and political support

- Successful implementation of ICT policies and strategies require high level buy-in and regulatory visibility.