

Honouring Telecommunication Experts

The 4th annual ET Telecom Awards 2014 ceremony acknowledged the best and the brightest in the field even as it looked towards innovations and practices that are pointing towards the future

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The fourth edition of The Economic Times Telecom Awards presented by the Global Group was held in a beautiful ceremony on December 5, 2014 at the Taj Palace, New Delhi. As has become the norm over the last three years, the awards night witnessed the convergence of some of the most eminent personalities and leaders from the Indian telecommunications industry. These awards, an initiative by The Times Group and the Global Group, are aimed at providing a platform that celebrates the excellence displayed by industry members and also highlights the benchmarks and standards of business and of innovation that are a hallmark of the highly competitive telecommunications industry in India.

Telecommunications has changed the landscape of India. Since the early 1990s we've seen communications in India grow from around a few million land phones to reach a significant majority (75%) of the country's 1.2 billion people. India has gone from a communications backwater to become the second largest and most vibrant mobile market on the planet. As of March 2014, the overall telecommunications subscriber base in India is approximately 930 million, with the wireless subscriber base being pegged at around 900 million and the wireline subscriber base at nearly 30 million, according to the data released by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI).

An offshoot of this telecommunication growth has been empowerment for the people; millions of citizens can now electronically access services and information easily and effectively. Clearly, telecommunication services are also proving to be

an essential tool for the socio-economic development. Slowly but surely, the telecommunication age in India is one of information and knowledge revolution at the grassroots level. It is also clear that telecommunication services are one of the main support systems that can enable rapid growth and modernization of the various sectors of the economy. Smart phone penetration, which is critically dependent upon data connectivity, can be the true harbinger of revolution in India because it allows access to information, knowledge and services electronically, via the phone handset, i.e. single point infrastructure investment by the consumer. While the policy tasks the sector with growth in broadband services, the sector itself needs to look at improving the availability and quality of the data service connectivity. Because the telecom sector also needs to look at new sources for growth as revenue based purely on increase in voice or communication device users slows down. Globally, data-users tend to result in higher than average revenue per user for the telecom service. The stakeholders in the Indian telecom industry have responded to

the challenge with innovation and services that look ready to take the country into the next telecommunications revolution – data services. And it is this spirit, this willingness to meet the unique challenges of the Indian market and service its demands, that The Economic Times Telecom Awards presented by the Global Group seeks to honour and acknowledge.

The glittering event began with a pertinent welcome note by Arunabh Das Sharma, President, Bennett, Coleman & Company Ltd., which not only mapped



MAYUR TODAY
Dy. COO, Infosource, delivering the vote of thanks



ARUNABH DAS SHARMA
President, Bennett, Coleman and Company Limited

There are several parts to the telecom sector: there are the service providers; there are handset manufacturers; there are the infrastructure players; the app ecosystem... so there is a lot going on in this sector. And they are all stakeholders in the growth of the sector. Today the main agenda for these awards is to recognise the contributions made; to recognise the breakthrough work that has happened and to motivate them to continue their journey of excellence.



All the winners of the awards across categories at the fourth Annual ET Telecom Awards 2014 presented by the Global Group



Rufina Fernandes, Head Corporate Communication & CSR, Global Group, welcoming Ravi Shankar Prasad



Marten Pieters, MD & CEO, Vodafone India receiving the Certificate of Appreciation for 'Outstanding Contribution to the Indian Telecom Industry' from Ravi Shankar Prasad

the contours of the industry but also pointed out the enormous potential it presented. He also rightly pointed towards the growing size of not just the telecommunications industry in terms of service providers but in terms of the entire eco-system of communications,

which is now a vibrant area of growth and development in itself. The evening also witnessed a lively and pertinent Global Master Class panel discussion by some of the best known industry leaders, which was followed by the presentation of the awards. The awards themselves were based on the advice and deliberations of an eminent jury comprising some of the most knowledgeable experts. A grand total of 17 awards across diverse categories were presented through the course of the evening.

ET NOW
Catch the coverage of the ET Telecom Awards ET NOW on December 27, 2014 at 6:00 p.m. and the repeat telecast on December 28, 2014 at 5:30 p.m.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS FOR A DIGITAL INDIA

It is good to be here at The Economic Times Awards ceremony. As is rightly pointed out the whole Indian telecom horizon is indeed a very exciting story. Today we cannot ignore technology. We cannot afford to be alien to the power of technology and connectivity. I am most fascinated by the growth of smartphones in India. Recently the internet and mobile service providers association conveyed to me that by the end of this year - just a few days away - internet penetration in India will be to the tune of about 300 million or 30 crore people.



RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD
Union Minister of Communications and Information Technology, Government of India

Mobile connectivity is growing, internet connectivity is growing and obviously we are already flooded with television channels and content. In short, we are becoming a hyper connected people and from there has emerged the whole initiative of Digital India. And in that quest we have unleashed a massive programme, the National Optical Fibre Network whereby we propose to connect all the gram panchayats of India - some 250,000 of them - in the coming three to three and half years. It is a huge exercise. We are fully committed towards implementing it. A Digital India is what we are proposing and very keenly pursuing. I understand that you have faced problems in the past. And there are a lot of legacy problems in the telecom ministry. We are setting it right. I wish to close by complimenting The Economic Times for continuing these awards to recognise the achievers in the field of telecom. I congratulate all the awardees. And I can tell you all that a very promising and encouraging horizon in the field of telephony, in the field of telecom, in the field of digitisation is available in India.

THE WINNERS

GAME CHANGER OF THE YEAR - RADIO DESIGN INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED



Gaurav Chauhan, MD, Radio Design India Private Limited, receiving the award for the Game Changer of the Year category receiving the award from Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union Minister

USE OF TELECOM FOR SOCIAL GOOD - NOT FOR PROFIT COMPANY - CENTRE FOR RAILWAY INFORMATION SYSTEMS



Vandana Nanda, Managing Director, Centre for Railway Information Systems along with her colleagues receiving the award from Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union Minister

USE OF TELECOM FOR SOCIAL GOOD - FOR PROFIT COMPANY - IFFCO KISAN SANCHAR LIMITED



S. Srinivasan, CEO, IFFCO Kisan Sanchar Limited, along with his colleagues receiving the award from Ravi Shankar Prasad, Union Minister

EXCELLENCE IN ENERGY MANAGEMENT - TATA TELESERVICES LTD.



Saji Mathew, Vice President, Tata Teleservices Ltd. & Sunil Singh, General Manager, receiving the award from Sanjay Kapoor, Chairman, Micromax Informatics Limited & Arunabh Das Sharma, President, Bennett Coleman & Co. Ltd.

MOBILE PRODUCT - BHARTI AIRTEL LIMITED



Anand Chandrasekaran, Chief Product Officer & Mani Narang, DGM, Bharti Airtel Ltd., receiving the award from R.K. Bahuguna, Chairman & Managing Director, RailTel Corporation of India Ltd. & Milind Bengali, COO Business operations, GTL Infrastructure Ltd.

MOBILE CUSTOMER SERVICE - AIRCEL



Sachin Das, VP- Customer Services & Vaibhav Chaturvedi, Senior Manager-Customer Services, Aircel receiving the award for its initiative from R.K. Bahuguna, Chairman & Managing Director, RailTel Corporation of India Ltd. & Milind Bengali, COO Business operations, GTL Infrastructure Ltd.

VALUE ADDED SERVICES (VAS) - MTS



Dmitry Shukov, CEO, MTS along with his colleagues receiving the award from R.K. Bahuguna, Chairman & Managing Director, RailTel Corporation of India Ltd. & Milind Bengali, COO Business operations, GTL Infrastructure Ltd.

MY FAVOURITE SERVICE PROVIDER - BHARTI AIRTEL LIMITED



Mani Narang, DGM & Anand Chandrasekaran, Chief Product Officer, Bharti Airtel Ltd., receiving the award from R.K. Bahuguna, Chairman & Managing Director, RailTel Corporation of India Ltd.

Global Master Class: OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

The telecom industry needs to keep growing in order to help unleash the full potential of Digital India

Nilakshi.Sharma@timesgroup.com

The Indian telecom sector continues to provide unique challenges as well as unique business opportunities for growth to the telecom industry. Some of these challenges and opportunities were discussed at length by some of the best known industry experts and leaders as a part of the Global Master Class panel discussion at the fourth annual ET Telecom Awards 2014 initiative in partnership with the Global Group. The panel comprised Marten Pieters, MD & CEO, Vodafone India; Sanjay Kapoor, Chairman, Micromax Informatics; Dmitry Shukov, CEO, MTS India; and Dr. Aneesh Agarwal, President, Qualcomm India & South Asia. The discussion was moderated by Shivani Muthanna, an anchor with ET NOW. The panel discussion was off to a lively start with a special focus on the needs of the telecom industry as well as on the needs of the consumer.

Spectrum clearly emerged as the single biggest requirement for the future growth of the Indian telecom industry. As Marten Pieters observed, "India has made available only half of the spectrum available for commercial use compared to what is available internationally." There was unanimous agreement on the need for more spectrum in India from the other



L to R: Sanjay Kapoor, Dr. Aneesh Agarwal, Shivani Muthanna, Dmitry Shukov and Marten Pieters

three panelists, with Dmitry Shukov pointing out that while the future of Indian mobile communications, without any doubt, lay in high speed internet access but that future could not be realised without more spectrum because "without spectrum there is no sense in discussing new technologies, new applications, storage, etc., because spectrum is the basis of everything." Dr. Aneesh Agarwal did point out two aspects of technology that could help mitigate the lack of spectrum availability, the first is "what we call small cells, which is really densification of networks... the second is in the device eco-system. Today devices have

started becoming essentially multi-mode devices - so they can support 2G and 3G and going forward, in 2015, you'll see devices capable of supporting 2G, 3G and 4G technologies. In addition we expect to see the ability to aggregate spectrum in different bands at the device level to give a richer user experience." But in the end, the need for spectrum cannot be denied and that is something the government of India and its telecom policy makers need to urgently focus on.

DATA & DEVICES

Given the excitement around the prophesied data revolution it was

interesting to hear the experts speak. For a start, as Sanjay Kapoor pointed out, "for most Indians the only computing device that they'll carry on themselves is the smartphone." So in terms of device development in India the smartphone is already an established part of the landscape. In fact, what is happening around the smartphones is so much more important; already, the e-commerce and m-commerce segment in India is skewed towards the smartphone. Today, more than 50 per cent to 60 per cent of the e-commerce transactions happen on smart devices

and not on fixed devices. With regards to the growth of data services, Sanjay Kapoor defines it in terms of 5 simple pillars - Access; Devices; Application and Content; Storage and Analytics. India is doing well in terms of devices and application and content. The real concerns about the data evolution in India are centered on the remaining three verticals. Access continues to remain a challenge with backhaul and fixed lines situation as areas of concern. We are yet to achieve even a 100 per cent penetration of fixed line in India. Storage is still more theoretical than real as we continue to be archaic in our thinking. Last but not least is analytics. Everybody is talking about analytics but when you really analyze it you realise that everybody has a different interpretation of what is to be done with it.

CALLING AHEAD

Clearly, the question is not whether the data revolution will take place but rather how do we enable it. And while the role of the telecom service providers is central, there are also concerns that need to be addressed. Infrastructure is the first but the industry also needs to be in good health to be able to attract investments in order to be able to invest in the networks. The data market has indeed gotten off to a good start in India but we need to enable further growth.

What They Said

MARTEN PIETERS
MD & CEO,
Vodafone India



In order to actually achieve 600 million mobile subscribers we have to get two main conditions right - the availability of spectrum and the money to invest in the network and that has to do with the financial health of the industry.

SANJAY KAPOOR
Chairman,
Micromax Informatics



Holistically, when I look at data, which is what we are all talking about and the next movement in India is from voice to data; I see it as the opportunity of Digital India that everybody talks about.

DR. AVNEESH AGARWAL
President
Qualcomm India & South Asia



Spectrum is the lifeblood of the industry but some aspects of technology can help mitigate some of the spectrum needs.

DMITRY SHUKOV
Chief Executive officer
MTS India



The future of the Indian mobile communication lies in high speed internet access - 4G and maybe higher... but for that we need spectrum urgently.

THE WINNING TEAMS



Soumen Roy Chowdhury, CEO, Indian Cable Net Co. Ltd., & his colleagues receiving the award from Sanjay Kapoor, Chairman, Micromax Informatics Limited



Sashi Shankar, Chief Marketing Officer, Idea Cellular, receiving the award from Sanjay Kapoor, Chairman, Micromax Informatics Ltd. & Arunabh Des Sharma, President, BCL



Sashi Shankar, Chief Marketing Officer, Idea Cellular receiving the award from R.K. Bahuguna, Chairman & Managing Director, Rail-Tel Corporation of India Ltd. & Milind Bengali, COO Business operations, GTL Infrastructure Ltd.



Gaurav Chauhan, MD, Radio Design India Private Ltd. & his colleagues receiving the award from Marten Pieters, MD & CEO, Vodafone India



Amit Marwah, Head of Technologies, India Region, Nokia Networks & Ranish Babu, Head of R&D, Services receiving the award from Marten Pieters, MD & CEO, Vodafone India



Ankur Lal, CEO, Infozech Software Pvt. Ltd., along with his colleagues receiving the award from Marten Pieters, MD & CEO, Vodafone India



Bimal Dayal, COO & Sameer Sinha, Chief Sales and Marketing Officer, Indus Towers receiving the award from Sanjay Kapoor, Chairman, Micromax Informatics Limited



Piyush Somani, CEO, Esds Software Solution Pvt. Ltd. & Dr. Rajeev Papneja, COO, receiving the award from Marten Pieters, MD & CEO, Vodafone India

The Jury

Process advisor and official tabulator for ET Telecom Awards 2014, Ernst & Young LLP sifted through 138 entries in the form of case studies in innovation and excellence. Data was gathered and validated with respect to the applications that were received, in accordance with the pre-determined set of rules and regulations. All entries were then appraised by an independent jury who shortlisted the top three entries in each category. A final jury then again reviewed the shortlisted entries and determined the winners.

FIRST JURY



Abraham Alapatt, Chief Innovation Officer and Head - Marketing & Service Quality, Thomas Cook (India) Ltd.



Gaurav Dua, Director & Practice Leader (Telecom, Media and Technology) CRISIL Global Research & Analytics



Bhaskar Pandey, Senior Vice-President & Group Head, 3i Infotech



Samresh Parida, Founder and CEO, SP Growth Consulting



Ravi Begur, CIO & Sustainability Leader, Mahindra Logistics



Karthi Marshan, Head Group Marketing, Kotak Mahindra Bank



Lloyd Mathias, Head Marketing, Printing & Personal Systems, Hewlett-Packard India

SECOND JURY



R.S. Subramanian, Senior Vice president & Managing Director, DHL Express India



Atul Joshi, MD & CEO, India Ratings



Aditya Ghosh, President, IndiGo



Himanshu Chakrawarti, CEO, The MobileStore



Sumit Sawhney, Country CEO & Managing Director, Renault India



Ashish Khanna, Managing Partner, Communications, Media and Technology, Accenture



Anand Rathi, Founder & Chairman, Anand Rathi



V. Vaidyanathan, Chairman and Managing Director, Capital First Ltd.

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