

Press Release

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Nokia Siemens Networks Village Connection Internet Kiosk helps rural villagers to capture the power of the Internet

Nokia Siemens Networks adds Internet access capability to its Village Connection, combining technology with business model innovation to create a self-sustaining model for rural access in emerging markets

Nokia Siemens Networks today announced that its Village Connection with Internet Kiosk will enable people in remote villages to access the Internet. Internet Kiosk allows them to connect, and access online information with an opportunity to improve their quality of life. Nokia Siemens Networks has introduced Internet Kiosk to its Village Connection to provide a holistic solution which brings voice, SMS, and Internet access to rural locations untouched by the power of the Internet and mobile communication. Internet Kiosk will utilize the IP backhaul connection of the solution.

The key challenge for the rural connectivity is affordability, and typically consumers with low income in rural areas can spend only very little on mobile and Internet services. Nokia Siemens Networks Village Connection addresses these challenges by combining technology with business model innovation to create a solution which is self sustaining, easy to implement and benefits everyone involved.

For rural consumers Nokia Siemens Networks Village Connection is, in many cases, the only way to access voice, mobility and the Internet. It helps them communicate across geographic boundaries, and access information to realize greater business and social opportunities. In areas such as healthcare, education and business, the power of the Internet can transform lives. By enabling the people to have affordable access to online information services such as commodity prices, healthcare and education, Village Connection Internet Kiosk will improve the wellbeing, knowledge base and economic prospects of rural consumers. Village Connection Internet Kiosk also provides rural consumers with shared access models similar to those available to Internet café customers in urban areas.

Local entrepreneurs who support the operator and manage Village Connection networks for mobile services, can now also provide services based on Internet access. Village Connection Internet Kiosk is easy to operate via a shared computer in a village. Entrepreneurs have a valuable role as they are able to tutor villagers on how to use the Internet for accessing relevant information and services. The system provides villages with autonomous local access points, which include all the technology needed to establish a village-level communications network. These local networks can be run by village entrepreneurs as franchises, reducing costs for network operators. In turn, local networks support full connectivity to operator's main network.

The biggest benefit to operators is that Internet Kiosk enables them to provide the Internet access easily and cost-effectively for rural villages benefiting from the existing IP backhaul of the Village Connection solution. Village Connection also enables operators to easily manage their investment since the network architecture allows subscriber management at a local level. Established operators can employ local people to manage access within each village, or local entrepreneurs may operate as small businesses together with the operators. Whichever option is chosen, capital costs can be slashed and operating costs are significantly lower compared with conventional network operations.

Village Connection solution

Providing services such as mobile voice and Internet access to people in remote areas presents special challenges in terms of cost, maintenance and power supplies. Nokia Siemens Networks Village Connection solution for voice and sms was launched in May 2007 and is specially designed for new growth markets' needs. It is cost effective, easy to implement and operate, and includes a business model that creates opportunities for local entrepreneurs in addition to the operator, hence addressing a key challenge related to the economic viability of providing connectivity to rural areas. Village Connection has been trialed successfully in select emerging markets, including India and Tanzania. The solution was recently shortlisted for the 13th Annual Global Mobile Awards by the GSM Association (GSMA), in the category of Best Use of Mobile for Social and Economic Development.

About Nokia Siemens Networks

Nokia Siemens Networks is a leading global enabler of communications services. The company provides a complete, well-balanced product portfolio of mobile and fixed network infrastructure solutions and addresses the growing demand for services with 20,000 service professionals worldwide. Nokia Siemens Networks is one of the largest telecommunications infrastructure companies with operations in 150 countries. The company is headquartered in Espoo, Finland.
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