

***Airtel, a leading telecommunications services provider with operations in 20 countries across Asia and Africa, has announced the launch of the mobile HD voice service for its subscribers in Africa. The development comes as the first step in Airtel's ambition to make mobile HD voice accessible in all its operations across the continent.***

HD voice is the most significant improvement in voice communications in the past two decades. Mobile HD voice offers crystal clear audio quality and will enhance user experience on Airtel mobile networks. "Surveys confirm that customers place a high value on HD Voice", explains Andre Beyers, the Chief Marketing Officer, Airtel Africa. "The new service will enrich end-user experience for Airtel subscribers"

Mobile HD Voice enables high-quality voice calls because it reduces background noise often heard on a regular call. Airtel customers on 3G networks will experience a significant improvement in their voice communications as the new service will enable them to hear better in noisy environments.

To enjoy the maximum benefits of this new technology, both the calling and the called party need an HD-Voice compatible mobile phone. However, improvements in call quality are also perceived when using an HD voice-enabled phone to call a non-HD Voice phone.

Mobile HD Voice based on AMR (Adaptive Multi Rate) Wideband technology (W-AMR) operates with nine different bit rates, providing high-quality voice calls. Compared to the current narrowband speech codec, the W-AMR speech-compression algorithm doubles voice bandwidth and produces better results.

After years of trials, HD Voice services were launched in 2009 and they are now available in 35 countries around the world. According to the results of a recent survey, 96% of customers are satisfied with HD Voice calls, hence the rapid pace of commercialization of the services across the globe.

## **Airtel rolls out mobile HD voice service in Africa**

Written by Kevin Wafula

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Airtel becomes the third operator to launch a mobile HD voice service in Africa. The telecommunications company aims to make HD voice a reality on the continent. Further launches will be scheduled in 2013.