

FUN GSM Articles

By

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All articles were compiled from GSM Today Ezine. Nigeria's first GSM Ezine. Feel free to publish these articles anywhere. The only condition is that you must include my resource box, which is at the bottom of all the articles.

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## **Amendment 1 Of GSM Acts Of 2002**

By Sagai John Adam

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ATTENTION: Senate President

Oga Sir,

We the GSM Subscribers of Nigeria, will like to propose some amendments to all GSM terms to fit the Nigerian context and our experiences so far.

Since the GSM rollout in August 2001, we have moved from excitement to despair as the GSM Operators unfolded their agenda.

It is these reasons that have necessitated this proposal for a change of names, terms and definitions for GSM as it relates to Nigeria.

We therefore propose the following changes:

GSM

Should now be called...(G)reat (S)ucker of (M)oney
Because it takes N3,000 to stay "connected" for a whole month o! Is it fuel hike or is it GSM we are to worry about?

NCC - No Control Commission

Because they don't do anything to help the situation. But if is something to do with CIL or MTS First Mobile, then they growl like guard dogs!. Foreign Investors can do what they want to us because Uncle Sege begged them to come? Haba...

MTN - Milk Those Nigerians

Or MTN - More Trouble for Nigerians

Because they charge for anything and everything. If it was not for the "free-free" policy of their rivals, we would be paying for Call Holding, Call Waiting, Voicemail, Caller ID etc. Up until now, we STILL PAY to ask them for advice at their Customer Services. Their SIM card is still the most expensive.

ECONET - Every Citizen Of Nigeria...Expect Trouble

Or ECONET - Exploit, Control and Oppress Nigerians
Even in Telecoms

Because their "free-free" policy is causing congestion everywhere.

Pay As You Go - Pay As You GROAN

Because MTN subscribers pay N60 per minute to call outside their network and N50 per minute to call inside MTN's network. The highest so far...and they are not bothered.

Buddie - Dundies

Because they are so many now that they can't make calls to other people but themselves...and even that is difficult.

The Better Connection - The BITTER Connection

Because "All we are saying...reduce your airtime!"

Inspired to Change Your World - Inspired to SHORT-CHANGE your WORLD

Because "All we are saying...improve your services!"

BOGOF - Buy One, Get OPPRESSED Forever

Because MTN just wanted to add more people to their Camp. Meanwhile they have forgotten about their old subscribers. Once they get you, they forget you... FREE things are not so free.

Voicemail - Force mail

Because whether you want to or not, you will be forced into the Voicemail box of the person you are calling.

Nitel Royal - Nitel (R)ush (O)! (Y)ou (A)re (L)ate

Because they only rolled out in October based on Ministerial fiat. They have no plans, no targets, no deadlines and nobody to sanction them. They sold 4,000 lines and went blank again.

In conclusion Sir, we would like to plead that you use your good office to help speed up the passing of this proposal into law. When things improve, we can then revert back to the old terms.

Thank You Sir.

Sagai John Adam is the Editor of GSM Today Ezine, which is Nigeria's FIRST Ezine dedicated to helping people "recover their GSM investments". To SUBSCRIBE send mailto:gsmtoday-request@freelists.org and put "subscribe" (without the quotes) in the Subject line of the email.

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## **GSM Amendment Act 2 of 2002**

By Sagai John Adam

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ATTENTION: Senate President

Oga Sir,

We the GSM Subscribers of Nigeria, will like to propose another amendment.

In order to consolidate the dividends of democracy, we suggest the merger of all the GSM networks into one more efficient network. Such a new network will be able to cover the whole of Nigeria in a shorter time as well as end the confusion of which network is the "best".

We therefore humbly suggest the following for your kind consideration:

The new merged GSM Network Operator is to be called MECOTEL from (M)TN, (ECO)net and Ni(TEL).

It should have 3 packages:

- The Heavenly package
- The Hell package
- The We-We package

MECOTEL - Heavenly Package

=====

Nitel will contribute its airtime pricing of N22 per minute

Econet will contribute its sweet prepaid package name "Buddy"

MTN will contribute its ubiquitous full-paged advertisements and yellow colour

Econet will handle the marketing so that is sold everywhere by every one

Econet will handle all the value-added services:

- Free Voicemail,
- Free Call Waiting,
- Free Call Holding,
- Free Call Line Identification,
- Free everything!

MTN will contribute the network infrastructure

MTN will build the network using its no-nonsense roll

out schedule

MECOTEL - Hell Package

=====

MTN will contribute its airtime pricing of N60/N50 per minute

MTN will contribute a modified version of its prepaid package name: "Pay As You GROAN"

Nitel will contribute advertisements...which is 1 advert in 4 months!

Nitel will handle the marketing so that is sold ONLY in it's Abuja office

Nitel will handle the Customer Care:

No Customer Services number
No User's Guide

MTN will handle all the value-added services:

You will pay N10 for Voicemail,
You will pay N1500 to setup Call Waiting,
You will pay N1500 to setup Call Holding,
You will pay N1500 to setup Call Line

Identification,

You will pay N6 to see your account accredit
You will pay for everything!

Econet will contribute the network infrastructure...2 Base Stations for every 100,000 subscribers!

Nitel will build the network using it's roll out schedule...1 state every six months!

MECOTEL - We-We Package

=====

This is for the busy defenders of democracy: The Government Big shots, Senators, Reps, Governors, Ministers, D-G's, Special Advisers etc.

Nitel will contribute EVERYTHING:

Airtime pricing
Package name: "Dividend Providers"
No advertisements...by Special Invitation only!
ONLY available in Abuja
Free GSM handset
No Customer Services number
No User's Guide
Bills to be sent every 6 months
The Government will pay for Voicemail,
The Government will pay for Call Waiting,
The Government will pay for Call Holding,
The Government will pay for Call Line

Identification,

The Government will pay for everything!
The network infrastructure will be based only in
Abuja

In conclusion Sir, this proposed amendment would help
hasten the enjoyment of the Democratic Dividends by
the teeming masses of this great country.

Thank You Sir.

The first part of this article: GSM Amendment Act 1
of 2002 is available in Issue 1 of GSM today at this
website:

<http://www.freelists.org/archives/gsmtoday>

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## **GSM Diary - My First Week of GSM**

By Sagai John Adam

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(First written on Friday, September 21, 2001)

GSM Diary - My First Week of GSM

Friday, 14th of September

* Walked into MTN Maitama Service Centre and got connected.

* Good Thing #1: The staff were nice and helpful. They showed me how to confirm how much money I had left (Type *556# then press Yes/OK button).

* Good Thing #2: MTN gave me a free N500 call card! They loaded it for me.

* Good Thing #3: The whole "connection" process took 10-15 minutes. They let me use my own phone which I bought in June so I spent just N21,500 (for connecting and a N1500 "refill" card.)

* I am excited. I walk out like a big shot, clutching my very own mobile phone!

* I made my first successful call to my office on my GSM phone! All the other numbers I tried were MTEL mobile phones and none worked!

* Problem #1: I tried all day to call my sister in Lagos to tell her "I have arrived" and wish her a Happy Birthday, but no way. It was "System Busy" or that woman in MTEL that always says "All trunks are busy..."

* At around 8:30 p.m., I got through to Jos and talked for about 1 minute. Every one is fine after the riots.

* At night, I got my friend's MTEL mobile phone in Gwagwalada. I couldn't hear him clearly and he couldn't hear me too. MTEL's coverage in Gwagwalada is horrible and my GSM couldn't help me.

* Good Thing #4: on the same night, I got my sister after just 1 dial! Unfortunately, no one answered.

* Problem #2: I found out my phone won't work in Karu, where I live. Great! There goes my cheap night calls!

Saturday, 15th September

* Good Thing #5 : I showed off my new GSM phone to my pals. It is great to be the first to get a GSM phone, I tell you!

* Tried more calls while in town. I am anxious to get my sister - today is her birthday and I didn't send a card. No show.

* After my meeting around 8:30 p.m., I got my sister! I was hearing her clearly, but she couldn't hear me. She uses MTEL's mobile phone in Ajah, after Lekki. The coverage there is horrible. I forgot to wish her a happy birthday. Oh well.

* Problem #3 : I tried the *556# number and found out that my call credit was now N206!

* Every time I try to call, a man first tells me that my credit is low and that my days on the MTN network would soon expire!

Sunday, 16th September

* Good Thing #6 : I came to church with my mobile phone bulging in my pocket! Amen O!

What would happen when there are 100 of us with GSM phones? How many will remember to turn off their phones? There are bad days of interruption ahead for Pastors...In a taxi, on my way home, I got my sister. At least we shouted long enough for her to get the message that she should call me in the office tomorrow.

The taxi driver and other passengers where shocked to have a guy with a mobile phone in a lowly taxi with them!

* Problem #4 : My call credit was now N126.

* The MTN man always reminds me that my call credit was low...

Monday, 17th September

* Good thing #7 : I broke the news in the office. Every one congratulated me. They said, the next thing was my car. What a strange comparison.

* Good Thing #8 : MTN sent me an SMS message. They said it was now possible to send messages. Great, but I don't know anyone else with a GSM phone! SMS doesn't work with land phones or MTEL mobile phones so I am stuck.

* Problem #5 : My boss tested my new number from her office. She got me on the first dial. She was happy. Now she can track me down when I duck from the office for my p-p.

* I noticed an advert for rival ECONET's Buddie. Theirs is cheaper by far! They are also giving away N6,000 "free" airtime. Wow! Did I move faster than my shadow?

* I called MTN Customer Service on 180 to ask why my Voicemail number was not working. It is not ready, they said. I also found out it costs N60 naira per minute to call every other line apart from an MTN line.

I also found out that as I am talking to them in Customer Service, they are charging me. Finally, they also told me it would cost N1500 to activate my Caller Line Identification. Oh boy!

* Two of my pals called me. It worked like a dream. They got me after just one dial!

* Problem #6 : My call credit is now 0 !! Haba, how?

* The MTN man now keeps telling me that my credit can't take any calls and my days on the MTN network are about to expire...

* I didn't bother to take my GSM phone home. What's the need? There's no coverage in Karu, FCT.

Tuesday, 18th September

* I got a message via SMS from MTN that my SMS will cost half the normal rate.

* Because of my "zero call credit" I can't dial anywhere except *556# and 555 to "refill" with an all-in-one or Booster card. The MTN man keeps telling me "You have insufficient credit to make a call. Please load an all-in-one card."

* Problem #7 : My phone starts showing me "Low Battery". Maybe I shouldn't have left it on overnight in the office.

* Nobody called me today.

* I am waiting to see what would happen when my 5 days expire before loading my N1500 card. Will MTN knock me off?

* My phone battery ran out. Now I know it takes about 5 days before I must recharge my battery. I recharge my battery overnight in the office as my phone manual suggested.

To be continued...

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## **I Had A Dream!**

By Sagai John Adam

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I had a dream! The Government called all the stakeholders of the Nigerian Telecommunications sector for a 3-day intensive-brainstorming meeting. At the end of the meeting, a beaming Minister of Communications announced that a new deal had been worked out with all the Private Telecom Operators (PTO's) to bring the dividend of democracy to the grassroots.

In an unprecedented move, the Government had directed Nitel to reduce its tariffs to pre-BPE-inflated levels. Nitel GSM also reduced its airtime tariffs to its landline rates. He also said that the proceeds from the sale of the GSM licenses were to be ploughed back to make sure every Local government Area was connected to the Nitel network in the next 6 months!

Other far-reaching decisions taken were:

- * Making Nitel GSM fully autonomous and allowed to partner with any GSM network operator in the world.
- * Reduction of the Telecom tax to 1 percent.
- * Reduction of all Nitel connection costs by 50 percent (landline and Nitel GSM)

I had a dream! The Nigerian Communication Commission (NCC) also gave back CIL its GSM license and frequency. It also promised to make adequate frequency adjustments to allow for the Second National Carrier to have a 5th GSM license.

I had a dream! The GSM network operators decide to co-operate instead of compete. They agree to share base stations masts and other infrastructure. Most importantly, Nitel GSM agreed to also open up its facilities in each state of the country for the other Operators to quickly deploy base stations. This offer also allowed the newly-licensed Regional Fixed Wireless Access Operators to roll out in record time!

I had a dream! The GSM Operators shocked Nigerians by reducing their airtime tariffs to Nitel landline rates. (After all, they won't have to build infrastructure from scratch!) They also threw away the "Access days" condition and commenced the deployment of new billing software that allows per second billing.

What that means is that Nigerians can now pay for ONLY the calls they make, at Nitel rates and without any access days. Unbelievable!

I had a dream! The Central Bank of Nigeria directed all banks to offer soft loans for the purchase of GSM handsets for its customers. NTA News showed Civil Servants, Students and Market

Women walking out of the banks smiling with their new Cellphones. GSM Cellphone for all by the year 2003!

I had a dream! O God, I don't want to wake up from this dream only to find out that Nigeria is still where it is. God give us leaders who can make our dreams come true!

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## Dear Lord

By Sagai John Adam

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Dear Lord,

How are you? I hope everything is well up there.

I know you are busy so I will keep this short. It's this GSM phone that you gave me. Things have not been the same since it came into my life O!

I thought it would help me communicate with my family and friends easily and it has! But the cost of maintaining it is something else. I am not saying it is your fault, no, but that you should know that all is not well with my pocket.

If there is a fault, it must be between our Government and the GSM network people. The GSM people are sucking me dry and blaming the Government for not putting the right things in place to enable them do their job well. The government on the other hand squandered the money they collected as license fees and left us at the mercy of the GSM operators.

It has been tough since then. Unlike NEPA and Nitel where we can get away with some things, these Guys are different O! We pay before we use the phone and the money finishes before we say "Jack Robinson".

These days, it is even difficult to make a call because the "system is busy". And they don't care one bit! While we groan, the GSM people are rushing from state to state in a "GSM Gospel race" trying to win more converts.

Dear Lord, what should I do? I don't want to throw my Cellphone away. People will wonder why. I don't want to go back to the bad old days when I waited for Nitel to come to my area.

That is why I am sending out this prayer. Can you increase my income a little bit? Say by an extra N3,000 every month? I promise to use it strictly for GSM matters. I know that nothing is impossible with you, but if you don't want to send me raw cash, then I have another suggestion. Can you show me in a dream or vision some 12-digit numbers that I can use to credit my phone every month?

Or can you confuse their computers so that I can pick up an already used recharge card and use it over and over again?

If that won't do, how about this one: I'm sure there must be GSM phones up above that the Angels use that doesn't require any SIM card to work! Can you please drop one of such heavenly GSM Cellphones down? I promise to keep it safe and not tell anybody about it. In fact, when I die, it will be buried with me in my coffin so that I can return it back to you in heaven. Is that all right with you?

Dear Lord, please consider my suggestions and act promptly. I eagerly wait your reply.

Thank you. Amen.

PS. Thank God, I don't need GSM to pray to you. They would have charged me an arm and a foot for the "inter-galactic call".

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## Dear Son

By Sagai John Adam

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Dear Son,

How are you doing? I hope everything is going on well with you down there.

I would like you to know that I am always happy to hear from you. Unfortunately, you only talk to me when you have problems :)

I remember how you thanked me when you first bought your GSM phone. How happy you were then. It's sad that you are already grumbling about it.

After listening to your plea, I have the following responses:

No, I won't increase your income because it won't solve anything. You should see the GSM-related prayers I am receiving from Nigeria. Everyone wants more money from me. The people who spend N6,000 per month want more money. Those who spend N10,000 PER WEEK also want more money.

I am your Father, not the Central Bank!

You should also not expect any help through dreams. If you defraud the GSM networks, how will they pay my children who work there? The staffs in these networks pray that business should prosper and that presupposes that you buy their recharge cards. Besides, after your heavy Eba at night, your dreams are always on food and never on GSM.

You wanted me to confuse their computers so you can pick and re-use recharge cards? Haba my Son! You, a Prince, going around town picking used cards? Don't you know that your Cellphone is one of the few brand new things you have? Your car, TV, VCR, air conditioner are all Tokunboh (fairly-used). How can you now be using "used" cards to make calls? No, you are too much for that.

Finally, I can send down an angelic GSM Cellphone that works without a SIM card. I even trust that you will bring it back to heaven when you die. (You said you would be buried with it.)

I only have 2 questions: will you pay the accumulated bill of using such a phone for a lifetime? Because the phone belongs to our GSM network here in heaven and their computers will be billing you for using their phone on earth.

Again, how are you sure that you will be buried with the phone? Your children may bury you alone and fight over the phone. Or they may employ gravediggers and return at night after the burial...

My son, what you need are not short-cuts and quick-fixes. You don't need more money, or 419 numbers, or special phones.

What you need is GRACE and that is what I will give you. The grace to adjust. The grace to cut your coat according to your size. The grace to pay for your

bills. You want Nigeria to be like the USA but you don't want to pay the price. NEPA, the water board, and Nitel have so spoilt you that you don't know what it feels to pay for something regularly. That is why you don't even thank me habitually and your don't PAY YOUR TITHE regularly.

Your schooling has begun...

It's me,

Your Father God.

PS. I was serious about the Tithe part.

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## GSM Quiz

By Sagai John Adam

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Next month, GSM Telephony will be 1 year old in Nigeria and as expected, there will be promotions and bonanzas. Here is a little quiz to help sharpen your memory just in case MTN or Econet Wireless decides to ask questions in any of their promos.

EASY STUFF

1. The full meaning of GSM is...
2. The full meaning of SMS is...
3. The full meaning of SIM card is...
4. Nitel GSM prepaid service is called...
5. Econet Wireless home country is...
6. MTN's home country is...
7. Give 2 MTN slogans/taglines used in advertisements.
8. Give 2 Econet Wireless slogans/taglines used in advertisements.
9. Give the names of 3 promotions by MTN since they started operations.
10. Give the names of 3 promotions by Econet Wireless since they started operations.

TOUGH STUFF

1. The full meaning of MTN is...
2. The full meaning of PUK is...
3. A term MSISDN is also known as...
4. Nigeria's International Direct Dialing code is...
5. Which GSM network launched their GSM service first?
6. Apart from Lagos, Abuja and Port Harcourt, name 5 other cities where MTN and Econet Wireless are BOTH in operation.
7. Adrian Wood the CEO of MTN replaced...
8. The first Nigerian bank to launch a GSM product/service is...
9. Name 3 banks that have GSM products/services.
10. The cost of sending an SMS is...

The answers are somewhere at the bottom of this issue.

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## Answers To The GSM Quiz.

By Sagai John Adam

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EASY STUFF ANSWERS

1. Global System for Mobile Communication.
2. Short Message Service.
3. Subscriber Identification Module.
4. Rose Pay As You Talk.
5. Zimbabwe.
6. South Africa.
7. "The Better Connection" and "The Best Connection".
8. "Inspired To Change Your World" and "The First, The Preferred".
9. BOGON, BOGOFF, and MTN CAF Awards.
10. Double Treat, Phone-O-Cracy and Econet World Cup Mania.

TOUGH STUFF ANSWERS

1. Mobile Telephone Networks.
2. Personal Unblocking Key.
3. MSISDN is the technical term for your GSM Cellphone number.
4. 009.
5. Econet Wireless launched on 8th August 2001 (MTN on the 9th of August 2001 while Nitel launched on the 15th of October 2001)
6. Both GSM networks are in Ibadan, Kaduna, Onitsha, Asaba, and Kano.
7. Karel Pienaar.
8. PurdentBank launched a GSM product in November 2001.
9. First Atlantic, Equity bank and Prudentbank.
10. N15 per message.

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