

State-owned firm says Vietnam's first 3G service launched

October 13 2009



A man tries out the Cityphone service in 2004. State-owned mobile network operator Vinaphone said Tuesday it has begun offering Vietnam's first 3G service, bringing "a revolution" to the country's mobile system.

State-owned mobile network operator Vinaphone said Tuesday it has begun offering Vietnam's first 3G service, bringing "a revolution" to the country's mobile system.

The company is the first to implement the service after it and three other telcoms in April received government approval to offer third-generation (3G) networks.

Third-generation mobile service offers users high-speed access to the Internet with email and video capabilities. The service "will create a revolution on Vietnam's mobile system," Vinaphone said in a statement.

Among its [3G services](#), the company said it will offer 15 television channels for mobile phones, [mobile broadband](#), and an information and entertainment portal.

Vinaphone says the service is now available for three million subscribers in about 20 percent of provinces and cities around the country, but service is expected to expand nationwide next year.

Army telecoms operator Viettel, MobiFone and a venture between Hanoi Telecom and EVN Telecom also qualified for 3G licensing. EVN Telecom is part of power company Electricity of Vietnam.

Vietnam's development of information and communication technologies, including mobile and fixed-line telephones as well as Internet and broadband, was outpacing other Asian countries, a senior official from the United Nations communications technology agency said earlier this year.

Close to 25 percent of the 86 million population are Internet users, while there are an estimated 50 million mobile phone accounts operating, the government says.

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Citation: State-owned firm says Vietnam's first 3G service launched (2009, October 13) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2009-10-state-owned-firm-vietnam-3g.html>

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