

# Mobile data 'to drive SE Asian telecom sector'

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People check the latest model of the 3G mobile phones on display at a PC show in Singapore. Data services will drive earnings growth in Southeast Asia's telecommunications sector as cellphone subscriptions hit saturation levels, an industry report said Tuesday.

Data services will drive earnings growth in Southeast Asia's telecommunications sector as cellphone subscriptions hit saturation levels, an industry report said Tuesday.

Data use via services such as mobile broadband is expected to account for 40.4 percent, or slightly over 12.4 billion US dollars, of mobile revenues earned by the region's [telecom operators](#) by the end of 2015, consultancy Frost and Sullivan said.

This is up substantially from last year, when data services accounted for

27.8 percent of operators' mobile revenues, the consultancy said in the report.

"Plain old voice and text messaging services will no longer deliver larger revenue growth than data services, even in developing markets such as Cambodia and Vietnam," said Nicholas Khoo, a senior consultant with Frost and Sullivan.

The report showed that in 2009 there were 489 million mobile phone subscribers in seven Southeast Asian markets -- Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines.

In some countries, such as Malaysia and Singapore, where the mobile penetration rate exceeded 100 percent, opportunities abounded for data services such as mobile broadband, the report said.

"[Mobile broadband](#) offers the clearest new connections growth and new revenue stream opportunity for operators," said Frost and Sullivan senior industry analyst Shi Min.

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