

MTN gives tips on reducing the cost of roaming when abroad

MTN has issued a number of helpful tips in order to educate consumers on effective ways of keeping telephony costs low when travelling overseas, including its EuroSaver and SEA region offerings.



With the end-of-year holiday season fast approaching, more and more South Africans travel abroad, while business tourists continue their voyages overseas for commercial purposes. Inevitably, the topic of roaming rates and potential bill shock when travellers return home will likely become a bone of contention. For MTN, discussing roaming rates is not simply a promotional opportunity for holidays or international festivities, but rather an ongoing education drive to empower consumers with the know-how of curbing the cost of communicating when abroad.

"Roaming internationally can be seen as somewhat daunting - choosing a roaming operator, the best form of communication to use and, of course, managing what could be an overwhelming phone bill," said Serame Taukobong, chief marketing officer of MTN SA. "However, with adequate information and education, coupled with knowing what is on offer from your operator, the cost of being connected when out of the country shouldn't be as overwhelming as people think it is."

Know your call and data rates

Taukobong emphasised that knowing your call and data rates, and choosing the best form of communication that works for you is essential. Contrary to belief, Instant Messaging services are not free, especially when you leave the confines of your country's border and, in some instances, it may in fact be more cost-effective to send an SMS. This is the type of information that consumers should be arming themselves with - by asking their operators prior to departure.

MTN reaffirmed its customer-centric roaming offering when it recently introduced Euro-Saver rates applicable when roaming on any operator in seven Euro-Saver countries. Considering that approximately 80 percent of calls made while roaming are calls back home, Taukobong noted that having a cost-effective international call rate was key for MTN customers. MTN significantly reduced the cost of international roaming rates by 87 percent* as part of its commitment to providing affordable and convenient roaming options in Europe and SADC operators. Thanks to MTN's large footprint across Africa, countries such as Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya and the DRC that were deemed expensive to roam in, moved from "exclusion zones" to MTN's Africa zone, where customers can enjoy value-added roaming services.

Strong positioning in Africa

MTN rates in the SEA region remain the most competitive where receiving of calls is free and data costs R0.25 per 25KB. MTN has a strong positioning with respect to roaming on the continent due to its footprint in Africa, and this is fast expanding into its European counterparts. Furthermore, MTN customers in Africa are also able to recharge their local number by purchasing a foreign operator's recharge voucher - offering more convenience.

With the reduction of rates, MTN now has a stronger value proposition to its African customers. MTN PayAsYouGo, TopUP subscribers will enjoy reduced call rates while Contract customers will benefit from both call and data rates.

"With the increased number of business tourists and holidaymakers travelling abroad, MTN has worked tirelessly with Europe and SADC operators to provide affordable and convenient roaming options throughout these regions," added Taukobong. "We are pleased to be able to offer rates that curb the high costs of communicating abroad, therefore alleviating customer worries. MTN continues to empower and educate customers about data roaming so that not only do our customers have the confidence to roam freely, but they have more choice than ever that meets their communication needs 24/7 365 days."

So to prevent frustration and digging deep into pockets upon returning home, MTN advises its customers to use the below roaming tips:

- To activate MTN Roaming, go to your nearest MTN store, and enjoy up to 87 percent discounts while roaming in Europe and Africa. MTN PayAsYouGo and MTN TopUp customers can automatically use this service
- Love to SMS? Try out MTN SMS Roaming by dialling *111*14# to activate
- Activate MTN iMail to manage your voicemail from anywhere around the world. Go to www.mtn.co.za to register
- Don't empty your pockets by calling your voicemail; dial *111*100# to get an MTN VoiceMail CallBack
- Get familiar with international roaming rates. Go to www.mtn.co.za to check out the current MTN Roaming rates
- Beware of background data activity, such as automatic updates on your cellphone and laptop. These can be very expensive. Smartphones in particular use a lot of data. Also note that all South African bundles do not apply in the country you will be visiting.

"MTN has always placed heavy focus on understanding its customers' needs and we continually review our prices and packages to meet those needs," he concluded.

*Roaming rates vary, based on the country you are in while roaming. Discounts vary across voice, SMS and Internet usage. Reduced rates apply to specific countries in Africa and Europe, when roaming in those countries. See www.mtn.co.za for full terms and conditions that apply.

Rates effective from the 17 May 2012 include:									
Continent	Africa	Asia	Europe	Euro-Saver#	Oceania	South America	North America	MTN South and East Africa***	Exclusions*
****Local Calls	R5	R8.25	R8	R7.56	R7.50	R8.25	R11	R3	R9.50
****Int. Calls / South Africa	R7	R25.50	R23.50	R10.66	R23.50	R38	R20	R5	R25.50
****Receiving Calls	R4	R4	R4	R4	R4	R4	R4	Free	R4
**SMSs	R2	R3.50	R2.75	R2.75	R2.75	R2.75	R3	R1.50	R2.75
Internet (Per 25KB)	R2.60	R3.50	R2.70	R0.35	R4	R3	R3.50	R0.25	R2.60

* Angola

** SMS rates are only applicable for roaming rates. Additional SMS charges as per price plan will apply.

***MTN South & East Africa refers to MTN operators in Botswana (Mascom), Zambia, Swaziland, Rwanda and Uganda.

**** All Voice Calls are charged per minute

#Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, United Kingdom. Note: Euro-Saver rates will be

available when roaming on any operator in a Euro-Saver Country

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