Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is impressive at almost 200% mobile penetration, and even more interesting due to the low penetration of fixed broadband (5.5%)

TELECOMMUNICATIONS MARKET

The mobile market in KSA was originally dominated by a government-owned company called STC. The market has been liberated over the years as additional licenses were given to two additional operators, called Mobily and Zain. STC now owns about 43.2% of the market share, while Mobily owns 40%, and Zain owns 16.4%. There have not been any new entrants to the mobile market except recently for a Push-To-Talk operator called Bravo that focuses on businesses.

Indicator[68]	Measurement	Value
Computers	Per 100	n/a
Internet Users	Per 100	46.0
Fixed Lines	Per 100	15.9
Fixed Broadband	Per 100	5.5
Mobile Subscriptions	Per 100	198.0
Mobile Broadband	Per 100	40.5
International Bandwidth	TOTAL	950MB

Key reasons for this growth are increased competition and the mass market availability of smart phones, which enable customers to access a variety of data packages. At the same time, mobile networks are also being upgraded as 3.5G (HSPA) continues to be widely deployed and more advanced wireless broadband technologies (4G) emerge. Data-only SIM cards have reached up to 7.8 million of the total number of mobile broadband subscriptions.

On January 7th, 2010, Saudi Arabia operator Mobily announced[71] it had one million mobile broadband subscribers. Registering 264 % growth, Mobily closed

70 http://www.worldbank.org & http://www.citc.gov.sa/English/MediaCenter/CITCinthemedia/Pages/PR_MED_094.aspx

71 http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/ict/newslog/Mobily+Announces+1+Mln+Mobile+Broadband+Subscribers+Saudi+Arabia.aspx

QUICK FACTS SAUDI ARABIA

Quick Facts	Saudi Arabia
Land Area:	2,149,690 sq km
Population:	27.5 million
GDI per capita: (ppp)	$22,750 (2009)
TLD:	**.sa**
Fixed Telephones:	4.5 million (2010)
GSM Telephones:	56.1 million (2011)
Fixed Broadband:	2.2 million (2012)
Internet Users:	13.0 million (2011)

2008 with 266,000 mobile broadband subscribers in its three high-volume bundles, prompting the GSM World Association to describe Mobily as having the busiest mobile date network on the face of the planet. Monthly traffic, upload and downloaded by customers, has grown more than 10 times from December 2007 to the time this report was written, and stood at over 50 TB for December 2009.

In June 2009 Mobily reported an active mobile broadband subscriber base of 600,000 customers. Three months later, when Mobily released its third quarter financials, the company announced it had 800,000 customers.

Fixed Broadband subscriptions, including DSL, Fixed Wireless (WiMax), and other fixed line subscriptions, grew to around 2.13 million at the end of Q3 2011.

The Fixed Broadband penetration rate stood at around 30.6 % of households at the end of Q3 2011[72]. Mobile broadband subscriptions reached 11.5 million at the end of Q3 2011, representing a penetration of 40.5% of the population.

Pricing Analysis ($US)	Saudi Arabia	All Countries Surveyed	
		Rank by Cheapest	Median Price
PRE-PAID Package Pricing			
Monthly Package Cost	24.00		
Cost per Minute National Call (first 3 min)	0.43	10	0.09
Price for Data Traffic (Price per MB)	0.03	4	0.05
Price for One Text Message	0.07	10	0.02
POST-PAID Package Pricing			
Monthly Package Cost	29.33	8	7.53
Cost per Minute National Call (first 3 min)	0.24	8	0.06
Price for Data Traffic (Price per MB)	0.03	5	0.04
Price for One Text Message	0.05	9	0.03

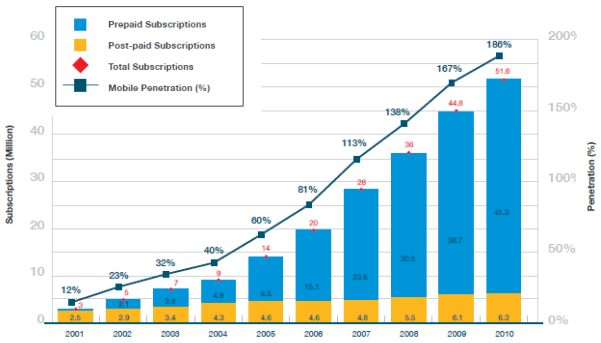
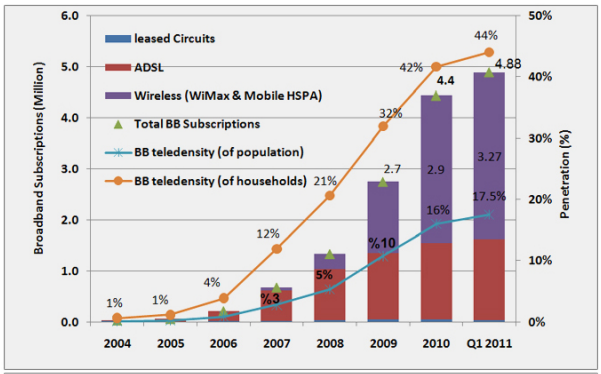


Figure (1): Mobile Service Market Growth - Total Subscriptions (2001-2010) Source: Based on numbers reported by mobile service providers [73]

Operator	Saudi Telecommunications Group	Etihad Etisalat Company	Mobile Telecommunications Company Saudi Arabia
Brands	STC	Mobility	Zain
Survey Respondents	45%	26%	2%
Subscribers	24.3m	22.5m	9.2m
Mobile Internet Users	9.8m	9.1m	3.7m
Ownership	KSA	UAE/KSA	Kuwait/KSA

INTERNET ACCESS

INTERNET CONNECTION TYPES 2010



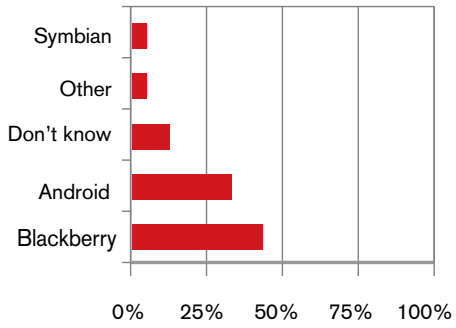
Broadband Market Evolution (2004 - Q1 2011)

Almost 88% of respondents used mobile internet, while 9% do not use mobile internet. 54% of mobile internet users used WiFi to access the internet with 36% paying for a limited volume of data with their subscription and a further 9% paying for usage. No one indicated that they lacked access to the internet using their mobile handsets. Almost 92% owned a smartphone and almost 23% had "jailbroken" their phone. Almost 72% had updated the firmware on their phone.

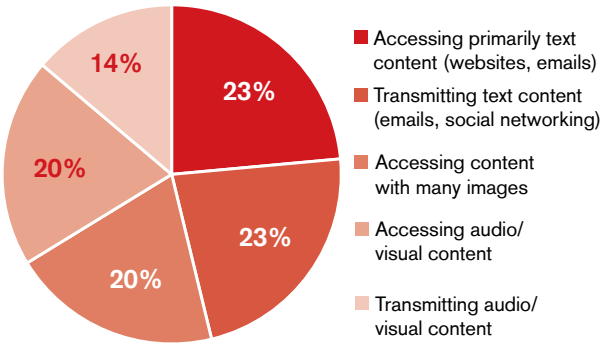
72 http://www.citc.gov.sa/English/MediaCenter/CITCinthemedia/Pages/PR_MED_098.aspx

73 http://www.citc.gov.sa/English/MediaCenter/Annualreport/Documents/PR_REP_006E.pdf

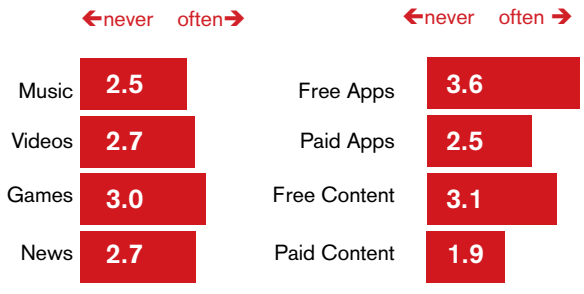
TOP 5 MOBILE OS IN USE



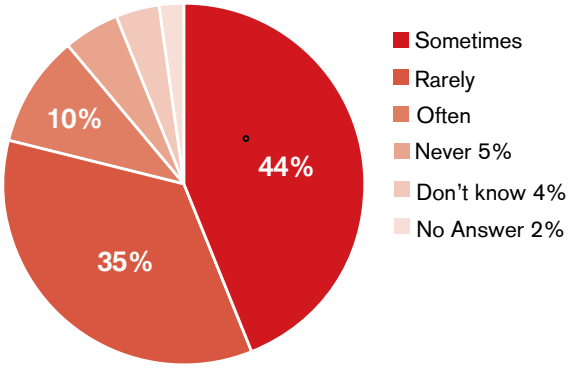
USE OF THE INTERNET 2012 (IN-COUNTRY SURVEY)



TYPES OF MOBILE DOWNLOADS INCLUDING CONTENT (LEFT) AND TYPES OF APPS (RIGHT)



HOW OFTEN DO YOU ENCOUNTER BLOCKED WEBSITES? (IN COUNTRY SURVEY)



CENSORSHIP AND CIRCUMVENTION

KSA continues to censor the internet to a great extent. It is very open about its internet censorship policies and provides a dedicated web page for reporting any additional content that users feel the need to have blocked. The KSA regularly censors pornographic content, and dissenting political or religious content, along with websites focused on human rights issues.

It is common knowledge that KSA monitors internet usage. In 2009 the government made orders to install hidden cameras in internet cafes and to record the names of all its users.

Censorship in the KSA is done through a proxy farm in the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology. This system blocks content on the basis of two lists, one for "immoral content" and the second for content to be blocked by direction of a special security committee run by the Ministry of the Interior. Recently, websites created in the aftermath of the demonstrations in Tunisia and Egypt were blocked. The website of the NGO Amnesty International was blocked after its publication of a draft anti-terrorist law that could have the result of repressing criticism.

PHONE BRANDS[74]

Phone	iPhone 4S	S5570 Galaxy Mini	I9000 Galaxy S	Bold 9780	Curve 8520
Manu	Apple	Samsung	Samsung	RIM	RIM
Released	October 2011	February 2011	June 2010	November 2010	August 2009
Data	GPRS/EDGE C10	GPRS/EDGE C12	GPRS/EDGE C12	GPRS/EDGE	GPRS/EDGE C10
Bluetooth	V4.0 with A2DP	V2.1 vA2DP	v3.0 with A2DP	V2.1 with A2DP	v2.0 with A2DP
Sensors	Accelerometer, Gyro, Proximity, Compass	Accelerometer, Proximity, Compass	Accelerometer, Proximity, Compass		
Internet	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
OS	IOS 5.1	Android 2.3	Android 2.3	BlackBerry OS 6.0	BlackBerry OS 5.0
GPS	GPS-A and Glonass	GPS-A	GPS-A	GPS-A	No
Camera	8MP (gps)	3.15 MP (gps)	5 MP(gps)	5 MP	2 MP
WiFi	b/g/n/hotspot	b/g/n	b/g/n/dlna/hotspot	b/g	b/g

CONCLUSION

Market regulation is strong and market competition is very healthy. Almost 82% of users consider themselves intermediate users of mobile handsets and almost 92% of the mobile users in our survey have a range of the most recently manufactured smartphones.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Saudi Communications and Information Technology Commission (CITC) - www.citc.gov.sa
Ministry of Communications & Information Technology - www.mcit.gov.sa
Network Security Center - www.netsec.org.sa
Internet Services Unit - www.kacst.edu.sa
Saudi Telecommunications Group - www.stc.com.sa
Etihad Etisalat Company - www.mobily.com.sa
Mobile Telecommunications Company Saudi Arabia - www.sa.zain.com

74 Data and images from www.gsmarena.com