

WHAT IS TELECOMMUNICATION?

The purpose of this article is an attempt to make this mind-numbing Technology called Telecommunication understandable. Telecommunication is a composite word gotten from *Tele*-a Greek word- and *Communicate*- a Latin word.

Tele as described in Greek means AFAR while *Communicate* a Latin word translated: MAKE COMMON in English. Putting the above breakdown into perspective, I present the definition of TELECOMMUNICATION.

TELECOMMUNICATION is the transmission of *information across a distance over a medium*, from a sender to a receiver in a usable and *understandable* manner.

Information in the above definition represents: *voice, data, images or video*, coded into the electric signal to be conveyed.

Medium here could be: *copper wire cables, fiber optic cables or Air (Radio Frequencies)*; this is what carries or conveys the *information*. An example of a *medium* is the pages of this magazine; they carry or convey the different information packaged in the different news and articles to you.

Across a distance in the definition agrees with the Greek word *Tele*-which means AFAR. So, when the issue of sending a message between point A and B arises, usually separated by some distance near or far, *telecommunication* systems were built to bridge the space between these two points.

Usable and Understandable drives home the meaning of the other part of the word: tele-communicate i.e. *communicate*; like its Latin meaning defines, *to make common* i.e. to be *in-sync with or understandable*. This is what validates a distance conversation as telecommunication;

when the information or message exchanged is usable and understandable by both the receiver and sender alike.

The first generations of telecommunications systems were built as a result of the invention of the TELEPHONE in March 7 1876 by *Alexandra Graham Bell*. It was necessary that calls be transmitted to connect people within and between towns, cities, states and then among continents. However, this generation of telecommunications systems carried or transmitted only one signal VOICE. It was basically Voice-Over- Wires.



With advancement in the Telecoms Industry- the convergence of VOICE NETWORKS and DATA NETWORKS- a newer, hybrid variation, perhaps you can call it the 21st century telecoms system was born - ICT (*information Communications Technology*) system- which essentially is still a Telecommunications technology. Its core goal is still to transfer information from or across a distance between a sender and a receiver. But in distinction with its predecessor -the early telecoms network- ICT supports not only *voice*, but *data* and *video* signals.

Indeed, further study and perhaps a couple of years in study, analysis and research are required in having a broader perspective and understanding of how *voice, data* and *video* are massaged into **one network or medium and transmitted over a distance**, sometimes great distances in a **usable and understandable format** between or among users globally separated. Welcome to the 21st Century, welcome to the *information economy*. And lastly, help me make welcome, the foundation on which this new 'economy' is built...the **TELECOMMUNICATIONS NETWORK**; the pied piper of the *digital revolution*...

-Bode A. Oladipo (AB/06B/190).