

Etisalat Group CEO shares vision for future of telecoms in the region

Ahmad Abdulkarim Julfar, CEO of Etisalat Group, recently predicted a positive future for the telecoms industry during the morning session of GSMA Mobile 360 Series-Middle East conference at Dubai World Trade Centre.



Etisalat Group CEO, Ahmad Abdulkarim Julfar, speaking at m360 conference

During the keynote presentation, "A Digital Future within Reach", Julfar said telecoms operators "have the ability to empower society and create significant value within economies like never before".

He said mobile data is "the new oil" that will fuel business decisions and he expects telecoms will improve lives through connected cities and smart buildings, and digital governments.

Mobile data traffic will grow

Citing latest international studies, Julfar said in the Middle East and Africa revenues from mobile internet will treble, and mobile data traffic will grow 17 times from 2012 to 2017, giving the region an annual growth rate of 77%.

Julfar said the traffic and services that will be used most in the future are the "free" over-the-top-related downloads and argued that telecoms companies and internet companies working "together in harmony" and partnering with government would benefit customers the most.

In 2011, mobile technology contributed US\$132 billion to the economies of the Arab States, or approximately 5.5% of total GDP, and created more than 1.2 million full-time jobs.

"A priority for Etisalat is to enhance our customer experience and to make it a truly differentiated offering," he said.