

Digicel and Bemobile at Vision City

by Stephen Howes
1 May 2014



I visited the very popular Vision City shopping mall more than once during my stay in Port Moresby. I was struck every time by the contrast between the bustling Digicel shop and the quiet Bemobile stall just nearby. The two photos were taken during the same visit, and illustrate this point.

When you think that the government-owned Bemobile was the monopoly incumbent less than a decade ago, it's a remarkable story.

The entry of the Irish company Digicel was highly controversial, and almost didn't happen. (You can read an account by Ron Duncan [here](#).) But what a success. According to the World Bank, the number of mobile subscribers in PNG increased from 2 per 100 in 2006 to 38 per 100 in 2012. I don't know how many of those 2.66 million (assuming a population of 7 million) are with Digicel, but it must be the overwhelming majority.

Such are the benefits of competition. But the question must now be: where is the competition to Digicel?

Author/s:

Stephen Howes

Stephen Howes is Director of the Development Policy Centre and Professor of Economics at the Crawford School of Public Policy at The Australian National University.

Link: <https://devpolicy.org/digicel-and-bemobile-at-vision-city-20140430/>