

'Window to the world' can be opened with ease

These days, we can use our mobile phones to pay underground fares and surf the Net, with ever more possibilities for services

By Yuri Chernyakovich

Modern technologies are developing rapidly, with the Internet no longer confined to home PC use. The past 5-10 years have seen a revolution in technology, allowing us online access from our phones and other mobile devices.

Belarus' mobile communication market has expanded into third generation (3G) technology within the past year or two, thanks to high-speed access and wireless communication. According to the National Statistical Committee, in 2011, just 1.8 million people were using mobile broadband access to the Internet. By 2012, the number exceeded 3 million. Now, almost a third of subscribers use a mobile device (a smart phone or tablet) for online access. You've only to observe those using public transport to see the true situation.

Besides a greater number of people using the In-

ternet, Belarusians are also downloading more information. Over the last two years, mobile access to the Net has grown 10-fold: on average, reaching 800Mb per person per month. Naturally, this relies on speedy data transmission and a good quality of connection. Where customers are disappointed,

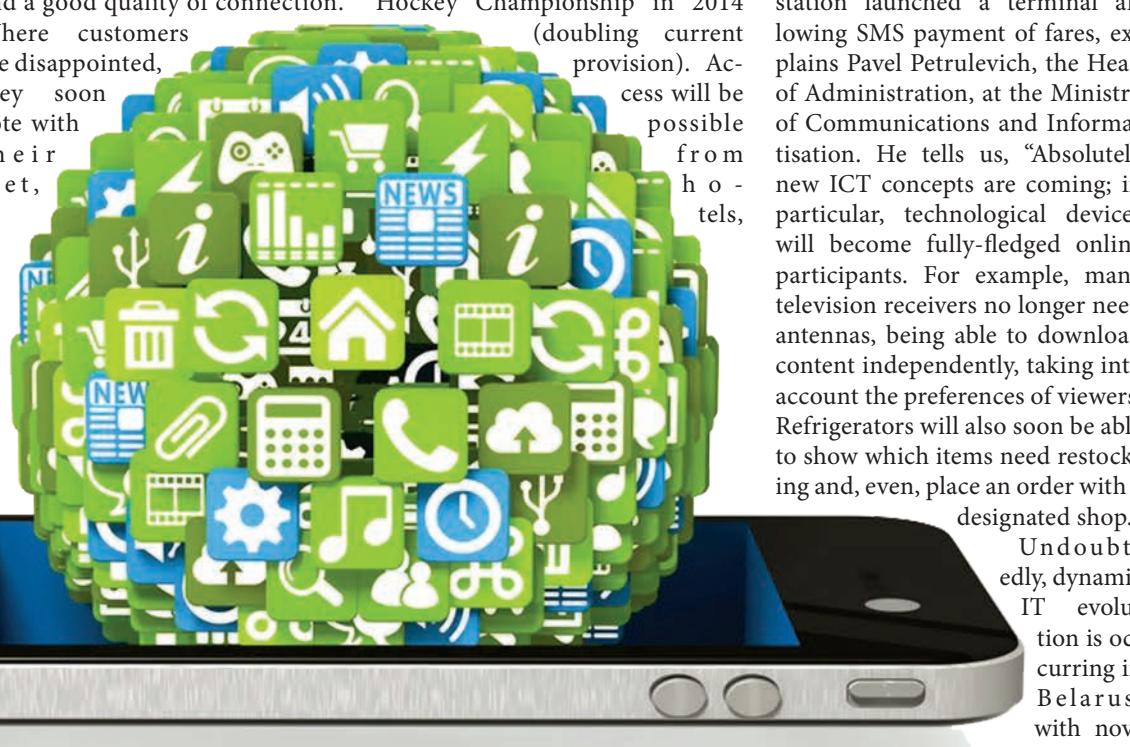
they soon vote with their feet,

obliging operators to constantly upgrade available services.

Wi-Fi technology is now more wide spread across Belarus, with over 400 public Wi-Fi access points to become operational in the capital in time for the World Hockey Championship in 2014

(doubling current provision).

Access will be possible from hotels,



Mobile Internet market developing rapidly countrywide

sports complexes and public places, for payment of a small fee to Beltelecom.

Mobile devices are able to perform more functions than ever before; not long ago, Minsk's Akademiya Nauk underground station launched a terminal allowing SMS payment of fares, explains Pavel Petrilevich, the Head of Administration, at the Ministry of Communications and Informationisation. He tells us, "Absolutely new ICT concepts are coming; in particular, technological devices will become fully-fledged online participants. For example, many television receivers no longer need antennas, being able to download content independently, taking into account the preferences of viewers. Refrigerators will also soon be able to show which items need restocking and, even, place an order with a designated shop."

Undoubtedly, dynamic IT evolution is occurring in Belarus, with novelties launching every day.

Anthem to a cucumber

Shklov hosts Day of Cucumbers

The traditional holiday has been celebrated in Shklov since 2006, the town being well-known as the 'cucumber capital' of Belarus. Almost everyone there grows this vegetable, which is even given tribute on the city emblem, designed in 2007.

The festivities began near the town monument with a short theatrical performance, followed by the singing of *Slavya*, by Glinka: sung to a cucumber. Everyone then eats a piece of sliced cucumber with honey. A busy fair of traders and recipe samples entertained visitors through the afternoon, with the versatile vegetable not just pickled but used in burgers, pizza and, even, a cake. Stallholders were more than happy to share their recipes.

Local authorities praised everyone's efforts and awarded the best dishes with prizes. Amateur dramatics groups also provided entertainment, setting the seal on the day of delicious fun.

Valuable present in gigabytes

Descendant of landowner of Slavgorod hands over digitised 18th and 19th century documents to Mogilev historians

Vladimir Yanchin, from Moscow, recently visited the estate of Dmitry Yanchin, his great-great-grandfather: the lands of Propoysk and the district centre. These passed to Dmitry Yanchin on the death of Prince Alexander Golitsyn.

Vladimir admits the *Mogilev Region is My Favourite Dnieper Region* book, by historian Nikolay Borisenco, has taught him a great deal. He also didn't come empty-handed, presenting digitized copies of 18th and 19th century documents to the region.

Surely finger licking good

KFC international network of fast food restaurants to launch in Belarus by 2015

Yum! Brands' company, which owns the KFC international restaurant business, is investing at least \$50 million annually in developing its network across Russia and the rest of the CIS in coming years. The foreign investor plans to enter the Belarusian market by 2015.

KFC is an American network of fast food outlets specialising in chicken dishes, established 1952 by Harland Sanders. Today, it's owned by 'Yum! Brands' — an American company — and brings in about \$14 billion annually. It boasts about 40,000 outlets across 130 countries worldwide. At present, the KFC network has 250 restaurants in Russia and other CIS countries, placing it among the top three fast food operators on the Russian market. Over the next three years, the network plans to open 200 new branches throughout Russia and the CIS, raising its turnover by \$1 billion.

NIKA looking into atomic nucleus

Our scientists joining those from 12 countries in creating NIKA Large Hadron Collider

The new accelerator will be built at the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research, in the scientific city of Dubna. The project involves the B.I. Stepanov Institute of Physics and the Joint Institute of Informatics of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, as well as the Pavel Sukhoi State Technical University of Gomel. Other Belarusian research centres and institutes may also take part. Senior Researcher of the Institute of Physics of the National Academy of Sciences Yevgeny Tolkachev tells us, "It's extremely important that we know about the structure of atomic nuclei, especially heavy ones, since nuclear power plants such as Ostrovtsev Nuclear Power Plant (under construction in our country) rely on this knowledge. Physicists hope that better understanding of the structure of protons and neutrons within the nucleus will reveal new sources of energy. This very question is to be studied using the NIKA collider; before its assembly and adjustment, all its processes will be modelled by a computer, in Dubna and in Minsk."

Using the Large Hadron Collider, in Geneva, Belarusian scientists have helped discover high-energy collisions of protons — known as Higgs Boson. Experiments on the nuclei of heavy elements such as gold and lead have been conducted, with NIKA to be used further in this direction.

Roadside services are operating along main roads

More roadside services for Belarus, with wider range of services



Valentina roadside service facility meets European standards

By Maxim Veselovsky

Supersized household refrigerators are being sold in a fuelling station shop on the Mogilev highway (near Smolevichi). It leaves a lasting impression on drivers dropping in. Of course, few of us are likely to come away with kitchen appliances after filling up with fuel but, certainly, such shops are selling a wider range of goods than ever. Fuelling stations also often offer small repairs

and catering facilities.

Belarus' Prime Minister, Mikhail Myasnikovich, believes that roadside services need to offer a greatly expanded range of facilities. A recent session of the Council of Ministers' Presidium discussed and approved a draft governmental regulation on this very sphere, envisaging comprehensive roadside facilities.

The issue of roadside services was raised by the President two years ago, leading to the Government's ac-

tion plan. Powerful economic stimulus was provided for investors, via a Presidential Decree making them exempt from paying land tax and rental for land lots during design and construction, and for the first two years after launch.

This proved effective but are drivers content that they now have what they need? Of course, the 2014 IIHF World Championship lies ahead, bringing vast amounts of traffic through Belarus for the Ice Hockey tournament.

According to the PM, the ideology of developing roadside services has now been elaborated. "We need to develop approaches relating to existing facilities and to adopt corresponding decisions," he emphasizes. As the Deputy PM, Anatoly Kalinin, adds, over the last three years, more than 80 fuelling stations have opened, alongside 120 food service areas, 20 hotels and secure parking areas, 15 technical maintenance stations and 10 car washes: all located along major Belarusian highways.

Today, fuelling stations are found every 47km, on average, on major Belarusian roads, and food service areas every 35km: meeting recommended international norms. However, it's necessary to enhance the quality of such services.