

# MTN NIGERIA REGISTRATION

## CASE STUDY

### INTRODUCTION

Regulatory changes in Nigeria mobile telephone environment led to the need of having MTN subscribers registered in a short period. In total MTN had over one hundred million SIM cards and they had to be registered in a period of around three months.



There were other challenges besides the number of subscribers and time constraints. Nigeria is a large country and the operating conditions required registration devices that could withstand harsh environments.

This was by far the biggest challenge faced by BioRugged. But the response was very positive, and we have produced Combo and BioWolf 7 as devices for this operation.

We have provided MTN Nigeria with fast implementation tools and a true biometric solution for their subscriber enrollment program.

### BACKGROUND

Nigeria is the largest country in Africa in population terms, one hundred and thirty million people, diverse from the religious and cultural background and therefore showing potential and signs for uprisings and internal problems.

To curb potential unrest driven by the usage of mobile telephony, the Nigeria Government decided to put in place stringent registration procedures for mobile subscribers on contract and prepaid alike. In fact, registration of mobile subscribers took one step beyond traditional methods by introducing not only biographic elements of the person but extending it to his (her) picture with proof that it is a real photograph (not a picture of a picture), biometric (fingerprint) and copy of his (her) identity document.

These new requirements were made compulsory to all mobile operators in Nigeria and the regulatory authority NCC was empowered to ensure they were fulfilled within three months following their official introduction.

At the time this new regulation was introduced the number of mobile subscribers in Nigeria was about thirty-five million distributed among three operators which had a total of three hundred million SIM cards in the field. To register this number of SIM cards in three months seemed an impossible task but sanctions to be imposed by NCC were a deterrent to force operators to move in the direction of finding solutions for implementing new regulations in time.

In addition to this strict time line MTN has placed many operating conditions to all devices that should be supplied for the registration of their subscribers, namely: battery size allowing operation for 24 hours without recharge, harsh environments (devices to be resistant to 1.5m drops, dust and water), camera better than 8 Megapixel, FBI fingerprint reader and storage of records collected in areas with bad coverage.

With these elements BioRugged had to select a suitable terminal that would be acceptable to MTN and their operating requirements.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

The selection of a device for this application was bound by the specifications issued by MTN Nigeria and therefore there was not much room to maneuver.

BioRugged at the time had several devices that could fit some portions of the specification, however none had an integrated FIPS201 fingerprint reader (FBI compatible) and the development of such terminal would take longer than the anticipated time limit.

At the end of our selection process we were able to provide MTN with three alternatives:

- 1) Ruggbo** – This was a new development proposed by BioRugged that would comply with all MTN specifications and would be the most adequate solution for this situation. It would be an integrated solution with 8MP camera, IP65 protection class and a large battery that would allow easily more than 24 hours of operation between charging cycles. However, the development and production time would exceed the ninety days period;



- 2) BioWolf 7** – Second in our list was the BioWolf 7, a tablet with most of the functionality required by the operator and with a good degree of IP protection (IP 65). The 5MP camera would cope with the high quality specified by MTN Nigeria and the fingerprint reader. This would be the best solution from the technical and delivery point of view;



- 3) **Combo** – A combination of a Rex 5” rugged telephone terminal with one OTG fingerprint reader both in a carrying case bearing the MTN logo.



### **ADOPTED SOLUTION**

Of the above proposed solutions MTN Nigeria adopted the Combo.

The main reasons behind their decision were the fast deployment of over 20,000 units and the respective cost.

The Combo is a combination of a 5” terminal of the Rex family with a FIPS 20 fingerprint scanner. The Rex 5 is a device with a high-resolution camera, therefore highly indicated for KYC applications, it is built to IP65 protection class (dust and water proof) and with a drop resistance of 1.5m. These characteristics allow it to work in harsh environments.



The supply in time, the ruggedness and excellent specifications displayed by this solution allowed a very successful implementation.

In addition, there were no returns from the field of any devices, thus proving the reliability of the product supplied to the customer and their agents in the field.