

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Orbitel, A Local Internet Service Provider, Is Shutting Down

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ST. CROIX -- Orbitel, a local internet service provider based on St. Croix is permanently closing its doors, The Virgin Islands Consortium can confirm. The company, which for years had provided high-speed fiber internet service to business organizations, had only recently started to push into the residential scene.

The talk of closure of Orbitel had been making the rounds in private business circles for weeks, but confirmation came following an email sent to a host of internet service providers (ISPs) in the territory from the Virgin Islands Next Generation Network (viNGN), a government-owned entity that provides fiber internet to many local ISPs, stating that Orbitel was no longer a client.

"The Virgin Islands Next Generation Network no longer has a business agreement with Orbitel, LLC. Furthermore, we want to ensure the process of maintaining and transitioning the internet service for the end user is as smooth as possible," reads part of the email, which was obtained by The Consortium. Because of the closure, viNGN offered all Orbitel's former clients to the local ISPs, among them Acute Alternative Care, Blue Water Bible College, Boys and Girls Club East, Centerline Airport Car Rental, Club Comanche Hotel, Department of Labor, Dermatology Wellness Center, Merchants Market Group, Plessen Surgical Center and many more.

Calls placed to Orbitel's St. Croix office were not returned at time of writing.

The situation has posed an opportunity for other ISPs to collect new customers. "Here's a story for you. Orbitel went out of business. Broadband VI is calling customers wanting them to switch," reads a text sent to The Consortium by a former Orbitel customer.

Yet, even as the company goes out of business, its website, as of Monday morning, [was still active](#).

The Consortium has not been able to confirm why the company is shutting down. However, local ISPs have been making their offerings more attractive, with dominant companies like Viya planning to introduce even higher speeds at more compelling rates soon, according to CEO Alvaro Pilar, who spoke with The Consortium during a recent business after hours event. The local anemic economy may also have been a factor in the company's closure.

Yet, the closure of Orbitel is still surprising as employees were not too long ago seen in various areas on St. Croix setting up lines as the company attempted to expand into residential scene.