
The End of Telecoms History

Professor William Webb

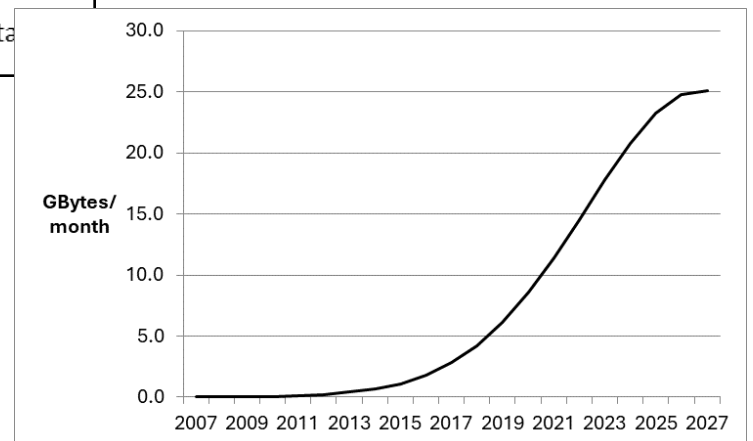
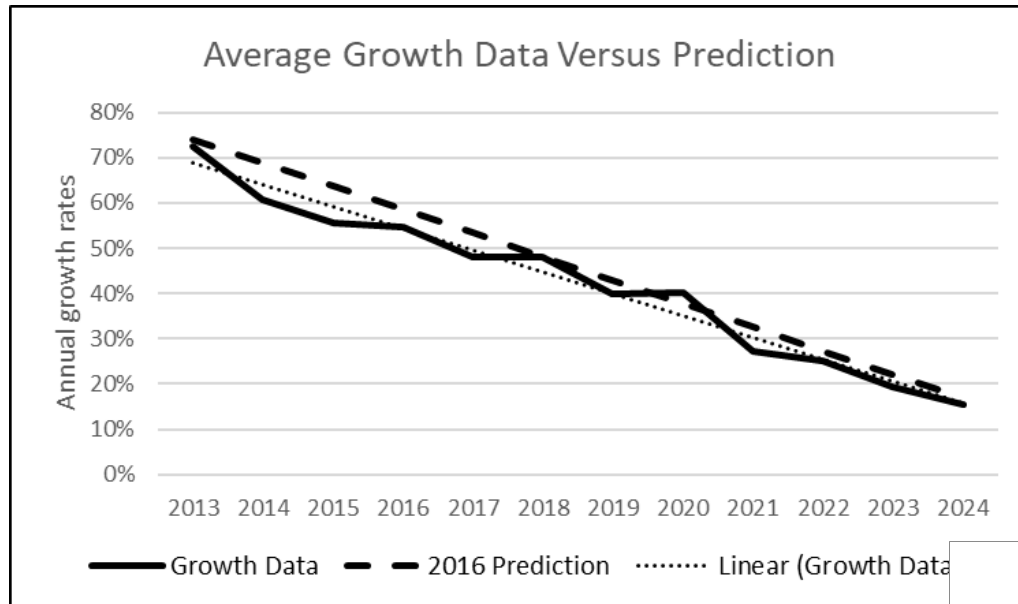
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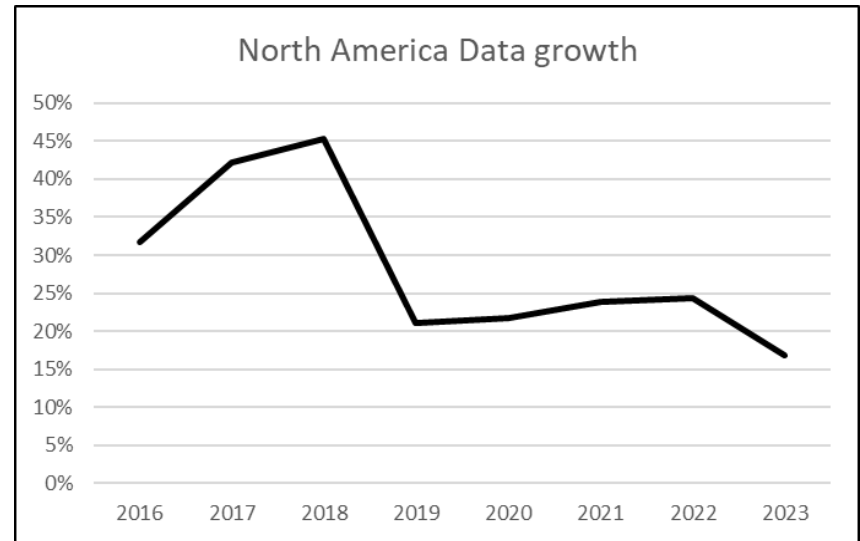
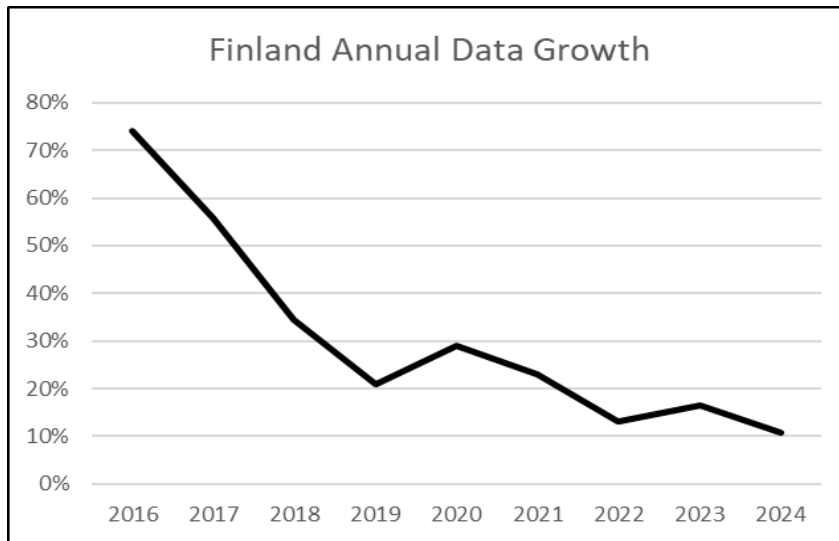
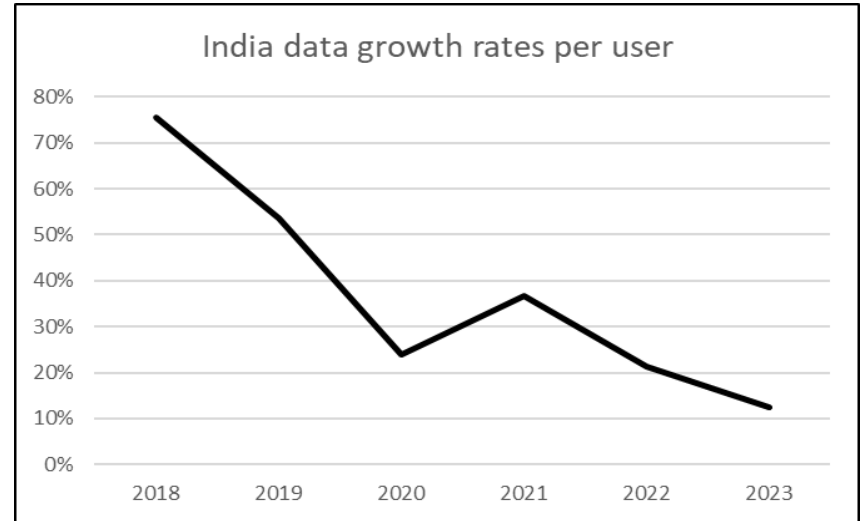
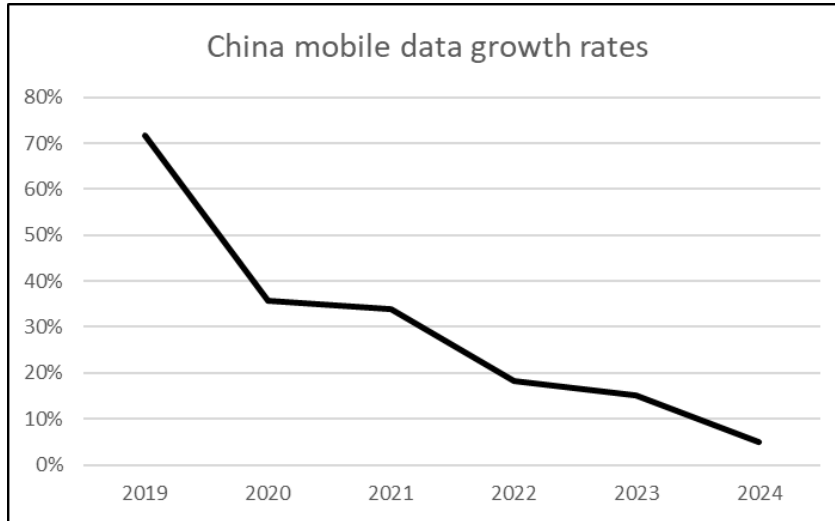


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Data growth fits precisely an S-Curve

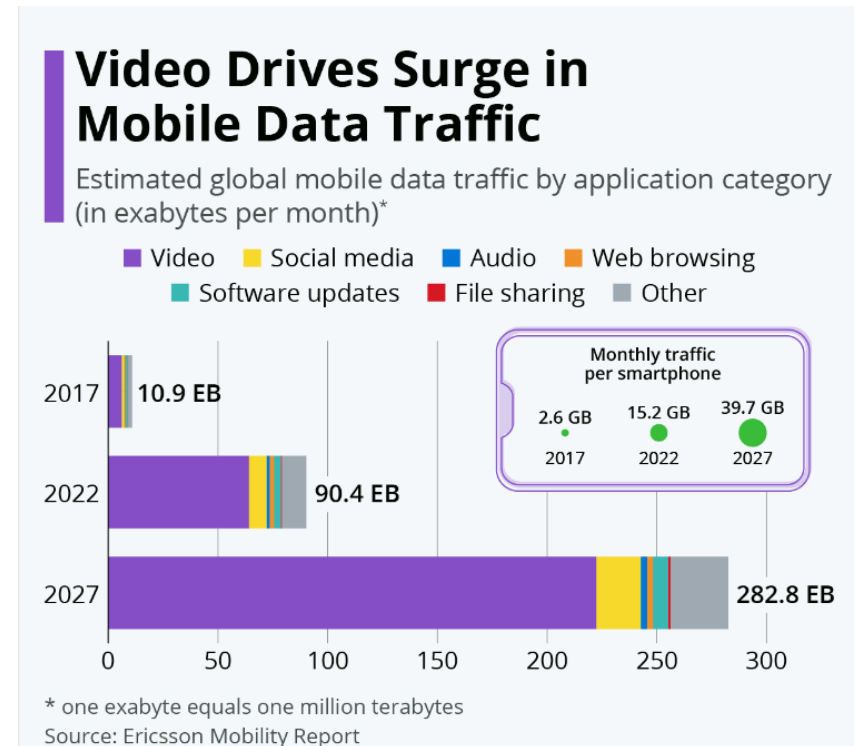


Major countries all look similar



Why is data growth slowing?

- By far the highest use of data is video (not just streaming but video within social media feeds, video calls, etc)
- There is only so much video we have time to watch and many have reached that point
- Video bandwidths are also falling as better compression is used
- Possible new applications like VR are still, broadly, video



Is there anything that could re-ignite growth?

- To make a material difference – one that might require more spectrum, more cells or some other major change – would require the equivalent of about an hour of video per day per person.

The current suggestions look mostly like a repeat of the 5G hype from 2015 and include:

- XR
- AI
- IoT and digital twins
- FWA
- Autonomous cars

These applications (and others) are readily dispensed with. They are either unlikely (XR at scale, highly connected autonomous cars) or will not generate much traffic (AI, IoT and digital twins). Only FWA might make a difference but this is not data growth, rather transfer of data from fixed to mobile

We should celebrate

- We should celebrate the end of telecoms history. It has been an amazing journey from a time where contacting another person took days or months to a world where most can contact most others on the planet from a device kept in their pocket and can access almost any information, book, film or music, instantly from almost anywhere. It is an incredible achievement.
- We should focus efforts where they are now needed - into ubiquity, ease of use and suitable technical and economic structures.

