

## Why Broadband:

Broadband is a fast connection to the Internet that is always on. This means sending and receiving data and information up to 40 x faster than a standard dial-up connection. To paraphrase the "Information Superhighway", broadband is an empty ten lane highway while dial up is a single lane blacktop with a tractor in front of you. Dial up is still plagued with the delays due to dialing, logging in, or worse having to redial due to busy signals. The frustration of dropped calls and not being able to download attachments to emails are constants in a dial up users day. High quality audio and video are not possible. Broadband is an enabler of economic - and social - development. Without it individuals and communities are being disenfranchised. Some of the specific benefits of broadband include:

- Increased usage of the internet is achieved by broadband. Dialup users access spend 95% less time on the internet than broadband users.
- Enhances business productivity by conducting research and reading news online, providing online customer service and support, sending/receiving e-mail with large attachments, purchasing goods and services online, and distance learning.
- Promotes the development of Information Technology companies which are increasingly competing in a global market place. Lack of broadband access or expensive broadband access can force skilled IT companies and people to move to areas with a more advanced infrastructure.
- Facilitates E-Government by speeding up the provision of government services and information over the Internet, placing government procurement online and improving the overall speed and efficiency of the government.
- Encourages telecommuting allowing individuals to work from home yet remaining connected to the office. In addition to saving commuting time and expense this has a dramatic effect on reducing traffic congestion and air pollution.
- Enriches education and integrated learning by allowing interactive conversations. Examples include easier and faster access to information, increased opportunities for communicating and sharing, supporting life long learning, allowing differentiation for specific individual needs, providing a platform to showcase creativity and problems solving capabilities. Access to media rich content can also provide additional motivation to learners of all ages.
- Promotes tourism to business and vacation visitors since broadband connectivity is increasingly a significant factor in hotel and location choice.
- Allows teleconferencing for holding business and personal meetings quickly, inexpensively and safely over the Internet rather than traveling to a distant location.
- Permits telemedicine to extend the reach of vital medical services in diagnosing and treating ill and injured patients in rural areas with a shortage of skilled medical personnel. It also allows doctors to quickly and inexpensively consult specialists in distant locations for their opinions on medical cases requiring outside expertise.
- Stimulates E-Commerce by allowing faster online shopping and purchasing and enhanced display of product and service information using rich media.
- Allows entertainment and other creative content including books, songs, music, plays, movies, videos, live performances to be delivered over the Internet to a global market.
- Makes more accessible the vast amount of information and media content on the Internet which people can avail themselves of to inform, educate and entertain themselves thereby speeding up the dissemination and evolution of human knowledge.

Thanks to the UK Access for Broadband Campaign for some of the content on this page.

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