The Mobile Broadband Group

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Principles of Good Practice for selling and promoting Mobile Broadband

Uptake of mobile broadband[1] services is increasing rapidly. Customers appreciate the widespread coverage and convenience of being able to connect wireless devices to a 3G mobile network.

As the market is in a relatively new phase and in order to promote consumer awareness of the potential of mobile broadband, the UK's mobile operators have agreed some good practice principles that underpin the way in which they and their customer service staff communicate information that is relevant when purchasing and using mobile broadband services. The principles cover:

- Coverage
- Factors that determine download speeds
- Pricing Transparency

Coverage

1. Make coverage information available via a web site (e.g. a map or a post code checker).

Promotion of and factors that determine download speeds

2. Download and upload speeds that are given in advertising and promotional material must be achievable by end users and should be accompanied by an explanation that speeds are variable. An indicative range of download and upload speeds under normal conditions can be given.

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[1] i.e a mobile data service providing Internet access via a 3G modem

3. The factors that determine download speeds should be explained (e.g. distance from mast, surrounding environment, number of other users, network connection).

4. A glossary should be made available describing technical mobile broadband terms used in customer literature and on on-screen indicators (e.g. 3G, HSDPA).

5. Translate raw data speeds into some real life examples such as: 2Megabits per second delivers a 5 minute music track in approximately 20 seconds.

Pricing transparency

6. Pricing information should set out the relevant tariff options, including a description of any fair usage limits. There must an explanation of the consequences of the usage limit or fair usage allowance being exceeded.

7. Where operators make references to Megabits, Megabytes and Gigabytes in close proximity, they should give an explanation of the differences. A description of what, for example, a Megabyte of data usage allows should be provided.

8. Pricing information should include either the roaming charges or a hyperlink to where the roaming charges are set out (which should also set out explanations of what a Mb of usage allows, description of fair usage limits and any other relevant information).

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